



A COMPLETE
GUIDE TO

MILITARY SPOUSE EMPLOYMENT

*Military spouses are as diverse as their career paths.
However, they share the challenges of finding and
maintaining gainful employment. MOAA is here to help.*

www.moaa.org/spouseguide

 **MOAA**[™]
MILITARY FAMILY
INITIATIVE

Complete Guide to Military Spouse Employment

The military lifestyle includes travel, adventure, and new experiences. However, it also guarantees a transient lifestyle and challenges to maintaining a career. The goal of this publication is to provide a helpful resource to military spouses in pursuit of a career.

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Introduction

THIS IS A GUIDE FOR MILITARY SPOUSES CREATED BY MILITARY SPOUSES, WITH THE GOAL OF HELPING YOU NAVIGATE YOUR NEXT TRANSITION AND ASSIST YOU IN KEEPING YOUR CAREER ON THE MOVE.

You will find this guide is packed full of information about job hunting and ways to manage your career. It outlines the basics while focusing on creative strategies and approaches that tackle some of the complex challenges military spouses face.

The information provided is not designed as a one-size-fits-all approach, so be sure to select what is applicable to your journey.

If you are just launching your career or need additional information about job-search basics, consider the Syracuse University's Institute for Veterans and Military Families (IVMF) career transition programs. MOAA's Spouse Programs, in partnership with IVMF, developed content specifically geared toward military spouses. For additional information, visit <http://vets.syr.edu>.



Contact MOAA Spouse Programs for more resources and information.

- Email moaaspouse@moaa.org.
- Visit the MOAA website at www.moaa.org/spouse.
- Call the MOAA Member Service Center at (800) 234-MOAA (6622).
- Mail MOAA Spouse Programs
201 N. Washington St.
Alexandria, VA 22314

Chapter 1

Military Spouses and Careers

Military spouses are diverse, coming from all walks of life and different stages of career.

However, they all share the trait of being married to a servicemember or veteran — active duty, National Guard or Reserve, or retired — and regardless of branch, rank, or service status, their spouse’s military service probably affects their life and career trajectory.

MILITARY-SPOUSE LIFE

Military spouses have more in common than just their spouse’s connection to the service. Military-spouse life offers camaraderie and often cultivates individuals with strong marketable skills. Common characteristics military spouses share include:

- adaptability
- resiliency
- independence
- flexibility
- problem-solving
- hard-working
- loyalty
- motivating

Many military spouses live a mobile lifestyle, moving often from state-to-state or even country-to-country. But military life also can affect spouses who are able to remain in one location for an extended period of time. Remarkable multitasking and coping skills are required to carry the load of household and family responsibilities during periods of separations and transition. You are continually put to the test through the rigors of your lifestyle.



THE AVERAGE MILITARY SPOUSE IS FEMALE

33
years
old

with
some college
or a
**bachelor's
degree**
and is more likely
to have children
in the home.

She is
less likely
to be employed
and makes about

38%
less

than her
civilian
counterpart.

Her
**service-
member**
has been
deployed
on average a
total of

24
months

DID YOU KNOW?

90%

of responding female
spouses of active duty
servicemembers are
UNDEREMPLOYED.*

*Possess more formal
education/experience than is
needed at their current/most
recent position.

2013 MILITARY SPOUSE
EMPLOYMENT SURVEY

COMMON CAREER CHALLENGES

You probably have invested a lot in your education and professional development. You might also feel an urge to contribute to a better world, make a difference in someone's life, or put your knowledge and talents to work. So it is not uncommon to meet military spouses who are frustrated and exhausted when it comes to employment and maintaining a satisfying career path. Even the most driven military spouses will encounter career challenges related to their lifestyle, such as:

- limited or no work options for skills and education level;
- unusual or worrisome career trajectory;
- paid-employment gaps;
- lack of specific work experience required for qualification;
- license transferability issues;
- lack of a local network at future duty stations;
- pegged as a “short-timer”;
- difficulty finding affordable child care;
- lack of flexible work options; and
- limited time to find a good job and work during temporary assignments and short tours.

SUPPORT SYSTEMS AND MENTORS

A strong support system will help you rebound when needed and carry extra weight when military life throws a wrench in your best-laid plans. Consider looking to your spouse, friends, neighbors, local military-spouse organizations, church, fellow career-minded spouses, colleagues, past employers, or any other source that will build you up and support you as you pave your path.

Consider establishing a formal mentor relationship as well. A mentor can give you guidance, direction, and insight on every stage of the employment process.

Choose a mentor who:

- is someone you respect and admire;
- is not necessarily in the same career field or the same organization;
- possesses the skill set you would like to further develop; and
- shares your values.

FINDING SUCCESS

Success is all in how you define it. Becoming a CEO and making six figures doesn't have to be your vision of success — or maybe it is. The point is, you have to decide how you define career success. Is it money? Hours? Flexibility? Telecommuting opportunities? Perhaps using your education? Work-life balance? It might even be something else entirely. Decide what is right for you.

The path toward your goals will be unique to you. What works for other people might not work for you. You are the best decision maker when it comes to your life and your career. You are also your own best advocate.

The barriers and challenges military spouses face are not likely to disappear tomorrow, so a healthy dose of confidence is in order. Without confidence, you can lose sight of your goals and eventually succumb to living a life with your personal aspirations set aside.

Know what you have to offer employers, and commit to seeking out companies that will value your skills, abilities, and interests. Be confident that your career path is waiting for you: prepare, get your tools in order, take action, adapt when needed, and persevere.

The following chapters will touch on strategies and tactics to consider as you march forward to achieving your vision of success.



Become a part of the MOAA spouse community. Follow @MOAA_MilLife on Twitter or MOAA Spouse on Facebook.

Chapter 1

Transitions

One of the mistakes people make when preparing for a career transition is waiting until they are actively transitioning or unemployed. An effective job search in today's market requires a well-developed strategy. Most people experience a learning curve, and those who wait can find themselves struggling or quickly becoming desperate.

As a military spouse, you are likely to have a career transition when your spouse receives orders to PCS or transitions out of the military. This often means you resign from your current position to find a new position with a new company at your new location. This type of transition is difficult because you are unemployed, competing on the open job market with a limited local network established, and feeling the pressure to secure work quickly while dealing with employers who might not be in tune with your value and challenges.

TRANSITION OPTIONS

Resigning from your job and finding a new job in your new location is not the only transition option. Consider these alternatives:

- Before leaving your current position, approach your current employer about remote or telecommuting options. Present a package outlining your proposed arrangement and how the employer will benefit from this arrangement (continuity in the position with a proven employee who knows the job requirements and is familiar with the company, no difficult or costly searches for a replacement, etcetera). Be sure to stress the value to the employer, not to yourself. Don't ignore the potential downside but offer reasons why the pros outweigh the cons.
- Explore freelance work or contract consulting. Consider this an option to get your foot in the door by demonstrating your value to a potential employer.

- Use strategic volunteer opportunities to enhance your skill set, demonstrate your commitments, build your network, fill résumé gaps, and open doors to paid work opportunities. Look for places where you can utilize the skills you want to strengthen or new skills you desire to develop. Skills obtained or fortified through volunteering are no less valuable than those gained through a salaried position.
- Earn additional credentials or training. Go to school for an advanced degree, earn a certification, or pursue professional-development opportunities through additional coursework, seminars, or workshops.
- Explore entrepreneurship. A helpful resource might be Veteran Women Igniting the Spirit of Entrepreneurship (V-WISE), which enables female veterans and military spouses to find their passions and learn the business-savvy skills to turn their ideas or businesses into a growth venture. The program is hosted through Syracuse University's Institute of Veterans and Military Families.
- Take a career or employment break.

CAREER PLANNING

Plans are important when you want to accomplish something and prepare for unexpected situations. Start with goals, steps to achieve those goals, guiding principles, an idealistic vision, and an idea of possible twists and turns that can affect your plans.

Some great career-planning questions to ask yourself include:

- If you could control your career trajectory, what would it look like?
- What are your short- and long-term career goals?
- What are your major milestones?
- Are small businesses or big companies part of your plan?
- What type of flexibility do you need?
- When do you need to look to your support system?
- When do you need to revisit your plans?
- What gives you a sense of fulfillment?

Don't just think about your plans, tell someone about them or, even better, write them out. Writing and talking about your goals helps

solidify your thoughts. Plus, you can refer to your documents when it is time to revisit your plans.

WHEN PLANS CHANGE

As you continue down your career path, you might find yourself stuck at a fork in the road.

Think through what is happening, and try to plan for the unknown, such as:

- What if there is a lack of employment opportunities at your next duty station?
- If you are unable to find employment, what volunteer positions might benefit you?
- What if you and your spouse encounter an unexpected deployment, temporary duty assignment, or a PCS?
- What if your spouse transitions out of the military?

Developing a plan will help you feel prepared and able to come up with solutions so you can put your plan into action, adjust, and still reach your end goals. Invest in yourself and the planning process so you can make the right decision for you and your family.

