



Effective Techniques for Marketing Veterans to Employers

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Welcome...the purpose of learning Effective Techniques for Marketing Veterans to Employers is to ultimately assist Veterans in obtaining suitable employment. This presentation provides the perspectives on the value and myths of hiring Veterans. How to provide a targeted job development strategy, conduct outreach, and utilize major resources is discussed. Lastly, it suggests leveraging Veteran success stories when connecting with employers.

2013 Veteran Employment



First, though, we would like to inform you of some highlights from the 2013 Employment Situation of Veterans per the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Veteran Employment rates improved from 2012 to 2013, especially for women.

The unemployment rate for Veterans who served on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces at any time since September 2001—a group referred to as Gulf War-era II Veterans—edged down to 9.0 percent in 2013, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. The jobless rate for all Veterans also edged down to 6.6 percent. Twenty-nine percent of Gulf War-era II Veterans reported having a service-connected disability in August 2013, compared with 15 percent of all Veterans.

- Among all Veterans, the unemployment rate for women declined to 6.9 percent in 2013 compared to 8.3 percent in 2012. The rate for male Veterans edged down to 6.5 percent compared to 6.9 percent in 2012
- Veterans with a service-connected disability had an unemployment rate of 6.2 percent in August 2013, little different than the rate for Veterans with no disability (6.6 percent). These rates are still lower in 2013 than those in 2012.
- Among the 722,000 unemployed Veterans in 2013, 60 percent were age 45 and over. Thirty-five percent were age 25 to 44 and 5 percent were age 18 to 24.

Objectives

Identify and present reasons why Veterans are employable

Dispel myths employers perceive about Veterans

Identify and leverage use of targeted job development strategy

Keep these statistics in mind while going through the training.

After this training, you will be able to

1. Identify and present reasons why Veterans are employable to employers without error;
2. Dispel myths employers perceive about Veterans after studying those myths;
3. And identify and leverage use of targeted job development strategy as outlined in the M28R Procedures Manual.

Frame of Mind



Employment Coordinators are offering an effective and convenient service to employers - access to qualified workers - not convincing them to hire Veterans with disabilities.

When marketing the Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment program to employers, it is important that Employment Coordinators (ECs) maintain the right frame of mind. ECs should not be cajoling employers into hiring Veterans, but rather helping employers understand what these Veterans have to offer. Employers are more interested in what contribution a job candidate can make rather than whether they are a Veteran or have a disability.

[Source(s): [Collaborating and Coordinating with Employers](#)]

Why Hire Veterans?

Veterans possess the following soft skills and competencies:

- Leadership
- Teamwork
- Character
- Structure
- Discipline
- Expertise
- Effectiveness

- Proven Success
- Resiliency
- Loyalty
- Public Relations Value

The value to business for hiring Veterans is that Veterans are perceived to have strong leadership and teamwork skills; to be reliable, trustworthy, dependable and drug-free; they bring discipline and safe processes to the workplace; and have the right expertise and skillsets for a company's success. Additionally, employers praise Veterans' effectiveness, resiliency, loyalty and ability to make decisions in dynamic circumstances.

While Veterans and transitioning Servicemembers tend to have a similar set of non-tangible skills, each is an individual and should not be "pigeonholed" into a position or career pathway simply because of their military service. A post-military career path has as much to do with training skill sets as it does with personality, interests and individual goals. Though some sources have attempted to identify the top civilian jobs for transitioning Service Members and Veterans, it is important to consider there are many industries not identified in which Servicemembers can apply their knowledge and skills. For example: medics with strong communications skills may target a position in public relations for a hospital or pharmaceutical company, a civil affairs specialist who enjoyed learning about new places and cultures may be an excellent high school history teacher, or a truck driver who picked up a photography hobby while deployed may seek employment with a travel magazine or as a documentarian.

Benefits of Hiring Veterans

Veterans offer the following qualities to the civilian workforce:

- Ability to perform successfully in a fast-paced environment, under stress
- Hands on experience with technology and globalization
- Diversity, interpersonal skills, and teamwork
- Strong leadership skills
- Respect for rules and leadership
- Strong personal integrity

- Quick learners who are adaptable to change

Employers should hire Veterans for a multitude of reasons, a few of which are listed. While some employers will hire Veterans for altruistic reasons such as service to their country, Employment Coordinators should highlight the knowledge, skills, and abilities they bring to the civilian workforce. The characteristics on this slide are prized in the business world.

[Source(s): [Employing Military Personnel and Recruiting Veterans - SHRM](#)

[Top Ten Reasons to Hire Veterans and Wounded Warriors](#)]

Value of Hiring Veterans



Let's discuss the value of hiring Veterans a little more. Veterans bring a variety of innate qualities and abilities to the organizations they work for, to include:

Accelerated Learning Curve

Possession of transferable skills and an ability to quickly learn new skills to achieve success

Leadership

Already trained to lead with practical ways to manage and achieve goals in a timely manner.

Teamwork

Understanding that genuine teamwork grows out of personal responsibility to the team and how best to motivate diverse groups in achieving mission goals.

Diversity and Inclusion in Action

Experience in working alongside diverse groups of people of differing ethnic, racial, religious, and mental or physical capabilities.

Efficient Performance Under Pressure

Proficiency in accomplishing tasks on time and in the face of stress or adversity due to an internal code of dedication and perseverance.

Respect for Procedures

Value of accountability and an understanding of the importance that policies and procedures play in yielding stability, safety and productivity.

Technology and Globalization

Knowledge of international and technical trends pertinent to business.

Integrity

Consistency of actions, values, methods, measures, principles, expectations, and outcomes.

Triumph Over Adversity

Ability to overcome challenges and obstacles through strength, determination, and a code of honor.

These innate qualities and abilities are only a small part of the reasons why employers should consider hiring Veterans. By emphasizing these traits, we can help dispel myths employers have about hiring Veterans and help lower the Veteran unemployment rate.

