

TITLE: Want To Know How To Get A Job Outside Defense?

By Jacey Eckhart

After your military service, are you hoping to find a job that is outside the defense industry or government? Do you want to break free from your military self and do something new?

That can be a tough one for veterans and spouses on the jobhunt. You are going to need a network strong enough to leap over corporate reluctance in a single bound.

So, Bud, who do you know in Corporate America? Who can open a door for you?

Nobody? Then you are pretty normal. This is why most of us give up dreams of working for Disney or Nike or ESPN. Our networks are like every new veteran's network—forged in the military and honed in defense. Our current personal network can't support the leap across the chasm into your dream job in non-defense Corporate America.

[Find out more about how to land your dream job in our newest FREE transition master class.](#)

Did you know your network is not complete yet? There are at least three ways to get that break into civilian companies-- even when you do not know a soul (yet).

1. A matched mentor through American Corporate Partners.

American Corporate Partners has a deep pool of 4000 new mentors in the civilian world who want to work with you. ["It's gratitude in action," said Leslie Coffey, Vice President of Military Engagement for ACP in a recent phone interview. "It is doing more than saying 'Thank you for your service.'"](#)

Over 80% of ACP mentors are in non-defense related occupations, including the most in-demand fields like cyber, IT, operations management, and HR. They work for more than 1100 companies like [Nike, Disney, GM, FedEx, Adobe, Johnson & Johnson, ESPN and Major League Baseball.](#) (ACP also has partners who are strongly related to defense and government.)

What I like about this program is that they handpick a mentor to work with you one-on-one for a whole year. This is great for introverts because you are not cold calling a lot of unwilling strangers. Mentors self-identify as being willing to help you and a relationship develops. Less than 20% of those who start the program drop out over the course of a year.

These mentors are especially helpful when it comes to focusing your search in their industry, including helping you figure out what job title you qualify for at their company. They can also help you tailor your resume for their exact industry, answer your questions, and lead you to the connections you need to get hired.

Once hired, veterans and spouses tend to stay. Of those who find work through their ACP mentorship, 85% are still in their first job a year after transition. [“It’s really about landing well and thriving, so you don’t have to transition twice,”](#) said Coffey.

2. Go for an Internship

An internship sounds like something that happens only to people who are 22 years old and fresh out of college. Not so. An internship through the Department of Defense Skillbridge program is an invitation into the companies who want you most. Interns include those from every branch and every rank, including O-5s and O-6s.

One I like is the Hiring Our Heroes Corporate Fellowship Program. It brings together veterans and spouses with hundreds of the employers you want most outside the defense industry, like Deloitte, Proctor and Gamble, Merck, Bristol Myers Squibb.

While working as an intern with a host company, you make all the inside connections you need to land the right job.. Hiring Our Heroes has a 93% placement rate among their Corporate Fellows.

3. Open The Military Door

I’ve written before about applying only to companies who have what we call “a military door”—a veteran or spouse employment program complete with a dedicated veteran hiring team. Those veteran recruiters can be the strongest part of your network.

To make it easy for you, we even have a list of the [25 top companies](#) with a military door open wide for you.

Trying to get a non-defense job is nearly impossible without a strong network. Mentor programs, Internships and Veteran Hiring Teams offer you an easy introduction to the companies who want you most.

Jacey Eckhart is [Military.com](#)'s transition master coach. She is a certified professional career coach and military sociologist who helps military members get their first civilian job by offering career-level [Master Classes](#) through our Veteran Employment Project and on her website [SeniorMilitaryTransition.com](#). Reach her at Jacey.Eckhart@Monster.com.

Find Your Next Job Fast

Transitioning military, veterans and spouses may be qualified for the job, but they are missing the secrets of civilian hiring. Find out everything you need to know with our FREE master class series including our next class You can view previous classes in our [video library](#). Questions for Jacey? Visit our [Facebook page](#).