Resource Tip

You might qualify for unemployment compensation if you left a job due to your spouse's PCS orders.

According to the National Conference of State Legislatures, "Recognizing that spouses of military service personnel who quit their jobs due to a military transfer may not be quitting so 'voluntarily,' state legislators have amended unemployment compensation laws to help military families who are relocating between states." Research to see where your state stands on this important issue.

See Appendix D for additional resources.

Chapter 3

Job-Search Strategies

Hiring practices are very complex and can vary by region, industry, company size, and the state of the economy. Educate yourself on various strategies, and create a job-search plan that works for you.

There is no single way to job search, but if you aren't seeing the results you want, change your strategy.

JOB-MARKET RESEARCH

Successful, strategic job searches start with research.

Understand the big picture:

Economic climate

- Are companies hiring?
- Will many qualified applicants be competing for jobs?

Industry trends

- Is your target industry in need of your skills?
- What are the recent changes in the industry?

Regional nuances

- How do people conduct job searches in that area?
- What industries are prevalent in that region?

Research specific companies and opportunities through:

- networking,
- career events,
- employment or transition office on the installation (if applicable),
- local job centers, and
- online (start with LinkedIn's job-search tool).

ONLINE JOB SEARCH

The Internet is a great source for job-market research, company and opportunity research, finding career events, social media networking, and applying online.

You can find opportunities online through:

- employer websites,
- job boards,
- the Military Spouse Employment Partnership website and career portal (<https://msepjobs.militaryonesource.mil>),
- the Chamber of Commerce Hiring Our Heroes website (www.uschamberfoundation.org/hiring-our-heroes),
- alumni association job boards, and
- social media (LinkedIn, Twitter, and Facebook).

Applying online

Online applications typically are processed through systems called Applicant Tracking Software (ATS). ATS systems are designed to automatically sift candidates based on data input by the employer. Every employer has different specifications, which makes figuring out how to create a perfect résumé and application virtually impossible.

The best strategy for applying online (or for any job, for that matter) is to tailor and target your application to the specific needs and interests of that employer. Include relevant information to communicate your qualifications in a concise and compelling way, while populating your résumé with keywords found within the job announcement and throughout the company website. Résumé specialists can help you understand how to maximize your chances of being selected for further evaluation.

Applying online is a way to actively job search but it should not constitute all of your efforts. If you limit yourself to applying online, then you might find yourself within the large pool of frustrated people saying, “I applied to hundreds of jobs and didn’t receive a single interview!”

Although most companies require an online application before they extend an offer, very few candidates are selected for interviews from this pool.

REFERRAL NETWORKING

The Internet is full of information, but networking and personal connections are a powerful part of an effective job-search strategy.

Getting an internal referral is not only a way to increase your chances for being selected for an interview, but it also is a great way to be part of the process before jobs are even posted or announced publicly.

Think about this example: How many times have you found yourself shopping and thought, *Wow! That is so cool. I really need that.* That item was never on your shopping list. In fact, you didn’t even know that item existed until you saw it. If your friend says it is great, too, aren’t you going to add it your shopping list? You might very well give to your future employers the same response. Businesses and organizations are running 100 mph, so when a solution to their problems (even ones they didn’t know they had) knocks on their door with a trusted referral and a plan in hand, smart employers will create a position if possible. While employers usually rely on hiring from posted jobs, given the unique experiences of military spouses, this might be an approach worth considering.

Many times, employers already have an idea of positions that soon will be created or vacated. No job opportunity is posted yet, but they know it is coming, so they have their radar on and are considering people with whom they already have a relationship. If they identify a viable candidate, then they might proceed with the interview without ever posting the position. If they are required to post it, they probably will include the candidate they previously identified. This is why candidates have a stronger chance of getting the job when they are referred by an internal source.

This method is particularly challenging if you don’t have a network at your next duty location. But, if you include this as part of your job-search plan, your attention and effort soon will lead to a robust network that can open up opportunities. Consider anyone you meet as a potential networking contact.

RESEARCHING AND EVALUATING OPPORTUNITIES

A job search involves not only identifying opportunities but also evaluating opportunities to determine which ones are worth pursuing.

To evaluate a job opportunity, ask the following questions:

- What are potential opportunities with that employer?
- Where are they finding new employees?
- What are they looking for in a candidate?
- Who are the decision makers?
- How are they different from their competition?
- What is the organization's culture?

Once you understand the opportunity, you can start formulating how you will provide value to the employer compared to other candidates. Nail down a solid response to the question, "Why should we hire you?"

Questions that help uncover your qualifications and competitive advantage include:

- Do you meet most of the minimum qualifications? If not, are you still capable of being successful in this role? What evidence do you have to support this claim? What is your plan to request consideration if you do not meet the specified qualifications?
- What do you have to offer that is above and beyond their desired qualifications?

- What makes you different from other people they might be considering?
- Do you have a unique skill set or perspective?
- Are you passionate about the work?
- What are your motivations?

PRESENTING YOURSELF AS A CANDIDATE

After you have identified which opportunities you plan to pursue and you understand your level of qualification, you should decide the best way to approach the employer:

- Apply online.
- Meet face-to-face at a career event.
- Get introduced by a networking referral.
- Introduce yourself via a cold phone call.

Some employers require applicants to apply online and do not want any contact before interviews. On the other hand, some employers welcome networking and want to build relationships with potential employees.

Once you develop your strategy to approach your target employers, prepare your self-marketing materials. Put your best foot forward, but keep in mind, employers might view your LinkedIn profile at any time so keep it updated and consistent with your other self-marketing materials.



Your Brand

Reflection and Self-Discovery

Professional Portfolio

Elevator Pitch

Correspondence

Résumés

Cover Letters

Online Reputation

Other Essentials

Chapter 1

Self-Marketing Essentials

One of the most important aspects of the job search is the ability to market yourself effectively. Your self-marketing materials need to be professional and compelling, conveying all the key information employers and your referral network need to see to be enticed to continue a conversation with you. Most people think of their résumé as the cornerstone, and rightfully so. However, there are many pieces you should include in your bag of essentials, and they all should convey a consistent message — your brand.

YOUR BRAND

What comes to mind when you hear the word “brand”? Products on a store shelf? Brand is what differentiates those products. It’s recognizable and distinguishes one product, or seller, as the one that will truly deliver what the employer needs or wants.

The key to self-marketing is communicating your unique brand. How can you portray yourself as the best solution to your future employer’s needs? All of your self-marketing materials, in addition to the way you speak and conduct yourself, should align with your brand. A good brand:

- delivers your message clearly
- confirms your credibility
- motivates your audience
- generates loyalty

Take these four steps to create your personal brand:

1. Determine your target.
2. Determine your ability to solve their needs.
3. Determine your competitive advantage.
4. Integrate this information into your self-marketing materials and your conversations in a succinct and compelling way.

REFLECTION AND SELF-DISCOVERY

Spend time reflecting on and capturing your activities and accomplishments. Acknowledge your achievements, which builds self-confidence, and understand who you are, what you want, what you have done, and how well you did it. Don't forget your transferable skills — skills you developed through a variety of experiences that enable you to perform in your current and future roles.

Use the form on the following page to capture your self-discoveries for future use:

- Compile summaries and examples of your most notable items and create a professional portfolio.
- Generate a running list of experiences, awards, activities, accomplishments, attributes, strengths, etcetera.
- Use the example accomplishment statements in Appendix A for ideas to create powerful statements.



CLICK FOR ACCOMPLISHMENT STATEMENTS IN APPENDIX A.

PROFESSIONAL PORTFOLIO

According to the Military Spouse Employment Report, military spouses will move, on average, 10 times more often than their civilian counterparts. Assembling a comprehensive professional portfolio will save a lot of time as you move from duty station to duty station or transition out of the military lifestyle.

Create a digital folder, along with a notebook, to track your current job search and ongoing career development. This will become your professional portfolio. You should include:

- résumé preparation materials;
- draft résumés and cover letters;

- a list of professional references;
- certified and sealed copies of educational transcripts (high school, college, graduate school);
- copies of any professional licenses or certifications;
- copies of awards, honors, and performance evaluations;
- writing samples (newsletters, blogs, articles, etcetera); and
- public speaking experience examples or videos

ELEVATOR PITCH

An elevator pitch is a fundamental piece of your professional process. Whether you are networking for job placement or seeking a project for promotion, your elevator speech is your marketing tool. It allows you to provide to your listener a quick summary — under 30 seconds — of your skills and qualifications.

Your elevator pitch should cover:

- Who are you?
- What do you offer?
- What problem is solved?
- What are the main contributions you can make?

Be concise and to the point. No one wants to be trapped by a person talking endlessly about himself or herself. Outline your pitch using bullet points, and expand each bullet point into a sentence.

How does a polished and practiced elevator pitch give you an advantage? You are equipped with a pre-planned answer to the questions, “What do you want to do, and what qualifications do you have?” Sure, it will feel artificial the first couple of times you do it, but that will pass with practice. You will feel confident that you are consistently giving your listeners the right information about who you are, what skills you possess, and your relevant background and experience — all in a short and compact sound bite.