Dispelling Myths

- Difficult Skills Translation

- Negative Stereotypes
- Skill Mismatch
- Concern about Future Deployments
- Acclimation
- Increased Worker's Compensation Cases

Employers are in a powerful position to help debunk such misperceptions. After arming themselves with the facts, they can use their knowledge to educate others and to support the social inclusion and acceptance of Servicemembers and Veterans. Understanding, support and a positive employment experience can make a real difference in the life of a person who needs them. As Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors and Employment Coordinators, we can educate employers to help dispel the myths of hiring Veterans.

Employers' Needs

Highlight the ease of access for an employer to participate in the NPWE, SEI, or an OJT program.

- High-quality employees
- Well-trained employee meets employer's standards
- Minimal paperwork required

In VR&E we provide employers with easy access to valuable job candidates, at no to minimal costs. Placing Veterans with employers through NPWE, an OJT, or through SEI, we are providing the employer with a high-quality and well-trained employee with minimal paperwork for employers. We will discuss these programs later in this presentation. First, let's see how we can educate employers on how to market their jobs to Veterans. The information we are about to present you is a condensed version. A more detailed explanation can be found at the government website titled, [America's Heroes at Work](#).

Educating Employers to Market to Veterans – Recruit



To recruit Veterans, employers should consider:

- **Develop detailed job descriptions:** Detailed job descriptions should include approximately six to eight “must have” characteristics. Employers should be careful not to include too many requirements which may exclude Veterans who could perform the job successfully. For example, a Veteran or Servicemember may not apply if he or she only has 8 out of 10 requirements because he may read it literally. He just ruled himself out. Therefore, as an employer, clearly list real requirements so that Veteran or Servicemember does not rule himself out before even applying for the job.
- **Use military language:** Military to civilian translators help employers select Military Occupational Codes that relate to civilian positions.
- **Alternatives to full-time employment:** This allows the Veteran an opportunity to demonstrate his or her skills and acquire new skills, while allowing the employer an opportunity to decide whether the Veteran is a good fit for the position.
 - **Internships:** Internships may be paid or unpaid, sometimes referred to as a “work experience.” Employers considering an unpaid internship should check the Fair Labor Standards Act, which determines the criteria an internship must meet in order to be unpaid.
 - **Apprenticeships:** While commonly associated with blue collar jobs, apprenticeships are available in advanced manufacturing, aerospace,

automotive services, biotechnology, energy, health care, homeland security, hospitality, information technology, transportation, and geospatial technology. Employers can create an apprenticeship program by working with their state Office of Apprenticeship.

- **Access credible resources:** Many government-affiliated sources exist to help employers connect with Veterans with or without disabilities. The Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment program, of course, helps employers connect with Veterans with disabilities who qualify for the program.

[Source(s): [America's Heroes at Work](#) and [DOL Internships](#)]

Educating Employers to Market to Veterans – Interview & Communicate



Employers should consider the following best practices when interviewing and communicating with Veterans with disabilities:

- **Identify whether accommodations are required:** If employers have a standard email they send out in advance of an interview (with directions and such), they might consider adding a line about who to contact if accommodations are required during the interview. If employers ask candidates if they require accommodations, they must ask all candidates if they require accommodations. Information on accommodations for interviews can be found through the Job Accommodation Network, or JAN.

- **Know what questions are prohibited by law:** The website describes what questions are prohibited by law. Generally, asking about the Veteran's disability, family, age, citizenship, social or religious affiliations, and whether they have been arrested are prohibited by the Personal Privacy Act. Asking about the Veteran's combat history, whether they have ever shot anyone, or whether they were in Iraq or Afghanistan is inappropriate.
- **Learn how to best communicate with Veterans:** Employers may also have concerns about communicating with Veterans with disabilities. The website offers information that can be conveyed to employers about communicating with Veterans with disabilities, and ECs can share Job Aids as well.
- **Invite a Veteran to participate in the interview:** Veterans may have difficulty translating their experience and expertise into civilian equivalencies. Having a fellow Veteran involved in the interviewing process can be beneficial. Partnering with organizations such as Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment can be helpful since Employment Coordinators (ECs) can pre-screen candidates and fully vet a Veteran's qualifications before they are interviewed.

[Source(s): [America's Heroes at Work](#) and [JAN: For Employers](#)]

Educating Employers to Market to Veterans - Hire & Accommodate



When hiring and accommodating Veterans, employers should:

- **Culturally sensitive new hire orientation plan:** Whether a formal or informal orientation, a Veteran should be told how their work fits into the company success plan and how their performance will be assessed. In the military, how their work contributes to the mission and how performance is assessed is important and explicit. An organizational chart may help the Veteran better understand the organization's hierarchy. The process for requesting accommodations should be provided to Veterans at this time, or the employer should let them know how they can access it. Frequent check-ins during the first few months of employment are also important to provide feedback and answer questions. Often, Veterans who have transitioned to the civilian workforce do not have enough to do and may become bored. Employers should discuss professional development opportunities and future career opportunities as well. A new hire orientation plan helps facilitate a successful transition for the Veteran.
- **Understand their responsibilities under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), as amended:** Most businesses are required to provide employees with reasonable accommodations. Facts about the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the responsibilities of employers with regard to reasonable accommodation can be found in a variety of sources.
- **Establish and disseminate a process for requesting accommodations:** Processes for requesting accommodations should be in an easily accessible location. During new hire orientation, all employees should either be provided with a copy of the process or should be advised how to find it.
- **Identify resources for support:** The Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment program should be the employer's first resource for support. Again, the Job Accommodation Network website also provides a wealth of information on accommodating and communicating with people with disabilities.

