

Survey Respondents Are Prioritizing Military Veteran Hiring, Development

Many organizations have prioritized the hiring of military veterans in recent years. This is commendable, as military hiring requires a different strategy than civilian hiring because veterans do not have exactly the same needs as traditional hires. For instance, they are often attracted by different things during the recruitment process, and sometimes respond better to alternative training and development approaches.

The Talent Activation, the Employee Experience, and Skill Development survey, conducted online within the United States by DeVry University on behalf of the Career Advisory Board in August 2018 examined how organizations are currently designing and executing specific employee experiences at the recruitment, onboarding, learning and development, and performance evaluation stages.

Survey respondents included 505 US-based individuals (53 percent male, 47 percent female) with full-time positions at the supervisor level or above, in companies with more than 500 employees (mean company size was large at 15,000). Our respondents' primary job responsibilities include the hiring, development, and management of employees.

In parts of the survey, we looked specifically at military hiring and development practices. Specifically, we asked our respondents how much they agreed or disagreed with the following statement: *My company has implemented a successful military veteran hiring strategy.* Sixty-four percent agreed, confirming that not only do such strategies exist, but also that they have been honed in a majority of organizations.

We also asked the participants how much they agreed or disagreed with this statement: *My company has implemented a comprehensive talent development program that capitalizes on the professional strengths military veterans bring to the workplace.* Refreshingly, 67 percent agreed. And, according to our respondents' verbatim responses, material is often customized to resonate with veterans' unique perspectives.

On the subject of the verbatim responses, the survey inquired about where respondents were focusing their thoughts and energies with respect to military veteran hiring and onboarding. Some of the initiatives they cited in the verbatims included:

- Hiring talent acquisition staff with military backgrounds
- Matching current employee veterans with new hires
- Engaging with Military Transition Centers
- Using regional military outplacement centers effectively
- Performing outreach to veteran groups in relevant locations
- Maintaining strong relationships with local VAs
- Holding veteran-specific job fairs
- Partnering with military recruiters

- Sourcing talent from military leaders who have commanded troops
- Participating in military-sponsored job events
- Offering interview and hiring preference to veteran candidates
- Creating onsite affinity groups for military
- Providing tuition assistance and educational incentives
- Emphasizing how military experience translates to work experience
- Understanding and communicating about PTSD and other symptoms veterans experience
- Placing veterans into supervisory or leadership jobs
- Developing veteran-specific onboarding programs to ease the transition to civilian work

Although our survey respondents are clearly moving in the right direction with respect to military veteran hiring, training, and development, there is always more we can do. For example, in this [recent article](#), we talked about training initiatives like [DeVryWORKS' Green Zone program](#), which was developed combining input from military veterans, DeVry University academic expertise, and DeVry's Fortune 500 corporate education partners. Programs like Green Zone are designed to help organizations improve veteran hiring and retention outcomes, and also to help close skills gaps by infusing organizations with attributes that are well-honed in the military but may be less prevalent in civilian employment circles.