CORRESPONDENCE

Your written correspondence is a small peek at the real you. It is an additional opportunity to communicate your brand and enhance your relationships and reputation. Always try to respond within 48 hours, use professional language, proofread, and select relevant and precise subject lines for emails. Types of professional correspondence include:

- handwritten notes
- emails
- LinkedIn messages (In Mails)

REFLECTION AND SELF-DISCOVERY FORM

Use this form to help you reflect on and capture your skills, experiences, and achievements. This will be helpful when you create your résumé and other self-marketing materials.

HARD SKILLS

SOFT SKILLS

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

CERTIFICATIONS AND QUALIFICATIONS

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS

WHAT CAN I DO FOR YOU?

FIVE REASONS TO HIRE ME

FROM YOUR LAST ROLE

What is your specific contribution?

What is your proudest moment?

What wouldn't have happened if you hadn't been there?

RÉSUMÉS

A résumé is your primary self-marketing document. It is you on paper. It is a reflection of your capabilities, experience, and accomplishments. Everything counts. Style, format, and accuracy are as important as the content.

Résumés no longer follow a strict format; résumés now focus more on qualifications, results, and employer benefits rather than on past position descriptions. Seek out examples, and explore ways to craft your résumé so you are presenting your information in a compelling way.

Although many aspects of a résumé are not standardized in length, section titles, and structure, you can find rules-of-thumb and examples to use as guides. The rule-of-thumb for length is about one page for every 10 years of work experience. Your résumé is not a biography. Every entry should support your objective and emphasize skill sets the employer is seeking. Use the job announcement, key words, and internal contacts as sources for the employer's needs. Add specific results, impacts, and accomplishments to prove you can add value to an organization. Quantify your accomplishments whenever possible.



Basic parts of résumé

Every résumé should contain these basic parts:

- identification and contact information (name, email, phone number, address, LinkedIn public profile URL);
- summary of qualifications (brief professional profile, credentials, or career history);
- professional and volunteer experience;
- education and professional development; and
- certifications and licenses.

NOTE: It is no longer standard practice to include a full address. In most situations, it is acceptable to include city and state only and in some situations, omit completely, especially if posted online.

There are two ways to make your résumé phenomenal:



Résumé types and styles

When it comes to résumés, one size does not fit all. Different kinds and styles are used in different situations and designed to generate slightly different results.

There are two general types of résumés:

Networking

- provided to those in your network but never to a potential employer for a specific job;
- usually a broad-based document; and
- written in language any reader can understand.

Job-specific

- focuses on the needs of an employer and tailored to reflect required skills and experience;
- targeted and branded (conveys you as the solution to the employer's needs);
- summarizes your relevant skills and experience (paid and volunteer); and
- includes an experience section full of specific accomplishments showcasing the results and impact of your work.

NETWORKING JOB-SPECIFIC CHRONOLOGICAL FUNCTIONAL HYBRID

Next, consider the style you want to use. There are three core styles of résumés:

Chronological

- starts with the most recent job and works backward through your work history including all relevant paid and unpaid work experiences, typically covering the past 10 to 12 years;
- useful when past experiences and accomplishments align with or are directly related to the type of job you are seeking;
- useful if it shows a track record of progressively more responsible assignments (avoid unexplained gaps in work history); and
- used when applying to federal government jobs.

Functional

- showcases a wide variety of skills and experiences that fully support your job and career objectives;
- cites experiences and accomplishments in specific functional areas for skills that are critical to a specific job or industry;
- useful when you have strategic volunteering experiences, an unusual career trajectory, are making a major career change, or are pursuing a position that is not directly aligned with your most recent position;
- useful when you want to highlight relevant skills but downplay previous position titles, employers, dates, or experiences related to specific positions; and
- used when seeking to return to a function or skill set you employed early in your career, enhancing that would be lost in a chronological format.

Hybrid/Combination

This style combines characteristics of both the chronological and the functional style résumés and can take on more aspects of one or the other depending on the strategy needed for your document.

- typically starts with a functional style and includes specific accomplishments and
- is followed by a short chronology of work experience, typically starting with the most recent position and working backward, emphasizing the most relevant work experience.

There is no one right way to prepare a résumé. When deciding which type and style of résumé works for you, consider your brand, your unique challenges, and how you intend to use your document. You likely will need several different versions. View a variety of résumé samples and craft your résumé to position yourself in the best light. Consider your risks when deciding whether to include or exclude information and always be in search of better ways to phrase and present yourself. Leverage your transferable skills when you have a break in career, employment gaps, long-term unemployment, or multiple jobs.

Review the sample résumés in Appendix B for ideas on how to handle common challenges military spouses face.



CLICK FOR SAMPLE RÉSUMÉS
IN APPENDIX B.

COVER LETTERS

A cover letter is your opportunity to introduce and supplement your résumé.

Memorable cover letters include:

- a catchy opening;
- why you want the job;
- how you will add value to the company;
- examples of your performance (evidence of your claims); and
- a strong call to action conclusion (ask them for an interview).

In many fields, a cover letter is a necessity. When you construct your cover letter, make sure it enhances your résumé but will not be detrimental if it is not read or considered as part of your application.

Cover letters are one page in length and usually have three parts:

- Opening paragraph — tells the person why you are sending the letter and résumé and how you learned about the position.
- Body of the letter — should gain the attention of the reader and connect your skills, experiences, education, and passion to the job requirements.
- Closing paragraph — thanks the reader for his or her consideration, states you are looking forward to interviewing with the organization, and provides your contact information.



CLICK FOR SAMPLE COVER

If you are writing an email to accompany a résumé, send it promptly after your last interaction with the following cover letter format:

- Subject line
- Body
- Closing
- Résumé attachment (named with last name, first name, RESUME)

Consider these email subject-line examples:

- Human Resources Manager, Job# 5498 — Susan Smith Application
- Job Application: Susan Smith for Human Resources Manager, Job# 5498
- Referred by John Green for Human Resources Manager – Susan Smith

ONLINE REPUTATION

With the exception of background checks and credit reports, even 10 years ago, employers would usually see only what you provided them. With our Internet-connected world, sophisticated search engines and data-collection software give employers access to a whole new source of information they use when it comes to hiring decisions.

According to the 2014 Social Recruiting Survey Results by Jobvite:

- Recruiters take social media profiles seriously when evaluating candidates.
- 93 percent of recruiters will review a candidate's social profile before making a hiring decision.
- 55 percent have reconsidered candidates based on their social media profile, with 61 percent of those reconsiderations being negative.

Beyond LinkedIn, social media sites like Facebook and Twitter can help you to expand your professional network and communicate your brand. Use them to your advantage, but remember employers also will take into account what is available and visible to the public. Will your social media activity or Google results put your candidacy in jeopardy?

LinkedIn

LinkedIn operates the world's largest professional network on the Internet with more than 332 million members in over 200 countries and territories. Employers often seek out talent online and integrate the review of online profiles into their hiring processes.

If you want to find a professional online, the first place people look is LinkedIn. Can your future employer find you? Do they see the right message? A LinkedIn profile gives you access to a network of professionals that was never possible before. A branded, concise, and attractive profile is a great self-marketing tool that can communicate a strong message and enhance your relationships. Customize your public profile URL by changing it to reflect your name. This will optimize search-engine visibility. Be sure to include your URL on your résumé and in the signature line of your emails. You also have access to special interest groups, company profiles, exclusive job posts, and a newsfeed to communicate periodically with your first-level connections. LinkedIn is an essential tool for self-marketing today.

LinkedIn members also have the option of adding a professional photo to their profiles. Many people recognize and remember faces of colleagues and classmates more easily than names. According to LinkedIn, members with profile photos receive 14 times more profile views than those without.

Your image should align with your personal brand. For this reason, many job-seekers today rely on professional photographers for a high-quality headshot, but at minimum, take a clean, crisp, professional snapshot with your personal camera against a neutral background. Your profile image might be the first time someone sees you.

OTHER ESSENTIALS

Biography

A biography is an excellent way to paint a coherent picture of yourself to someone other than a potential employer. While a résumé might scream, “I’m looking for a job,” a biography is a softer sell that can be used to introduce yourself to a networking contact or as a read-ahead for a meeting or an engagement with someone you might not know well. What you choose to include depends on what you want to accentuate and how you want to be perceived by those who are reading it. Maximum length is one page.

Networking cards

Order personal business cards to exchange when you network. Many companies today offer a very professional product for a low price. The cards will provide the recipient with a tangible reminder of your interaction with them. Include your name, your email address, a reliable phone number, your LinkedIn URL, and your target position or industry if you know what you want to pursue.

Interview portfolio

Just as sales professionals use product demonstrations to sell their products, consider preparing a small collection of materials to supplement your discussions during interviews. Interview portfolios can contain examples of your work, letters of reference, awards, project descriptions, or any materials that will support your candidacy.

SG

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Business cards are effective when used during networking.