[Source(s): [America's Heroes at Work](#)]

Educating Employers to Market to Veterans – Retain



To make a successful transition to the civilian workforce, Veterans can benefit from additional support, such as:

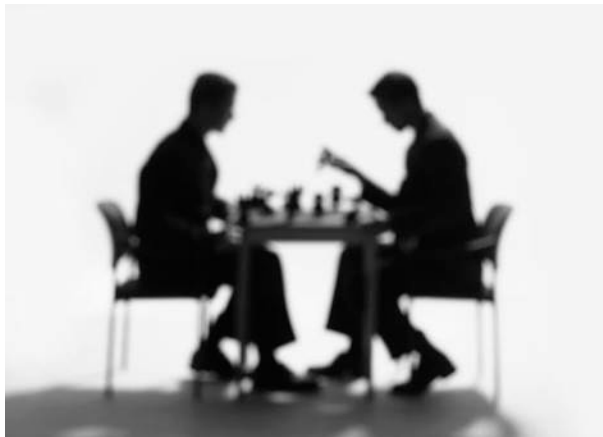
- **Mentors or coaches:** These can be within the organization or within the community. Community mentors can be located through American Corporate Partners, a free program connecting Veterans with business leaders.
- **Job or life coaches:** If Veterans have a difficult time acclimating to civilian life, a job or life coach might be beneficial. As discussed in the Job Development module, these professionals should not build dependence upon themselves and provide a plan for phasing out their services.
- **Employment Coordinator follow-up:** Employment Coordinators will follow-up with Veterans, at least during the first 60 days of employment. They can help Veterans identify any issues related to their transition and any other support or job accommodations that may be necessary in order for the Veterans continued success in their new position.
- **Affinity networks:** Organizations that employ a large number of Veterans might cultivate a Veterans Affinity Network. Like other minority groups, these groups can be a valuable contribution to the organization as they develop a sense of community and connectivity, support recruitment efforts of other Veterans,

engage in community service, and network with one another. These networks contribute to employee retention.

- **Connections to fellow Veterans:** Through Veteran Service Organizations, sports teams, school alumni groups, etc. fostering connections with fellow Veterans can contribute to a Veteran's well-being. Well-being is related to workplace productivity and can help retain Veterans.

[Source(s): [America's Heroes at Work](#)]

Targeted Job Development Strategy



- Veteran's skills are matched to Employer's needs
- Use Stakeholders:
 - Federal & State Agencies
 - Disable Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP)
 - Local Veterans Employment Representatives (LVER)
 - Community organizations

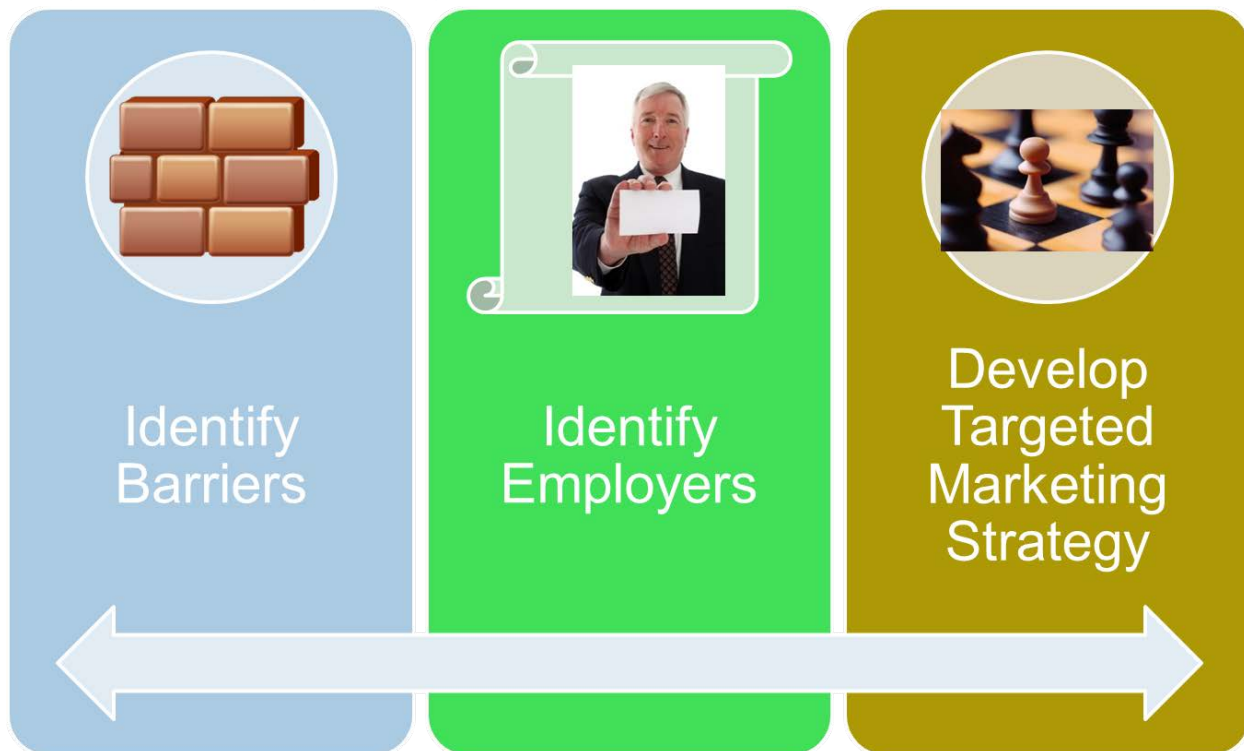
A targeted job development strategy is an effort where an individual's specific skills are matched to an employer's needs. This strategy is necessary when an individual is successfully participating in Vocational Rehabilitation Services and has exhausted all available options, yet is unable to find suitable employment. Typically, you will know the individual is in need of job development assistance when your review of the file indicates the individual has not received any offers for suitable employment.

