

Beyond the Barracks: Structuring Wellness in Civilian Life



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Community: **Pillars**



COMMUNITY



ACTIVITY



MENTAL HEALTH



RECOVERY & SLEEP



NUTRITION

Doing Their Part: How Employers can create a soft landing for Veterans

Our audience is typically transitioning servicemembers, Veterans, and their families, but as we dive into the Community Pillar this month, our audience is going to be employers. In the employment handshake between transitioning servicemembers and employers, it is the responsibility of the Veteran to prepare themselves for transition, but it is also important for employers to create a welcoming environment for their entire employee population. This month, we take a look at Veterans employee resource groups and some things an employer can do to create a healthy work environment.



CONT. INSIDE ➡

MilitaryConnected.org is a nonprofit organization improving the military-connected community's transition experience through employer education, data driven research, and access to a network of job opportunities with military-ready employers.

The Vegetus Foundation is dedicated to helping Americans improve their quality of life through education on healthy living and has published the Nutrition Health Review since 1979. Learn more at nutritionhealthreview.com



LEARN MORE AT [MILITARYCONNECTED.ORG](https://militaryconnected.org)



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What Employers Should Know About a Veteran's Transition

Before we discuss the ways employers can invest in their Veteran community, it is important for employers to understand “why” they are both important investments to make and prudent for their bottom line.

The journey from military service to civilian employment is a significant transition, and it's one that presents both unique challenges and incredible opportunities for employers.

While a veteran's resume might not always use traditional corporate language, the skills they possess are highly valuable and directly applicable to the civilian workforce.

One of the most important things for employers to understand is that military service instills a deep-seated sense of discipline, teamwork, and problem-solving.

Veterans are trained to operate effectively under pressure, adapt to changing circumstances, and work collaboratively to achieve a common goal. Their experience in diverse, high-stakes environments prepares them to be reliable and resourceful team members.

However, the transition can also be difficult. Veterans may struggle with a shift in communication styles, the loss of a close-knit community, and the search for a new sense of purpose. A successful transition is not just about finding a job; it's about finding a place where they feel a sense of belonging and where their unique experiences are understood and appreciated.

Employers can play a crucial role by creating a supportive environment. This means more than just hiring a veteran; it means providing mentorship, celebrating their military service, and actively listening to their needs. By doing so, companies can tap into an immense pool of talent while helping our nation's heroes find meaningful and lasting careers.



What Makes a Strong Veterans Employee Resource Group?

Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) are more than just social clubs; they are a vital component of a company's culture and an essential tool for fostering a sense of community and inclusion. For veterans, a dedicated Veterans Resource Group (VRG) or ERG can be a powerful bridge between their military past enhancing their ability to integrate in the culture of the organization.

A strong Veterans ERG is built on three core pillars: purpose, leadership, and a clear mission. It must have a defined purpose that goes beyond simple networking, such as providing professional development, creating mentorship opportunities, and offering a safe space for dialogue. The most impactful groups often partner with external organizations, like with external organizations to connect their members to a wider network of support. Effective leadership is also critical. A successful ERG is led by passionate individuals—both veterans and allies—who are committed to advocating for their community's needs within the company. These leaders champion initiatives that address the unique challenges veterans face in the





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workplace, from translating military skills to advocating for mental health resources. The trap some VRG's can fall into is leaning on previous military ranks for leadership. It's a new environment and the VRG needs to focus on leaders that understand the culture of the organization, communicate well, and are passionate - being an O5 isn't always as important.

Ultimately, a strong VRG benefits not just its members but the entire organization. It enhances employee engagement and retention, and fosters a deeper understanding of military service. By investing in these groups, a company demonstrates its commitment to the veteran community, solidifying its reputation as a military-friendly employer.

Why Veterans Struggle With Civilian Careers

podcast with Scott DeLuzio and Jon Safran
May 1, 2025

[Click here to listen to the podcast](#)



Five Tips for a Successful VRG

Creating a strong Veteran Resource Group (VRG) requires a thoughtful approach. Here are five key things to keep in mind when starting one:

1. **Secure Executive Buy-In.** A successful VRG needs a champion in leadership. An executive sponsor provides crucial support, resources, and credibility, ensuring the group's mission aligns with company goals.
2. **Define a Clear Mission.** The group's purpose should be more than just social networking. Whether it's to aid in professional development, offer mentorship, or support community outreach, a clear mission gives the group direction and value.
3. **Include Allies.** A VRG should not be exclusive to veterans. Encourage military spouses, family members, and non-veteran allies to join. This broadens the support network and helps to educate the entire workforce on the military experience.
4. **Align with Your Business.** The most effective VRGs tie their initiatives to the company's business objectives. For example, the group can assist HR in recruiting, provide insights to marketing teams, or help train managers on veteran-specific issues.
5. **Measure and Promote Success.** Track the group's impact on key metrics like veteran retention and employee engagement. Publicize your successes through internal newsletters and company-wide events to demonstrate the group's value and attract new members.

Maple Cranberry Brussels Sprouts



Serves 8

- 3lbs Brussels sprouts
- 3 Tbsp avocado oil
- 1 Tbsp 100% maple syrup
- 1/2 Tbsp dried thyme
- 1/2 Tbsp dried basil
- 2 tsp dried rosemary
- 2 tsp dried tarragon
- 1/4 tsp salt
- 1/4 tsp pepper
- 2/3 cup pecans, chopped
- 2/3 cup dried cranberries



1. Preheat the oven to 400F. Place cranberries in a bowl of water to rehydrate them.
2. Trim the stems of the Brussels sprouts and remove the outer leaves, then halve them.
3. Toss Brussels sprouts with oil, maple syrup, herbs, salt, and pepper.
4. Spread Brussels sprouts on a parchment-lined baking sheet and bake for 30 to 35 minutes.
5. With 5 minutes left, sprinkle the pecans on top of the Brussels sprouts and return to the oven.
6. Once the Brussels sprouts are cooked, drain and add the cranberries.

Approximate Nutrition Information: Calories: 251;

total fat: 14.5g; saturated fat: 1.5g; cholesterol: 0mg; sodium: 117mg; total carbohydrate: 29.2g; dietary fiber: 8.9g; total sugars: 13.4g; protein: 7.6g; calcium: 98mg; iron: 3mg;

potassium: 781mg