Chapter 5

Networking and Presenting Yourself

Unlike local or nonmobile professionals, military spouses usually don't have time to build strong relationships in any one location. When relationships and referral networking are key to hiring and advancement, use your network and skill sets wisely to quickly navigate to the right people while being respectful and professional.

Here are three strategies to find people in order to focus on developing quality relationships:

1 If you have a large number of contacts, consider selecting a few that could open doors for you at your next installation.

SELECT KEY CONTACTS

SEARCH LINKEDIN

2 Search LinkedIn for people located near your next installation and former colleagues, former classmates, potential employers and groups.

3 Ask your network contacts if they would be willing to connect you with their contacts who are near your next installation or who work for companies that have a location in that area.

CONNECT WITH THEIR CONTACTS

DEVELOPING CONTACTS AND RELATIONSHIPS

Networking is about relationships and is the main source of information, job leads, and interviews. You should ensure everyone you know—friends, family, professional colleagues, casual acquaintances—has a basic understanding of your brand and is aware of your employment interests.

Don't wait until you are transitioning to build your network. Make an effort, and take every opportunity to meet new people and establish new relationships prior to a PCS. Even the most unlikely contact could be your connection to your next job opportunity.

Consider all of the following when developing your networking contacts:

- former employers
- past associates
- professional association members
- career fair attendees
- college associates and alumni
- references
- relatives and friends
- neighbors
- clergy
- community and volunteer group members
- people met while traveling
- sporting event fans
- club members
- civil leaders and politicians
- salespeople
- doctors and dentists
- lawyers and accountants
- insurance agents and realtors
- bankers
- business owners
- consultants
- common-interest associates

Keep in mind, a large number of networking contacts might be beneficial if you need to reach out later, but it is difficult to develop quality relationships with a large network. Balance the quantity and quality of your network so you can achieve your ultimate goal.

During times of unemployment, volunteer opportunities can open doors to new connections. Be mindful of opportunities that could steer you away from your goal. Carefully select your volunteering commitments. Find roles that incorporate your development goals and expand your network. By demonstrating your work ethic and ability to produce results, strategic volunteering can lead to employment opportunities.

Many people don't enjoy networking because they feel it is only about promoting their self-interests. However, you should think about it as a two-way street: You are engaging in a relationship in which both parties are benefiting. How can you help or benefit them? Help others, and they will be more apt to help you.

REFERENCES

References are your strongest professional advocates. Maintain healthy relationships with them and keep them apprised of your professional journey.

Consider the following tips to help manage your references:

- Carefully select four to six professional references.
- As a professional courtesy, ensure you obtain permission to use them as a reference.
- Keep them informed of your career progression and job-search activity.
- Send them your updated résumé periodically.
- Have your reference list ready to present when requested.
- Always keep your reference contact information updated.



It conservatively is estimated that 80 to 85 percent of all jobs come from networking.

CAREER EVENTS

Career events are a great way to meet several employers face-to-face. They are there to provide information about their organization and find great talent. Research the employers before you arrive at the event:

- Know which employers you are going to talk to first and what positions are available.
- Have a basic understanding of what they do, how they do it, why they do it, and what makes them stand apart from their competition.
- Develop a list of questions whose answers cannot easily be found by looking on their website or on a job announcement.

Use this opportunity to develop internal contacts and learn more about the company so you can understand their needs better and decide if they meet your needs and interests. Remember, employment is just as much about your needs as it is about their needs.

To make the most of a career fair:

- come prepared with self-marketing materials and a

polished, professional image;

- discuss open and potential opportunities and what will make someone successful in those roles and within the company;
- gain additional information about the company's needs and challenges so you can position yourself as a solution;
- find out how the company sources and evaluates candidates along with how they conduct the hiring process; and
- inquire why the employees like their company and their jobs to gain additional insight.

Even if you currently are not seeking employment, consider attending career fairs to practice your elevator pitch, develop new contacts, gather résumé feedback, gain confidence, expand your knowledge base of companies and opportunities out there, and get up to speed on what is really important to employers.

For more information about career fairs, networking events, and professional development resources, go to www.moaa.org/career.



Chapter 6

Acing Your Interview

Résumés are all about getting noticed for an interview. Interviews are all about getting the job.

You can have the best experience in the world and the most compatible skills required for a position, but if you don't positively connect with the employer through the interview, the chances are very high you won't get the job. While job skills are important, employers know that for many positions, you can be trained.

Your interview is an opportunity to show you have the professionalism and the skills necessary to make that connection. Interviews also are an opportunity for you to evaluate the organization and job opportunity so you can decide whether the position is a fit for you.

TYPES OF INTERVIEWS

Formal interviews

Formal interviews scheduled by an employer usually occur in the one of the following forms:

- phone interview
- video interview (such as via Skype)
- in-person interview, one-on-one or panel

Types of formal interviews:

- Screening: Initial discussion to review your experience, confirm interest, validate data.
- Skills Interview: Detailed, probing questions on your skills and experience.
- Behavioral Interview: Open-ended questions to learn more about how you handle situations and the behaviors/values you demonstrate in those situations.
- Case Interview: Scenarios presented to gauge your ability to problem solve.
- Assessments: Specific assessments or tests to determine skill level for position.

Chemistry and rapport, crucial factors in a hiring decision, are initially discovered during the interview and are much easier to establish in person. Make a positive first impression and use professional, common customs and courtesies:

- Arrive no more than 10 minutes before the scheduled interview time, as early arrivals can be as annoying as late ones.
- Offer a firm handshake, make (comfortable) eye contact, and maintain good posture.
- Be prepared for the exchange.
- Remember names, or write them down on your notepad/portfolio.
- Listen, don't interrupt, answer their questions, and keep your responses concise.
- Maintain a positive attitude.
- Respect and thank them for their time and consideration.
- Send thank-you notes and follow-up correspondence promptly.

Informational interviews

Informational interviews are interviews conducted at your request so you can gain additional insight about a particular company or position. Not every employer will accept informational interviews, but many do. An informational interview could turn into an actual job interview or an internal referral. Because you request the interview, come prepared to facilitate the discussion.

PREPARING FOR AN INTERVIEW

Preparation is the key to success to an interview. Always do your homework, which includes gathering all the information and documents you might need for the interview.

- Research the company (consider the company website, Google, LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube).
- Look for background on the interviewer (via LinkedIn).
- Review details of the job description and why you are a great fit for the job, and ensure your qualifications speak to your ability to perform in that role.
- Bring copies of your formatted résumé along with an interview portfolio or other materials that will supplement the conversation (examples of your work, expanded project descriptions, reference list, etcetera).
- Review the route to the location, and check traffic and parking availability.

Sample Interview Questions

Interview questions generally fall into two categories: behavioral and technical. Be prepared to answer both types. In response to behavioral questions, spend some time reflecting on your past experiences when you faced difficult work or personnel-related problems and how you were able to resolve them.

Sample interview questions you might be asked include:

- *Tell me about yourself.*
- *What will you bring to this job?*
- *Why do you want this job? What about our company appeals to you?*
- *What is the toughest work-related or personnel problem you ever faced, and how did you resolve it?*
- *What are your top three achievements?*
- *Where do you see potential gaps between our requirements and your skills/experience?*

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Most people dread interviews because they don't know what questions will be asked and fear the questions will be challenging and difficult to answer.

Common questions military spouses are asked

Even if an employer is "military-friendly," the interviewer might be unfamiliar with the military lifestyle. Military spouses often are asked specific questions. Anticipate the questions the interviewer will have, and then take the time to plan a response to them.

Q: When will you move next?

A. Employers are interested in seeing a return on their investments. A potential employer will invest resources, training, and time in you for your new role. They might be concerned whether you will be in the position long enough to give them a return on that investment. There are a number of ways to answer their questions and address their concerns so it becomes a non-issue or no longer part of their decision-making process. You can even flip your response into a competitive advantage.

Consider this when planning your responses:

- Emphasize the strengths you bring to the table that make you a worthwhile investment.
- According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics 2012 press release, over 69 percent of all employment relationships end in less than five years.
- Create a plan to produce results within the first 30, 90, or 180 days of employment to demonstrate your interest and commitment to contributing to their return-on-investment. Back up your plan with evidence of performance and results in other work situations.

Q: Are you a military spouse?

A. From the Military Spouse Employment Survey results released in 2014, nearly 47 percent of female respondents with active duty spouses indicated a potential employer has asked them if they are/were a military spouse. Over 40 percent of all respondents said they would not inform a prospective employer of their military spouse status. When asked, "Why not?" the highest percentage of responses was, "I think it would make an employer less likely to hire me."

This question might be asked through indirect questions like, "What brings you to the area?" Many employers make it a priority to hire military spouses, while others are reluctant. Thus, their interest in the answer to this question might help or hurt your candidacy.

NOTE: It might not take an interview question to determine that you are military spouse. A military address or a string of successive jobs in various states might signal your status, and these indicators might be included within your LinkedIn profile.