Executing a targeted job development strategy can produce additional employment opportunities. It will also provide the VRC/EC guidance in deciding which of the following stakeholders you should contact, if not all.

- Community organizations
- Disable Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP)
- Faith-based organizations
- Federal agencies
- Job fair organizers
- Job placement providers
- Local Veterans Employment Representatives (LVER)
- Non-profit organizations
- Regional workforce agencies
- State agencies

You can also cultivate job opportunities through cold-calling, internet job searches, or VA programs that provide special incentives for employers to hire individuals with service-connected disabilities.

Targeted Marketing Strategy



Identify Barriers

Identify Employers

Develop Targeted Marketing Strategy

Providing the needed assistance requires identifying the issues hindering the individual from securing suitable employment. You can identify these issues by:

- Reviewing the individual's file.
- Reviewing the individual's medical information.
- Reviewing the individual's job log to determine if he or she is fully participating.
- Meeting with the individual to discuss his or her job search approach.

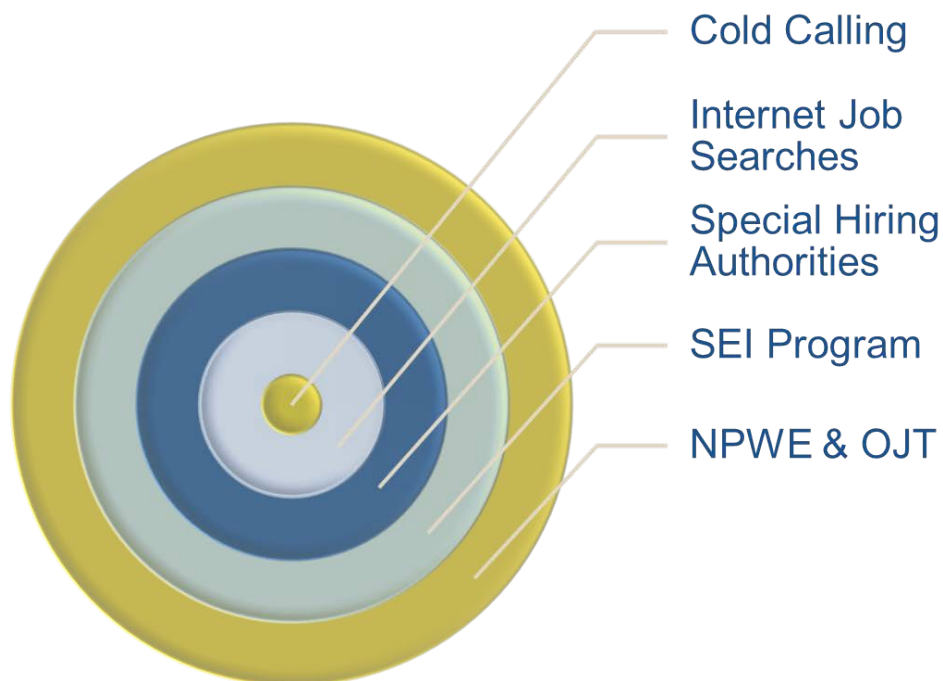
Once a potential issue is identified, determine if it can be addressed with additional services or a targeted marketing strategy.

To develop a targeted marketing strategy, you will need to identify employers whose specific needs align with the educational background, skills, and experience of the individual you look to place. You can identify the employer's specific needs by looking at the requirements that employers place in job postings. These postings will contain the requirements an individual must meet, and additional skills or education that are identified as being highly desirable. Highly desirable skills, education, and experience

may be clearly identified in the announcement or posting. Since your search will primarily focus on employers whose needs match the individual's skills, the VRC/EC will be more effective in identifying employers who are likely to offer suitable employment to the individual.

To identify employers, an internet job search can be performed using the different job search engines managed by private organizations, professional associations, state and federal agencies, and local job placement organizations. Once you have compiled a sufficient list of employers to contact, you will need to determine which incentives can be offered to the employer to secure suitable employment for the individual.

Marketing Execution



- Cold Calling
- Internet Job Searches
- Special Hiring Authorities
- SEI Program
- NPWE & OJT

Cold Calling is a technique where an employer is called in the hope of speaking with a hiring manager to develop a job opportunity. The idea is to develop a rapport with the hiring manager by finding a common purpose with the hiring manager. Cold calling may not lead to the cultivation of immediate job placement opportunities, but can lead to a working relationship with the contact that you can refer back to.

Internet job searches by employers and job seekers, are the most common form of job searching because of the internet's ease of accessibility. The use of multiple job search engines can produce the highest percentage of available jobs that may be suitable for the individual.

The next few slide discuss Special Hiring Authorities, the Special Employer Incentive program, the Non-Paid Work Experience program and On-the-Job Training.

Special Hiring Authorities - VEOA

Greatly improves chances of obtaining Federal employment

1. Veterans Employment Opportunities Act of 1998 (**VEOA**)
 - Individual treated as a current Federal employee or a Status Candidate

Per Title 5 and Title 38 of the United States Code

ECs and VRCs must educate both the Veteran and employers on the use of special hiring authorities. It is important for the EC/VRC to understand how the hiring authorities work so they can educate both the Veteran and employer alike. In many cases, government managers outside of Human Resources do not fully understand how Special Hiring Authorities can enable them to hire qualified individuals quickly and non-competitively. In addition, Veterans benefit when they apply for all hiring authorities for which they are qualified. It's imperative to teach them that these authorities may greatly improve a Veteran's chance of obtaining employment in the Federal government. Let's now go into the types and eligibility criteria for each authority.

Veterans Employment Opportunities Act of 1998 (VEOA) Gives "preference eligible," title to those family members entitled to derived preference, and eligible Veterans access to jobs that otherwise would have been available only to current Federal employees. For this type of appointment, the applicant can apply for jobs as if they were already a Federal employee (known as a status candidate). The candidate must rank among the best qualified when compared to current employee applicants in order to be considered for appointment. Veterans' preference does not apply to internal agency actions such as promotions, transfers, reassignments and reinstatements. If selected,

you would be given a career or career-conditional appointment. To be eligible for a VEOA appointment, you must have separated under honorable conditions AND must meet one of the following criteria:

- Be a preference eligible (as defined in title 5 U.S.C. 2108(3)), OR
- Be a Veteran who substantially completed 3 or more years of active service.

Special Hiring Authorities - Schedule A

Greatly improves chances of obtaining Federal employment

2. Schedule A: Appointing Authority for People with Disabilities

- No vacancy announcement required.
- Show documented proof of disability and job readiness

Per Title 5 and Title 38 of the United States Code

Next, there is Schedule A: Appointing Authority for People with Disabilities

Though not specifically for Veterans, the Schedule A appointing authority for people with disabilities is an excepted authority that agencies can use to appoint eligible Veterans who have a severe physical, psychological, or intellectual disability. No vacancy announcement is required.

To be eligible, you must: Show proof of your disability. Documentation may be from any licensed medical professional (e.g., a physician or other medical professional certified by a State, the District of Columbia, or a U.S. Territory to practice medicine), a licensed vocational rehabilitation specialist (i.e., State or private), or any Federal or State agency, or agency of the District of Columbia or a U.S. territory that issues or provides disability benefits. Your medical documentation should distinguish between disabilities that are temporary, or transient, versus disabilities, which are chronic, permanent, ongoing, or unresolved with no end in sight. One must have a certification of job readiness. Certification of job readiness (i.e., that you are likely to perform the duties of the job you wish to perform despite the presence of your disability) may be from any licensed medical professional (e.g., a physician or other medical professional certified by a State, the District of Columbia, or a U.S. Territory to practice medicine), a licensed vocational rehabilitation specialist (i.e., State or private), or any Federal or State agency, or agency of the District of Columbia or a U.S. territory that issues or provides disability benefits. This documentation may be combined in one letter or you can provide it in separate letters.

Special Hiring Authorities – VRA

Greatly improves chances of obtaining Federal employment

3. Veterans' Recruitment Appointment (VRA)

- Appoint eligible Veterans without competition up a GS-11 equivalent

Per Title 5 and Title 38 of the United States Code

Third, there is the Veterans' Recruitment Appointment (VRA) An excepted authority that allows agencies to appoint eligible Veterans without competition is the Veterans' Recruitment Appointment or VRA. There is no limit to the number of times you can apply under VRA, and Veterans' preference applies when using this authority. You can be appointed under the VRA authority at any grade level up to and including a GS-11 or equivalent, if you separated under an honorable or general discharge AND:

- Are in receipt of a campaign badge for service during a war or in a campaign or expedition; OR
- Are a disabled Veteran; OR
- Are in receipt of an Armed Forces Service Medal for participation in a military operation; OR
- Are a recently separated Veteran (within the last three years).

Special Hiring Authorities – 30% or More & VA Training Program

Greatly improves chances of obtaining Federal employment

4. **30% or More** Disabled Veteran

- Non-competitive hire with no grade level restriction

5. **Disabled Veterans** Enrolled in a **VA Training** Program Fedshirevets.gov

- The Certificate of Training allows any agency to appoint the Veteran noncompetitively under a status quo appointment which may be converted to career or career-conditional at any time.

Per Title 5 and Title 38 of the United States Code

Continuing on, there is a special hiring authority for 30% or More Disabled Veteran and the Disabled Veterans Enrolled in a VA Training Program.

30% or More Disabled Veteran

30% or More Disabled Veteran allows any Veteran with a 30% or more service-connected disability to be non-competitively appointed. You are eligible if you: are retired from active military service with a service-connected disability rating of 30% or more; **OR** You have a rating by the Department of Veterans Affairs showing a compensable service-connected disability of 30% or more.

This authority can be used to make permanent, temporary (not to exceed 1 year) or term (more than 1 year, but not more than 4) appointments in the competitive service. There is no grade level restriction. When using this authority to appoint on a permanent basis, you are first placed on a time limited appointment of at least 60 days and then converted to a permanent appointment at management's discretion. When the authority is used for temporary or term appointments, you will not be converted to a permanent appointment.

Disabled Veterans Enrolled in a VA Training Program Disabled Veterans eligible for training under the VA vocational rehabilitation program may enroll for training or work experience at an agency under the terms of an agreement between the agency and VA. While enrolled in the VA program, the Veteran is **not a Federal employee** for most purposes but is a beneficiary of the VA. Training is tailored to the individual's needs and goals, so there is no set length. If the training is intended to prepare the individual for **eventual appointment** in the agency rather than just provide work experience, the agency must ensure that the training will enable the Veteran to meet the qualification requirements for the position. Upon successful completion, the host agency and VA give the Veteran a Certificate of Training showing the occupational series and grade level of the position for which trained. **The Certificate of Training allows any agency to appoint the Veteran noncompetitively under a status quo appointment which may be converted to career or career-conditional at any time.**

Special Employer Incentive (SEI): Employer Benefits - Private Sector

- Veterans face extraordinary obstacles to obtain employment
- Reimbursement up to 50% of Veteran's Salary during the SEI program, which typically lasts up to 9 months
- Hire qualified Veterans trained to the agency's specifications

- VA provides the necessary tool, equipment, uniforms and other supplies, and accommodations
- Minimal paperwork required by the Employer

When is the right time to use an SEI and how should one market it? The SEI program is for eligible Veterans who face extraordinary obstacles to obtaining employment. Veterans are hired by participating employers at the on-set of the SEI program and employment is expected to continue following successful completion of the SEI program. As a result, the SEI program is beneficial for both Veterans and employers. It is a win-win situation: a Veteran is employed and the employer saves money. The points on the slide indicate the benefits for employers:

- Reimbursement up to 50% of Veteran's Salary during the SEI program, which typically lasts up to 9 months, to cover:
 - Additional expenses incurred for cost of instruction
 - Loss of production, and
 - Additional supplies and equipment.
- Ability to hire qualified Veterans trained to the agency's specifications;
- Ability to hire a trainee at an apprenticeship wage;
- VA provides the necessary tools, equipment, uniforms and other supplies;
- Appropriate accommodations are made based on individual needs;
- Minimal paperwork is required by the Employer;
- And, the employer has VA support during training and placement follow-up phase to assist with work or training related needs.