Consider the following when planning your responses:

- If the employer is military-spouse friendly, use their understanding of and appreciation for military spouses to your advantage. Ways to gauge their level of friendliness:
 - Does the employer have a military spouse- or veteran-hiring program?
 - Did they commit to hiring military spouses through initiatives like the Department of Defense Military Spouse Employment Partnership or the Chamber of Commerce Hiring Our Heroes initiative?
 - Do other military spouses work for that employer?
- Tackle the employer's underlying concerns like longevity and reliability.
- There is not a single perfect response that works for everyone.



Questions to ask the interviewer

At the conclusion of an interview, you will be asked whether you have any questions. Be prepared with a thoughtful list. Choose questions that have not already been addressed. This is also an opportunity to communicate additional information supporting your candidacy that was not discussed previously. Consider the questions in the graphic above.

AFTER AN INTERVIEW

It is imperative to send a thank-you letter immediately following the interview. Even if you don't think the interview went well or you have doubts about the culture of the company, a well-written thank-you note will help preserve future options with the company.

It is recommended that you send an electronic thank you (email) the same day, followed by a handwritten letter sent through the postal system.

The thank-you letter serves several purposes. It:

- expresses your appreciation for the opportunity to interview;
- can be used to support any points or clarify important issues that surfaced during the interview;
- reinforces your interest in the position and the company; and
- helps you to stand out from the other candidates.



CLICK FOR A SAMPLE THANK-YOU LETTER IN APPENDIX C.

WHEN YOU DON'T SEAL THE DEAL

When you don't get a call back from a potential employer or you receive the infamous, "thank you for your interest, we have selected another candidate" letter, remember the selection process is just as much about you finding the right fit as it is for them.

An unsuccessful interview process can be a tremendous learning experience, even though it might be frustrating and difficult to obtain useful feedback. Many employers have policies preventing them from telling candidates why they were not selected. Many factors might have influenced the selection process besides the strength of your résumé and the quality of your interview, such as an internal candidate, a referred candidate, or the company's determination that you were not a good fit with their organization. Or perhaps they simply did not have a position open at that time.

Here are two tactics to help you gather feedback:

- Write a thoughtful turnaround letter to the employer thanking them for the opportunity to interview with the company and saying that while disappointed in your nonselection, you still desire to be part of their team and would like to be considered for future positions. This is a professional way to reaffirm your interest and stand out in their minds.
- If you practiced with a coach, mentor, or friend, circle back with them and discuss areas for improvement.

As part of your analysis, ask yourself: What did I do well in this interview? What areas need reinforcement? What percentage of the interview was spent listening as opposed to talking (the goal is a 50/50 balance)?

Stay focused, and remain positive. You might now be one step closer to getting the perfect opportunity. It is all about knocking on the right door at the right time with the right message.

What percentage of the interview was spent listening as opposed to talking?

What did I do well in this interview?

What areas need reinforcement?



Chapter 7

Evaluating and Negotiating Offers

When an offer is extended to you, make sure you understand, evaluate, and negotiate (if necessary and permitted) the offer.

SALARY

Many employers like to ask your salary requirements up front as a way to gauge compatibility. Your answer could jeopardize your candidacy and take away your ability to negotiate later. For this reason, avoid discussing salary until absolutely necessary.

If the salary question is introduced early in your discussions with a company, the best ways to respond include:

- Defer: “I’d be more comfortable discussing salary once I have a better understanding of the position.”
- Toss back: “My range is probably more flexible than yours. What is the range you are considering for this position?”
- Respond with market information: “Based on my research, I understand salaries are between \$X and \$Y for similar positions. Is this consistent with your salary range?”

Keep in mind, salaries vary depending on the local market, so you might take a salary cut simply based on location. Perhaps a lower salary is acceptable if the job is a perfect fit for you and the benefits are attractive.



CLICK FOR ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR
SALARY INFORMATION IN APPENDIX D.

BENEFITS AND PERKS

There is much more to consider than just salary. Think of an offer as a complete salary and benefits package, and look at the whole picture when evaluating a job offer and consider how it fits into your priorities.

- alignment with career strategy
- 401(k) or retirement plans
- vacation and sick leave
- medical benefits
- life and disability insurance
- maternity/paternity leave
- work satisfaction
- cultural compatibility
- internal support programs
- mentoring opportunities
- skill and experience diversification
- skill development
- work schedule and flexibility
- telecommuting options
- employer match programs
- start date
- job title
- company reputation or brand strength
- reporting relationships
- management style
- hiring bonuses
- commissions
- methods of evaluating and rating performance
- advancement opportunities
- association fees and professional-development programs
- reimbursed expenses
- office space
- computers, phones, or equipment
- corporate wellness programs or gym memberships
- travel requirements
- transportation
- frequent-flyer miles
- hotel points
- commute time

NEGOTIATING

In the realm of negotiating salary and benefits, knowledge is power. Do your homework. You should have a general idea of the salary range for a position. This will prevent you from asking for too much or too little, both of which might remove you from consideration.

Before negotiating, ask yourself:

- What do I want?
- What are my priorities?
- What do I want to negotiate?
- What am I willing to negotiate, and how much am I willing to compromise?
- What is non-negotiable?
- How will I provide a courteous response as to why those items are non-negotiable?
- Am I prepared to walk away from an offer if I am asked to compromise on items that are non-negotiable?

Resist the urge to avoid negotiation because you are grateful to have the opportunity. Identify your most important priorities — preferably not more than two or three. Signal flexibility to thoughtfully consider any reasonable offer that recognizes your skills and experience, as well as the business outcomes you can drive.

If an increase in salary is important, consider negotiating for an early performance review to be considered for a merit-based pay increase.



If you waive health care, consider negotiating for additional compensation in lieu of benefits.

Chapter 8

Landing the Job

CONGRATULATIONS, YOU GOT THE JOB! NOW WHAT? WHAT'S YOUR PLAN FOR THE FIRST 90 DAYS?

First, close out your job search.

Approach your new job with a positive attitude and a determination to provide immediate value while respecting and adapting to the culture and team dynamics.

As a new hire and employee, you want to exude self-confidence, intelligence, and success in everything you do, but you have to be very careful not to let these positive attributes become negative, in the form of arrogance. It doesn't matter how talented you are — if your coworkers think you are arrogant, it will become a hindrance to the team-concept of the workplace and a stumbling block to your success.

It is important you hit the ground running and make an impact quickly to position yourself for continued growth. Focus on your critical few objectives. Create coalitions and alliances to maximize your effectiveness. After all, you might only have a short time to give the employer the return on investment you promised.

If you presented a plan of action during the hiring phase, ensure you follow through with your plans. Document your milestones and achievements. If you negotiated an early performance review, prepare a summary capturing achievement of your goals and schedule a review with your employer to remind them to increase your salary or benefits as agreed.

PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE

In addition to performing in your current role, think about your career plans so you can continue to make career decisions that will set you up for long-term success. Share your new contact information with your network, and stay connected.

Be proactive by integrating career-management activities into your everyday life. You will be more confident and fulfilled. In addition, you will become a more compelling candidate prepared to capture or take advantage of any opportunity that arises.

Position yourself for future success:

- Enhance your skills and credibility through professional development, continuing education, and conferences.
- Continue building your network. The best time to expand your network is while you are employed or volunteering.

- Consider how the skills you use today are transferable and how your experiences translate to other types of jobs.
- Capture your accomplishments and continue to build and refine your professional portfolio, self-marketing materials, and social media presence.
- As time permits, continue to strategically volunteer to supplement and enhance your skills and build your network.
- Thank those who have helped you along the way.
- Organize your search records.

Embrace all that is valuable and wonderful about being a military spouse. Advocate for yourself, pave your own path, be a guiding light, and reach out to help other spouses tackle their challenges and achieve their dreams alongside you.



APPENDIX A: ACCOMPLISHMENT STATEMENTS



Think beyond describing your job duties and responsibilities, and communicate your success and value through accomplishment statements.

The strongest accomplishment statements are relevant, start with an action verb, include quantified data, and include the action you took to achieve the results. Front-load your statements by putting the most important information first.

Examples:

- Increased division's project completion rate more than 20 percent by elevating performance of coworkers through motivation and leading by example.
- Selected as 1 of only 10 delegates via competitive application to represent military families in discussion for improved health care and benefits.
- Trained 75 employees in less than four weeks, exceeding six-week goal, and achieved all competency testing requirements thereby moving project completion date forward to capture additional market share.
- Improved warrior awards timeliness from 44 percent to 88 percent by streamlining processes and improving communication of user expectations.
- Saved \$25,000 annually through implementation of new cash handling procedure.
- Boosted morale and enhanced quality of life for 315 military families by planning and overseeing the first base-wide scholarship program and morale dinner.
- Avoided penalties and equipped board of officers to make sound decisions for organization by keeping accurate records.



This list of verbs might be helpful in writing résumés and letters. Use these powerful, positive verbs to describe your job functions in your résumé.

ANALYTICAL

analyzed
assessed
adapted
catalogued
coded
compiled
consolidated
critiqued
defined
diagnosed
diversified
evaluated
examined
identified
investigated
judged
researched
sorted
strategized

CREATIVITY

conceived
conceptualized
innovated
invented
pioneered
proposed

COMMUNICATION

answered
authored
clarified
communicated
composed
conveyed
drafted
edited
emphasized
illustrated
informed
instructed
marketed
persuaded

presented
promoted
publicized
reported
responded
summarized
translated
verbalized
wrote

EFFECTIVENESS

accomplished
completed
developed
devised
engineered
established
exceeded
generated
influenced
instituted
launched
reached
resolved
solidified
solved
structured
strengthened
succeeded

HANDS ON

assembled
built
constructed
delivered
designed
distributed

IMPROVEMENT

enhanced
expanded
expedited
improved
increased

perfected
recommended
redesigned
reorganized
repositioned
restored
restructured
revised
revitalized
simplified
transformed
updated
upgraded

ORGANIZATIONAL

filed
organized
planned
prepared
processed
recorded
scheduled

INTERPERSONAL

acted
advocated
collaborated
connected
counseled
demonstrated
educated
energized
engaged
enlisted
facilitated
greeted
interviewed
mediated
motivated
negotiated
partnered
reconciled
recruited
rehabilitated

represented
taught
trained
tutored
unified
united
welcomed

SUPPORT

assisted
contributed
participated
served
supported

TECHNICAL

calculated
entered
designed
developed
formulated
measured
patented
programmed
tested

SAVINGS

eliminated
reduced
saved
streamlined

LEADERSHIP

administered
advised
challenged
coached
coordinated
delegated
directed
eliminated
encouraged
founded
guided

headed
hired
hosted
initiated
inspired
led
managed
mentored
navigated
officiated
orchestrated
oversaw
presided
ran
supervised

VERSATILE VERBS

ensured
explored
formalized
gathered
implemented
improvised
incorporated
integrated
introduced
leveraged
maintained
marshaled
modified
monitored
observed
performed
piloted
qualified
realigned
received
recognized
regulated
retrieved
reviewed
secured
selected
surveyed

In this section, you will find sample excerpts of résumés and other self-marketing materials. The examples included were prepared for actual military spouses by a professional résumé writer. All identifying information was changed for privacy. The examples are not representative of standard formats but are examples of creative approaches to deal with complex situations.

Need additional help? Consult a trained career-services specialist for professional advice. Call MOAA's Transition Center team for help at (800) 234-MOAA (6622).

Résumé

As outlined in the chapter sections, every résumé should include a few basic elements, but there are numerous ways to organize a résumé. In this example, we point out a few of those key elements.

A résumé longer than one page should include a footer to ensure potential employers read it in its entirety and a header on subsequent pages that is similar in style to the first page.

RÉSUMÉ: CHRONOLOGICAL

For this type of résumé, keep the professional summary section short and include a reverse chronological history following the professional summary section. See this excerpt of the experience section:

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

ABC Consulting Group, Inc., San Diego, CA

PROJECT MANAGER LEVEL II

2013–present

PROJECT MANAGER LEVEL I

2011–2013

Handpicked to manage \$1 million project load. Established new clients, contracts, and projects in the commercial sectors of client service assessment and analysis based on site-specific quality standards and project-specific parameters. Manage all stages of project development, execution, and issue resolution to achieve client satisfaction.

- ◆ **Consistently delivered results promised** by determining and communicating ability to meet client's expectations and special requirements prior to project initiation.
- ◆ **Improved client notifications and timely problem resolution** by strengthening internal communication channels.
- ◆ **Improved invoicing accuracy to 93% and converted outstanding invoices into payments** by simply contacting overdue clients and inquiring if additional action was needed to fulfill obligations.

Gordon Inc., Jacksonville, FL

PROJECT ADMINISTRATOR

2009–2010

Promoted to act as liaison between Project Managers and assistants, supervise three employees, and coordinate and manage customer projects through all phases of operations, ensuring fulfillment of commitment to client requirements, error-free work, and on-time delivery.

- ◆ **Delighted clients by providing products addressing all needs and expectations** by uncovering unknown needs and expectations through detailed and open-ended questioning.
- ◆ **Avoided loss of employee** due to inadequate performance by rehabilitating through a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP).

Jaxtar International, Norfolk, VA

PROJECT MANAGEMENT ASSISTANT

2007–2008

Selected to assist project management team and customers throughout all phases of client projects. Generated client deliverables and monitored schedules and project events for quality, compliance, timeliness, and execution. Sought out information to achieve project objectives and tackled challenging demands head-on.

- ◆ **Boosted new hire success rate** after division manager implemented a user guide prepared from my detailed notes collected during training period.
- ◆ **Served as interim Project Manager** during periods of vacancies.

Waterman Associates, Corpus Christi, TX

LEAD TELLER

2005–2007

Promoted to lead role at branch after consistently performing and demonstrating attentiveness to detail, time management, effective communications, and professionalism. Supervised six employees, performed audits, trusted with sensitive codes and access key, and ensured proper execution of opening and closing procedures. *Branch closed, transitioned into client-services field for growth opportunities.*

- ◆ **Stimulated employee performance, resolved conflicts, and maintained good morale** by establishing effective and efficient communication methods accommodating for the unique needs of each employee.
- ◆ **Reduced and recovered financial losses** by routinely identifying error causation within error records then issuing consistent compensation awards and disciplinary action when appropriate.

CLICK FOR TIPS



Use formatting to emphasize what is most important. In this example, the job title is capitalized and bolded to attract attention.



Create powerful accomplishment statements for each work experience. Include accomplishments that demonstrate your ability to perform in your next role. Quantify if possible.

RÉSUMÉ: FUNCTIONAL

For this type of résumé, the professional summary section usually is longer and the entire document focuses on skills and experiences instead of a chronological history.

MARK JACKSON

123 Pine Street, San Antonio, TX 55555
555.555.5555 | markjackson@email.com | www.linkedin.com/in/mark

MARKETING PROFESSIONAL

Creative | Diversified | Adaptable | Energetic | Dependable

PERFORMANCE HIGHLIGHTS

“Mark repeatedly pushed himself to exceed all expectations.” – Manager, retail sales

- **Outstanding Service Award recipient**, Intellnet Technologies Corp., 2015
- **Staff Member of the Quarter nominee**, Warrior Transition Battalion, 2012
- **Active contributor to organizational success** through strategy development and implementation

EDUCATION & TRAINING

BROWN UNIVERSITY
Master of Business Administration (MBA), 2005
Emphasis in Marketing

COLORADO COLLEGE
Bachelor of Science in Cultural Geography, 1998
Bachelor of Science in Anthropology, 1998
Emphasis in Photography
Minor in Psychology and Health Sciences

TRAINING
Peer-listening training
Outdoor-leader training

COMPETITIVE EDGE

- Signature strengths:
- Cross-collaboration
 - Public speaking
 - Research-based reporting
 - Assessments and evaluation
 - Continuous improvement
 - Media outreach

- Delivers unique value by leveraging skills from:
- Retail sales
 - Human resources positions
 - Administrative work
 - Emergency services
 - Volunteer work

There is no information about employment (dates, job titles, employers, etcetera). This résumé style focuses solely on skills, experience, and qualifications.

This style is most effective when used during networking.

There are many ways to prepare a functional résumé. This is just one style. Mark’s various work experiences made this style a logical choice.

QUALIFICATIONS & EXPERIENCE

“He communicated effectively, managed time and most important when dealing with customers, handled conflict with professionalism.” – Manager, retail sales

CUSTOMER-FOCUSED
Strong customer relationships | Relates to customers on a peer-to-peer basis | Identifies, satisfies, and keeps customers

- Customer Compliment Acorn Award recipient for exceptional customer relations

MARKET & BRAND AWARENESS
Diverse professional experiences | Delivers consistent branding | Recognizes the important of positive image

- Exceeds performance expectations by reliably adjusting strategies to align clientele and brand

COORDINATION & MANAGEMENT
Exceptional and creative communicator | Detailed reporting | Self-starter, team player, and leadership supporter

- Increased organizational timeliness and submission rate more than 20% by elevating performance of coworkers through motivation and leading by example

This section is formatted to focus the reader’s attention on the key skills that are important without connecting each item to a specific job or work experience.

Willing to relocate

RÉSUMÉ: HYBRID/COMBINATION

For this type of résumé, the professional summary section usually is longer and the entire document focuses on skills and experiences instead of a chronological history.

Susan Green

www.linkedin.com/in/susan

Colorado Springs, CO 80909
susangreen@email.com | 555.555.5555

Youth & Family Art Program Coordinator Volunteer

Enhance local art programs designed to expose youth and families to art

Educator ❖ Motivator ❖ Team Builder ❖ Planner ❖ Leader

Passionate creative professional with strong art education and broad exposure and experience in art and design, early childhood environments, educational settings, program coordination, and project management. Shapes youth and families by expanding awareness, understanding, appreciation, and use of art through the development and delivery of youth and family art programs.