Special Employer Incentive (SEI): Veteran Benefits - Public Sector

- Immediate income and benefits as an employee
- Incentive helps Veterans overcome barriers to employment
- Valuable skills are learned in a practical setting that meet the employer's specifications
- Permanent employment following successful completion of the SEI program

Here we see how Veterans benefit from participating in a Special Employer Incentive. Veterans obtain immediate income and employee benefits. The incentive helps Veterans overcome barriers to employment. They learn valuable skills in a practical setting that meet the employer's specifications. There is likelihood of permanent employment following successful completion of the SEI program. Plus, Veterans receive one-on-one support from a Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor or Employment Coordinator to assist with training or work related needs. Lastly, the SEI allows Servicemembers to begin the private sector employment process PRIOR to separation for a seamless transition from military to civilian employment.

Non-Paid Work Experience Program - Public Sector

- Training and practical job experience working in a Federal, State, or Local government agency
- Veteran receives a subsistence allowance from the VA
- Does not count against agency's full-time employees
- No "red tape" to hire or fire; Minimal paperwork
- Highly-qualified temporary employee at NO COST to the employer

Establishing partner relationships with employers not only assists in expeditiously placing Veterans into suitable employment opportunities, but also is beneficial when regular hiring proves difficult for Veterans who have special and complicated circumstances. On the other hand, a nonpaid or nominally paid work experience in a Federal agency, generally supplements other training or experience. For example, academic instruction may be pursued before induction into or concurrently with work experience to help Veterans achieve their planned vocational goals.

The Non-Paid Work Experience Program (NPWE) provides eligible Veterans with the opportunity to obtain training and practical job experience by working in a Federal, State, or Local government agency. Although the agency is under no obligation to hire the Veteran, the goal of this program is for the Veteran to obtain full-time employment with the agency or a similar agency.

Ultimately, NPWE provides eligible Veterans with practical job experiences by establishing an employment history; exposure to employment opportunities; a monthly subsistence allowance from the VA; and essentially provides easy access to public sector employment experience. The employer is able to train a Veteran employee at its standard, and there is minimal paperwork involved to begin and end the placement. The Veteran employee does not count against an agency's full-time employee quota. Keep in mind that placement of a Veteran cannot result in the displacement of currently employed workers. One other limitation of a NPWE is that a Veteran CAN NOT be placed in a position involving *religious or political activity*.

What is the best part of an NPWE? There is NO COST to the employer.

On-the-Job Training – Private & Public Sector

- Offset part of the initial costs of hiring a new employee.

- Offers employers the opportunity to hire qualified Veterans for which a certain period is designated as training
- Supplement Veteran's salary with apprentice wage
- Purchase necessary tools, uniforms, and supplies
- Evaluate need for on-site accommodations
- Support Veteran through the training and follow-up phases

Under the on-the-job training (OJT) option, the employer hires a Veteran at an apprentice wage and VR&E supplements the Veteran's salary (up to the maximum allowable under OJT).

What are the benefits to the employer? The employer is hiring a qualified Veteran at a trainee wage and may receive Tax Incentives (WOTC). The business value is the off-set of initial hiring costs with a tax incentive. Those hiring costs include salary supplementation and purchase of necessary tools, uniforms, and supplies through the VA.

Again, there is minimal paperwork, case management support, and job accommodations. The difference between an NPWE and OJT is that OJT can be provided in the private and public sectors, whereas NPWE is only provided in the public sector.

Tax Incentives

- Work Opportunity Tax Credit/Wounded Warrior Tax Credit (pending reauthorization for 2014)
- Returning Heroes Tax Credit
- Disabled Access Credit
- Barrier Removal Tax Deduction

In addition to the Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment (VR&E) programs, the following tax incentives are also available to employers: Work Opportunity Tax Credit, Returning Heroes Tax Credit, Disabled Access Credit and Barrier Removal Tax Deduction. Employers who hire Veterans with disabilities or improve access for people with disabilities are eligible for some or all of these tax credits. This creates even more of an incentive for an employer when combined with either an SEI or OJT under VR&E.

Please note that Congress has not reauthorized the 2014 WOTC, but is accepting applications.

Let's discuss these in more depth.

[Source(s): [DOL WOTC](#)]

Work Opportunity Tax Credit (currently unfunded)

The Work Opportunity Tax Credit was established to enable targeted employees to gradually move from economic dependency to self-sufficiency.

Veteran Target Groups	Maximum Credit (If $\geq 120+$ hours, 25% of qualified wages)	Maximum Credit (If $\geq 400+$ hours, 40% of qualified wages)
Receiving Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program	\$1,500	\$2,400
With disability (hired within 1 yr separation) (Wounded Warrior Tax Credit)	\$3,000	\$4,800
With disability (unemployed \geq 6 months) (Wounded Warrior Tax Credit)	\$6,000	\$9,600
Unemployed ≥ 4 weeks (Returning Heroes Tax Credit)	\$1,500	\$2,400
Unemployed ≥ 6 months (Returning Heroes Tax Credit)	\$3,500	\$5,600

The Work Opportunity Tax Credit targets individuals from groups who have historically faced substantial barriers to employment. The Veteran target groups are shown on this slide. In order for an employer to claim the credit, qualified Veterans must begin work on or after November 22, 2011, and before January 1, 2014.