Art & Design

- Innate Passion for Art & Design
- Formal Art Training
- Art Creation Methods
- Art History Education Programming
- Content & Design Development Communication
- Exhibit Set-up & Breakdown

Youth & Family Education

- Observational Techniques
- Sensorial Exploration
- Leading Questioning
- Learning Strategies
- Descriptive Vocabulary Development

- Art Education Programming
- Program Delivery Training
- Activity & Evaluation Reporting
- Oral & Written Instruction
- Inventory Management

Program Coordination

NOTABLE CONTRIBUTIONS

- **Created training program** for art outreach program coordinator
- **Enriched the art exposure curriculum** within an organization by proposing and implementing new art education projects
- **Cultivated art appreciation** by challenging students, staff, and teachers to think beyond traditional arts and crafts and explore art history
- **Performs all duties**, exceeding expectations consistently

EMPLOYMENT SUMMARY

Teacher Associate for Early Childhood Education Centers <i>Exploration School Child care center, Colorado Springs, CO</i>	2013–Present
Volunteer Student Caregiver	2010–2013
Instructor <i>Naval Station Morale Welfare and Recreation, Newport, RI Japan</i>	2007–2010
“Art Box” Aesthetic Education Outreach Program Teacher <i>San Diego Museum, Univ. of San Diego</i> San Diego, CA	2005–2006
Project Manager Client Manager Creative Services Manager <i>Mireshall, San Diego, CA</i> <i>Landman Associates, San Francisco, CA</i> <i>Gymbory Corporation, Bulingame, CA</i>	1999–2005
Graphics Department Coordinator Graphic Designer <i>Teachers’ Curriculum Institute, Pacific Grove, CA</i> <i>Melissa Marks Designs, Palo Alto, CA</i> <i>Ryan Blue Printers, Monterey, CA</i>	1994–1998



This résumé example has more functional elements than chronological elements. This blend worked for her because she had a number of seemingly unrelated work experiences and gaps in her employment history. She focused on her qualifications and skills including her key transferable skills. Her goal was to volunteer first with her next employer.



She highlighted her accomplishments before her work history.



In a chronological format, this period would stand out as a gap. With this format, she was able to divert attention by lumping work experiences. Because this section is “Employment Summary,” she did disclose this was volunteer work to be transparent.

Susan Green

Page 2

susangreen@email.com | 555.555.5555

EDUCATION & CERTIFICATIONS

Bachelor of Science in Art and Design

University of Virginia

- Bridgeman Art Club member and Treasurer Officer
- Internship at Darnig Advertising

Associates of Arts

Mordell Junior College

Art Education and Art Therapy coursework

University of California

Early Childhood Development coursework

Pent Peninsula Junior College and South Western Nevada College

Exhibition and Museum Studies and Child Development coursework

Mesa Junior College

Miller-Heiman Strategic Selling & Large Account Management Training

Personal Trainer and Fitness Instructor certified

Nutrition for Optimal Health, Wellness, and Sports certified

NOTABLE VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCES

Art Educator

Museum of Art Museum on Wheels program | Get Smart with Art program

- Stimulated creative thought and ignited interest in art by exposing elementary students to art and art history
- Reached elementary students through ambassador work setting up mini exhibits on location and educating them on art exploration and proper museum behavior
- Expanded program offerings by creating new lessons for the program

Art Therapy

Healing Arts program at Heart Valley Memorial Hospital

- Enhanced the quality of life for adolescent cancer patients through art therapy

Educator

Exploratory School | Hinchdart Elementary

- Prepared elementary students for technological demands by teaching them fundamental computer skills

Community Outreach Coordinator | Discussion Group Leader

Nonprofit Preschool Parent Support Group

Fitness Leader

EDUCATIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

University of California

- ❖ Founded student group of American Institute of Graphics Arts (AIGA) professional guild
- ❖ Student Commendation Award
- ❖ Team Leadership Award for Exploratory Art Program

KEY ATTRIBUTES

- ❖ Committed
- ❖ Engaged
- ❖ Adaptable

KEY TRAITS

- ❖ Creative
- ❖ Innovative
- ❖ Purposeful
- ❖ Extroverted
- ❖ Energetic



Susan elected to include her employment history on the first page because most employers expect to see it there. Her education and volunteer experience is as important as her work experience so she dedicated large sections to each but on the second page. Her document is clean and easy to read but is different from what most employers expect. However, it does place emphasis on her most important qualifications so this format works as she networks her way into a volunteer role with her next target employer.

LINKEDIN PROFILE

Your LinkedIn profile is another opportunity to present yourself, so rephrase and summarize your experiences instead of copying your résumé. Keep your profile short and concise so it is easy to skim and digest.



Your image should align with your brand and project the image you want.

Jane Doe, PMP

Senior Business and Project Management Professional

San Antonio, Texas | Management Consulting

Current Brown Inc.
 Previous Spiras, Johnson & Mack LLC, Acciva (*all fictional names*)
 Education Washington University

CONNECT

SEND JANE AN EMAIL

www.linkedin.com/in/janedoePMP

Customize your URL to make it memorable and easy to type.

Create a headline that communicates your brand quickly and grabs someone's attention. Only use your job title if you know that is what you want to do at future installations, too.

500+
Connections

SUMMARY EXAMPLE:

I am a proactive manager with 9+ years of progressive experience working client-facing projects from beginning to end. I pay close attention to details but operate with the big picture in mind.

Dedicated to continuous improvements, I strive to make the workplace experience better for my employees, co-workers, and clients.

Always open to challenges and opportunities for advancement, I consistently put forth effort to perform above standards and expectations.

- Earned **Exceptional** performance rating for FY 2013
- Rave reviews from internal and external clients

Professional Focus:

- Managing client-facing programs and projects
- Overseeing full-cycle from acquisition to delivery
- Achieving organizational performance objectives
- Developing collaborative and high-performance objectives
- Cultivating satisfied clients

“Always striving for the best!”

How do you operate? Do you want people to know that you are interested in moving up? Give examples.

This is your introduction. Include what is most important and memorable. Touch on your competitive advantage.

What are your professional values and interests? List three to five examples.

A quote, personal testimony, or recommendation statement is a great way to end your summary section.

Most people use first person to be more approachable, but third person also works.

Highlight what is important to you. This speaks to who you are as a person/employee.

LINKEDIN PROFILE (CONTINUED)

EXAMPLE EXPERIENCE DESCRIPTION:

Promoted to act as liaison between project managers and assistants, supervise three employees, and coordinate and manage customer projects through all phases of laboratory operations, ensuring fulfillment of commitment to client requirements, error-free work, and on-time delivery.

- Delighted clients by providing products addressing all needs and expectations
- Avoided loss of employee



Highlight one to three key accomplishments.



If you include a job description, integrate accomplishments and use powerful, concise language to keep it interesting.

EXAMPLE BIOGRAPHY:

Jane Doe is a director of development and brings a wealth of experience to nonprofits and communities across the U.S. Dedicated to implementing and carrying out comprehensive development strategies, Doe is instrumental to organizational sustainability and growth. Sought out for her most recent position, she manages two large annual campaigns and recently increased member contributions by implementing a “one-ask” program. Doe has a consistent record of exceeding fundraising and event-planning performance goals. A true professional and community builder, she is a longtime volunteer and contributor to organizations like the Junior League and the National Association of Professional Women.



Biographies are always written in third person.



Keep it short, and focus on communicating your brand.

SAMPLE CORRESPONDENCE: COVER LETTER



Susan Green

www.linkedin.com/in/susan

Colorado Springs, CO 80909

susangreen@email.com | 555.555.5555



Ensure your résumé header matches.

December 10, 2015



Your name and contact information should be at the top of every page.

Mark Johnson
Museum Education Director
City Museum of Art
555 Market Street
Atlanta, GA 31131



Cover letters follow the standard letter format.

Dear Mr. Johnson:

Subject: Volunteer for City Museum of Art Youth & Family Art Programs



Always include your target job title and job # in the subject line if available.



Catch the reader's attention right away.

see life through a more vibrant lens. I am submitting this letter to offer my time and to enhance your youth and family programs through development or delivery assistance.

I have a strong passion for art and the ability to educate and relate to youth. I strive to see children's eyes light up when they make connections with art, provide insightful interpretations, and express themselves through art media.

For this reason, I am making a concerted career change with the goal of eventually securing a Community or Program Coordinator position within a museum setting. In order to facilitate the transition, I am seeking direct experience to acquire credible experience in this setting. I have included a copy of my résumé for your consideration.

"Creativity is contagious, pass it on"
– Albert Einstein



Tell the reader why you are sending a letter.

My goals for enhancing the program will focus on helping participants experiment and explore art; I want participants to:

- ❖ **See art.** Explore galleries, journey through art, learn about professional artists, thought-provoking observation techniques, in-depth techniques using senses, and engaging youth.
- ❖ **Make art.** Create art with traditional methods followed by displaying work.
- ❖ **Appreciate art.** Develop a more in-depth relationship with art and critical thinking and using art as inspiration.



Here is Susan's plan for her desired role. If you have quantified accomplishments, this is a great place to highlight your relevant past performance.

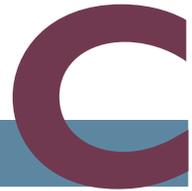
Thank you for taking time to consider my offer. I will call you on Friday, December 15 at 1 p.m. to provide you with any additional information you request to support my acceptance. I look forward to discussing this opportunity with you over the phone or in person. Please contact me at 555.555.5555 or susangreen@email.com to schedule.



This is a bold approach but works well in some industries and professions.

Regards,
Susan Green
Susan Green

Enclosure



THANK YOU LETTER

Dear Ms. Jackson:

Thank you for taking time out of your busy schedule to speak with me on Friday regarding the Financial Analyst position.

After our discussion, I am still very interested in this opportunity. Everything I have learned about Wells Farmer is in line with my needs and preferences.

Thank you kindly for your time and consideration. I look forward to the next step in the hiring process. If you need any additional information to determine my candidacy, please don't hesitate to contact me at (555) 555-5555 or lisa@email.com.

I want to be your preferred candidate.

Regards,
Lisa Powers



If you know they will make a hiring decision within one to three days, you should send an email so your letter arrives before their decision. If you have additional time, a mailed letter can make a great impression.



This thank-you letter also could be in the form of a formal letter. Mail a thank-you letter promptly after your interview or meeting. If you do not have a physical address, an email is second-best.

LINKEDIN/EMAIL INTRODUCTION

Dear Ms. Janzen:

It was such a pleasure talking with you at the coffee shop last week about the city's recycling efforts. There is a great article in the paper today about a new recycling program.

After our conversation, I realized you are in contact with Brian Lyons. I am interested in connecting with Mr. Lyons because he is head of the Environmental Sciences division at TGU. I would love to talk with him to find out more about TGU's involvement in the local recycling efforts.

I am not sure how to connect with Mr. Lyons. Can you assist me?

I realize you are extremely busy, so do not feel obligated. I appreciate any help you can provide.

Thank you for your time.

Kind regards,

Jennifer Geiger



Always thank your connections even if they choose not to help you.



Make a personal connection first, then follow up with your request.



Kelly Barker 

DENVER, CO 80123
KELLYBARKER@COMCAST.NET | 555-555-5555

June 10, 2015

Fred Stuart
Accounting Manager
Meyers, Inc.
123 Company Way
Denver, CO 80123

Subject: Informational Interview Request

 Explain why you are writing them.

Dear Mr. Stuart:

I am considering a change in employment to continue to advance my career, and I believe Meyers Inc. might be a great fit. I would love to talk with you about your experiences with the company.

As the Accounting Manager, you are in touch with the daily accounting activities but still focus on organizational goals. I would love sit down with you for 15 to 20 minutes to find out more about your experiences and ask you a few questions, such as:

- What makes an employee successful at your company and in your division?
- Are their nuances at Meyer Inc. that make it different from other companies in the in

 Providing a few questions will help set the tone for your conversation.

Realizing you are extremely busy, I am very appreciative of your time and assistance. I am available on Mondays and Thursdays after 2 p.m. Please contact me at 555-555-5555 or kellybarker@email.com to let me know what works for you. I will gladly come into your office for our meeting. Thank you for your time.

 As always, thank your connections.

Sincerely,

Kelly Barker

Kelly Barker

Enclosure – A copy of my résumé for your reference



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

BIBLIOGRAPHY

MOAA Resources

- MOAA Spouse Program Resources and Overview: www.moaa.org/spouseandfamily
- MOAA Spouse Accounts: www.moaa.org/welcomespouse
- MOAA *Legislative Update* (subscribe at): www.moaa.org/email
- MOAA Spouse Making it in the MilLife® blog: <http://moablogs.org/spouse>
- MOAA Military Spouse Employment Survey: www.moaa.org/milspousesurvey
- MOAA Relocation Resources: www.moaa.org/relocation
- MOAA Spouse on Facebook: www.facebook.com/moaa_spouse
- MOAA Spouse on Twitter: @MOAA_MilLife
- MOAA's LinkedIn Career Networking Group: www.moaa.org/linkedin

SELF-ASSESSMENTS

- CareerOneStop's list of free and fee-based self-assessment tools and resources: www.careeronestop.org/explorecareers/selfassessments/findassessments.aspx
Note: CareerOneStop is sponsored by the U.S. Department of Labor.
- Military One Source Spouse Education and Career Opportunities: www.militaryonesource.mil/seco

MARKET RESEARCH

- Business Research: www.linkedin.com
- Business Research: www.ceoexpress.com
- Business Research: www.manta.com
- An Inside Look at Jobs and Companies: www.glassdoor.com

SALARY INFORMATION

- Installation's transition support office or career center
- Your closest American Job Center: www.jobcenter.usa.gov
- *Occupational Outlook Handbook*: www.bls.gov/ooh

- Trade and professional journals
- *The American Almanac of Jobs and Salaries*
- *Jobs Rated Almanac*
- Informational interviews
- America's Career InfoNet: www.careerinfo.net
- U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics: www.bls.gov
- Salary.com
- Glassdoor.com
- NACEweb.org

LICENSE PORTABILITY

- Blog post, "Legislation on the Move for Mil Spouse License Portability": <http://moablogs.org/spouse/2012/03/legislation-on-the-move-for-mil-spouse-license-portability>
- Department of Defense State Liaison Office www.usa4militaryfamilies.dod.mil

UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION

- MOAA Blog post, "Forty States Provide Military Spouses Eligibility for Unemployment Compensation": <http://moablogs.org/spouse/2012/03/forty-states-provide-military-spouses-eligibility-for-unemployment-compensation>
- Benefit Eligibility for Workers Who Voluntarily Quit Because of a Spousal Transfer, Congressional Research Service report, "Unemployment Compensation (Insurance) and Military Service," <http://fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/RS22440.pdf>

EMPLOYER INCENTIVES

- On-the-job training funding benefits available to employers for qualified (dislocated worker) military spouse hires: www.doleta.gov/layoff/veterans_priority_service_policy.cfm
(Funding opportunities vary by state and year. Consult your state's job center representative for more information.)



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

RIGHTS

- U.S. Department of Labor, Military Family Leave Provisions: www.dol.gov/whd/fmla/militaryflprovisions.htm
- “Military Family Leave Provisions of the FMLA (Family and Medical Leave Act) Frequently Asked Questions and Answers,” 2008: www.dol.gov/whd/fmla/finalrule/militaryfaqs.pdf

NONCOMPETITIVE APPOINTMENTS AND MILITARY SPOUSE PREFERENCES

- U.S. Department of Labor, “Noncompetitive Appointment of Certain Military Spouses Eligibility”: www.dol.gov/oasam/doljobs/noncompetitive.htm
- USAJOBS, Special Hiring Options for Military Spouses: https://help.usajobs.gov/index.php/Special_Hiring_Options

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT JOBS

- USAJOBS (the federal government’s official job site): www.usajobs.gov

NETWORKING

- LinkedIn: www.linkedin.com
- Facebook: www.facebook.com
- Twitter: www.twitter.com
- Hiring Our Heroes Military Spouse Program: www.hiringourheroes.org/hiringourheroes/milspouse

SPOUSE LIFE RESEARCH

- USA 4 Military Families, Department of Defense State Liaison Top 10 Quality of Life Issues: www.usa4militaryfamilies.dod.mil
- Syracuse University’s Institute for Veterans and Military Families (IVMF) Curriculum: <http://vets.syr.edu/education/employment-programs>

- 2013 Military Spouse Employment Survey (Syracuse University Institute for Veterans and Military Families and MOAA): www.moaa.org/milspousesurvey

GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES, LEGISLATION, AND FEDERALLY FUNDED SERVICES

- Joining Forces: www.whitehouse.gov/joiningforces
- U.S. Department of Labor, Strengthening Our Military Families: www.dol.gov/dol/milfamilies
- Military One Source Spouse Education and Career Opportunities (SECO): www.militaryonesource.mil/seco
- Military Spouse Employment Partnership Career Portal: <https://msepjobs.militaryonesource.mil>

BOOKS RECOMMENDATIONS

- *Dress for Success*, Molloy, Warner
- *The Woman’s Dress for Success Book*, Molloy, Warner
- *Interview for Success*, Krannich & Krannich, Impact Publications
- *National Business Employment Weekly Interviewing*, Hirsch, Wiley
- *Sweaty Palms*, Medley, Ten Speed Press
- *Dynamite Salary Negotiations*, Krannich & Krannich, Impact Publications
- *How to Make \$1,000 a Minute: Negotiating Salaries and Raises*, Chapman, Ten Speed Press
- *Find a Federal Job Fast*, Krannich & Krannich, Impact Publications
- *Résumés that Knock ’Em Dead*, Yate, Bob Adams
- *The Perfect Résumé*, Jackson, Doubleday

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