The Veterans Opportunity to Work (VOW) to Hire Heroes Act amends and expands the definition of Veterans who qualify. VOW added unemployed Veterans as a target group (it had previously been added as a targeted group in the Recovery Act of 2009, but expired at the end of 2010.) VOW named the credits for Veterans with disabilities as the Wounded Warrior Tax Credit and those for unemployed Veterans as the Returning Heroes Tax Credit.

State Workforce Agencies must certify Veterans as meeting the required periods of unemployment based on the receipt of unemployment insurance compensation.

Credits are available for non-profit organizations as well, but at a lower amount. Tax exempt organizations can claim a maximum of \$6,240 against the employment social security tax.

[d Source(s): [Employers WOTC](#) and [White House Fact Sheet Tax Credits](#) and [Incentivizing Employers to Hire Vets](#)]

Other Tax Incentives

Two tax incentives are available to businesses who improve access for people with disabilities.

	Description	Criteria
Disabled Access Credit	Non-refundable credit for small businesses that incur expenditures for the purpose of providing access to persons with disabilities. Credit is for 50% of up to \$10,000 in eligible expenditures.	An eligible small business earns < \$1 million with no more than 30 full time employees in the previous year
Barrier Removal Tax Deduction	Businesses may claim a deduction of up to \$15,000 a year for qualified expenses for items that normally must be capitalized.	Expenditures must make a facility or public transportation vehicle more accessible to individuals with mobility disabilities.

Two other tax incentives are available to businesses who improve access for people with disabilities.

Disabled Access Credit

The Disabled Access Credit may be used to reimburse employers for eligible expenses, including:

- To remove barriers that prevent a business from being accessible by individuals with disabilities
- To provide qualified interpreters or other methods of making audio materials available to individuals with hearing impairments
- To provide qualified readers, taped texts, and other methods of making visual materials available to individuals with visual impairments
- To acquire or modify equipment or devices for individuals with disabilities

Barrier Removal Tax Deduction

The Architectural Barrier Removal Tax Deduction encourages businesses to remove architectural and transportation barriers to increase access for people with disabilities. Businesses may claim a deduction of up to \$15,000/year for qualified expenses for items that normally must be capitalized. Businesses may also use the Disabled Tax Credit in the same tax year, if expenses meet the requirements for both.

[Source(s): [IRS: Employer Tax Benefits](#)]

Outreach



- Align Veteran skills with Employer needs
- Maintain rapport for future placement
- Establish network with employers and stakeholders to share job opportunities

To summarize targeted marketing, the employers you contact should align with the targeted job development strategy you developed for the individual you are looking to place. This means you should be targeting employers that can utilize the skills the individual has developed, and the job should not present any foreseeable issues that might aggravate the individual's condition. All in all you should contact employers with positions that are suitable for the individual.

When networking with employers who have the ability to place individuals, but may not have a position available at that time, maintain contact with these employers. These contacts will be useful in the future when performing job development activities for other individuals. You should maintain contact with these employers in the hopes of placing an individual in their organization.

Moving on, an outreach strategy involves developing a plan that will allow you to reach out to as many employers and stakeholders in the area you serve. This plan

should encompass a way to establish and maintain effective working relationships with employers and stakeholders to share information regarding employment opportunities. The development and execution of an outreach strategy is not simply a best practice, but a vital job function that plays a major role in job carving and development. You should continuously seek out opportunities that allow for opportunities to meet and network with employers. These opportunities assist in expanding your network, making it easier to find suitable jobs for the individuals in the areas being served.

Outreach Techniques



There are many ways you can conduct outreach, such as the following:

- Attend regional employment networking events.
- Establish relationships with Disabled Veteran Outreach Program (DVOP) and Local Veterans' Employment Representatives (LVERs).
 - Enhance community awareness through public service announcements on local TV and radio, and by writing guest columns in local newspapers and online blogs. There are currently established media sites for VA. These include VBA Facebook, VBA Twitter, VA Flickr, VAntage Point, and VA

YouTube Channel. All of these have various concurrence procedures, so consult the M28R.

- Sign up for job development distribution email lists.
 - Participate on regional workforce development committees. Consult with your local VRE Manager and RO Director.

Outreach Execution

- **Compile and Store**
 - Excel
 - Outlook
 - Access
- **Maintain Communication**
 - Don't be a nuisance
 - Email primarily
 - Call when trying to place

Once you have obtained networking and contact information, compiling and storing the information so it is easy to access is a critical next step. For instance, the use of an Excel spreadsheet can allow for organization of contact information and other important information about the contact such as the industry they are in, their position, job responsibilities, role in the hiring process, and other notes you may want to include. Email software that you use at work can also be used to sort contacts into different groups to accommodate the size and diversity of your network. Lastly, a database can be developed to store, sort, and view contacts in a customized manner. Documenting networking contacts is a personal choice, but the most important thing is that a comprehensive approach to networking is taken.

Maintain communication with your contacts to sustain long-lasting rapport; to include, reaching out to your network regularly and not only when you have a need you hope they can fill. This approach will encourage the contact to be more engaged and responsive when you do call upon him or her to place an individual. Be consciences not to contact the individuals in your network so often that they consider you to be bothersome or a nuisance, as this can make the contact become disengaged and unresponsive.

The level of comfort that is established with the contact will dictate the frequency and whether you call or send an email.

Now we'll describe some top resources to use while executing job development strategies and outreach in the next few slides.

NEW Employment Center on eBenefits



The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is working to improve resources for employers wanting to connect with Veterans, transitioning Servicemembers, and their spouses who are looking for career opportunities now. VA, along with federal agency partners created the Employment Center to replace the Vetsuccess.va.gov website. The Employment Center on eBenefits was created to provide employers with the ability to make a hiring commitment, post jobs, and search a bank of Veteran resumes. It will serve as the

single authoritative source for connecting employers to Veterans, transitioning Servicemembers, and their spouses.

Start encouraging employers to create a free profile by visiting the [eBenefits Employment Center](#). Profiles allow employers to search a resume bank of job seeking Veterans and report Veteran hires. Then they can begin to post job openings on the Employment Center. User-friendly instructions are on the website.

Emphasize to employers that the new Employment Center will make it easier for applicants to connect to Veteran-friendly employers like them. VA encourages all employers to check out the new Employment Center and start sourcing Veterans today!

Calls & Bulletins

Call & Bulletins



Monthly Employment Coordinator Calls

VR&E Monthly Hotline Bulletins

	Hotline Bulletin December 2013	Hotline Bulletin December 2013	12/9/2013	VR&E	No	VR&E Study II, DOMA, Chapter 36, Counseling, M28R, Part VIII, Purchase Card Reconciliation, NPWE Video, Blackstone, Grants, Recruiting, Career Fair, Federal Workforce, Local QA Review, Best Colleges for Vets, 2013 Guide to Hiring Vets	COLA2014; Employment Facts and Statistics; Proper use of RC 07; Veterans in the Federal Government
	Hotline Bulletin November 2013	Hotline Bulletin November 2013	11/12/2013	VR&E	No	M28 lesson Plans/Releases; Letters, Supplies and Equipment, Crisis/Homeless Hotline; Audi, CCI, Water Sector, National Training, Military Transition Advisors, Hiring in Federal Government	5-year Dashboard; Advisory- Academic Probation; CRC Continuing Education; Knight In Shining Armor Award; Knight on a Music Box

In addition to the Employment Center on eBenefits, we can market the VR&E Monthly Employment Coordinator Calls and the Monthly Hotline Bulletin as FREE press for employers seeking job candidates, especially for those employers not already utilizing it.

Send national job leads through the Field Liaison in VACO to get posted into the monthly call and bulletin.

Also, utilize the monthly DOL statistics on the current state of Veteran employment attached to our Monthly Hotline Bulletin. Share this information with potential employers to emphasize the enormous value of hiring a Veteran with vast life experience. Reiterate the value of hiring a Veteran and dispel those myths.

Council on Veterans Employment



Dec. 29, 2009, First Meeting of the Council on Veterans Employment

- Executive Order 13518
 - Federal Veterans Employment Initiative
 - Dated November 9, 2009
 - Dedicated HR Specialist
 - Coordination and Management
 - Outreach Activities
- [FEDSHIREVETS](#)

Executive Order enhances and promotes recruitment of Veterans for employment opportunities within the executive branch. It establishes an interagency Council on Veterans Employment (Council) and requires each federal agency to develop an Operational Plan for the employment of Veterans. Each agency on the Council must also provide a full-time Human Resources Specialist to serve as the agency's Veterans Employment Program Coordinator. This specialist is responsible for

coordinating and managing employment of Veterans and must perform outreach activities at the agency, including helping with the placement of Veterans with disabilities. More information is available at [FedsHireVets](#) . Any VRC/EC assisting a Veteran in Job Ready Services should utilize this site for information on federal employment of Veterans and as a directory to find the Veterans HR Specialist at federal agencies they are interested in contacting.

Success Stories

- [VetSuccess on Campus: John Luque](#)
- [What We Bring](#)
- [Vet to Vet: Prepare Yourself](#)
- [Hiring Managers Success](#)

Sharing Veterans' success stories is a great way of marketing Veterans to employers and dispelling any misguided views of Veterans, especially Veterans with service-connected disabilities. Listed on this slide are hyperlinks to a few of those stories of how the VA, and specifically VR&E, assists Veterans to find, obtain, and maintain employment. The first three listed are directly from the Veteran and Servicemember perspective, while the last one is straight from hiring managers' perspectives. Most of the videos are short, allowing one more time to "talk up" one's local Veteran candidates.

Recap

- Value
- Myths
- Targeted Job Development Strategy
- Outreach
- Resources
- Success Stories

Sell the business case of hiring a Veteran by highlighting their valuable assets which serves to dispel the myths associated with having a Veteran employee. Begin leveraging a targeted job development strategy. Outreach, outreach, outreach! Share these national success stories and local station successes as well.

References

Here is a list of references that were used to create this training module. Please refer to these references if further clarification is needed.

- [M28R, Part VI, Section A, Chapter 5](#): Outreach Activities to Employers
- 38 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR)
 - [21.299\(d\)](#)
 - [21.256](#)
- [Title 5 CFR 3.1](#) and [315.604](#)
- [VRE Employment Services TPSS](#) (TMS ID VA3812172)
- [Employing America's Veterans](#)
- [National Veterans Training Institute](#)
- [Veterans Opportunity to Work \(VOW\) Program](#)

Questions

In conclusion, we encourage you to utilize your local resources, such as your colleagues and VR&E Officers to assist you with any questions regarding this training. If further guidance is needed, VR&E Officers and Assistants will send all inquiries from the Regional Office staff to the Field Liaisons. A list of the VR&E Field Liaisons is referenced on this slide.

Area	Primary	Alternate	E-mail
Eastern	Vacant	Veronica Brown	VAVBAWAS/CO/VRE/EA
Southern	Veronica Brown	Vacant	VAVBAWAS/CO/VRE/SA
Central	Marisa Liuzzi	Vacant	VAVBAWAS/CO/VRE/CA
Western	Vacant	Marisa Liuzzi	VAVBAWAS/CO/VRE/WA

CRC CEU Credits are available for this training. Please remember to return to the TMS content screen and take the Feedback Survey. The TMS ID Number is 3812174. Your input regarding this training is greatly appreciated.

This concludes our presentation. We hope that this training has been beneficial in educating you. Thanks for participating and for your dedicated service to our Nation's Veterans and Servicemembers.