

A photograph of a Marine band marching in formation on a ship's deck. The band members are wearing dark uniforms with white trousers and white hats. They are holding brass instruments, likely trumpets or trombones, and are marching in a precise, synchronized manner. The background shows the ship's deck and a clear sky.

Veteran Hiring Survey

Exploring the Bottom-line Value of Hiring Veteran Talent

Executive Summary

Welcome to the 2018 Veteran Hiring Survey: [Exploring the Bottom-line Value of Hiring Veteran Talent](#). At a time when skilled talent has never been harder to recruit, Orion Talent surveyed talent acquisition leaders nationwide to find out whether they see veterans transitioning from Active Duty as part of the solution. Can veterans minimize the effects of the labor shortage? Do their skills, employability and workplace versatility outweigh the challenges of competing for veterans? Orion Talent invites you to find out.

Total Engagement

Who hires veterans today? Everyone. Across all industries and company sizes, the desire and commitment to employ veteran military talent is ubiquitous even if the quality of the recruiting effort may be lacking.

Why Veterans? For the Business.

According to the survey, hiring veterans is not about altruism. It's not about feeling good, looking good or doing good. According to the data, hiring veterans is a smart, strategic hiring and business practice.

Ideal Candidates

Survey respondents identify clear advantages to recruiting veteran talent in their assessment of three key hiring metrics: interview-to-hire, acceptance and retention.

The Ultimate Team: Versatility and Skill

According to survey respondents, military candidates can and do thrive in a range of roles and hierarchies. They are flourishing as team players in many organizations while also succeeding in a wide range of workplace scenarios, from entry-level to management roles to blue-collar and white-collar work.

Standout Skills

While military candidates bring many sought-after skills and attributes to the table, there are two distinct areas where they stand out: technical skills and having the ability to work autonomously.

Sourcing Challenges and Opportunities

While a lack of experience among talent acquisition team members fuels challenges in the veteran engagement process, survey respondents see specialized recruiting firms, referral networks and other best practices as effective methods for improving recruitment results.

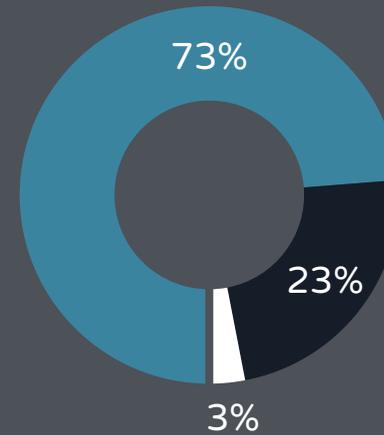
It's Unanimous.

EVERYONE Recruits Veterans.

Businesses everywhere—across all geographies, industries and sizes—are recruiting military talent. An almost complete majority, 99% of businesses are recruiting military veterans. While 26% (one in four businesses) have or are in the process of adopting a formal program or strategy to recruit military talent, far more businesses, 73%, take an informal recruiting approach.

Does Informality Hurt Effectiveness?

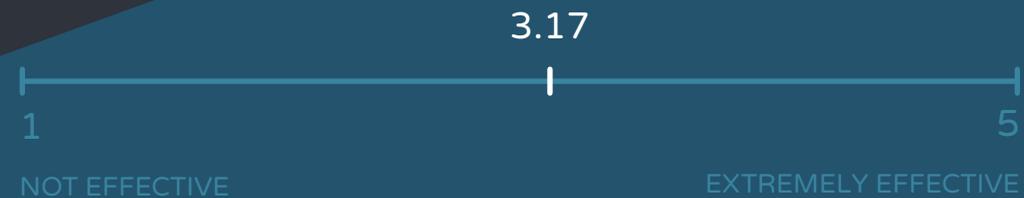
Even though most everyone recruits military talent, not everyone does it well. On average, businesses rate their veteran recruitment effectiveness at only 3.17 on a scale of 1-5, with one (1) being not effective and five (5) being extremely effective. It's a solidly average number that leaves plenty of room for improvement as businesses consider how to tap into this trained and transitioning talent pool. The widespread informality and lack of standardization around the veteran recruitment process is likely one factor keeping businesses from giving their military recruitment a higher effectiveness score.



99% RECRUIT VETERAN TALENT

- Recruit informally
- Recruit with a formal program/strategy
- Building a formal program/strategy

AVERAGE VETERAN RECRUITMENT EFFECTIVENESS



High Quality. Technically Skilled. Efficient. Cool Under Pressure.

Why Businesses Put Veterans to Work

A sizeable majority of businesses are hiring veterans because of what those candidates bring to the table and not because of compliance requirements or because “it’s the right thing to do.” Among survey respondents, 79% pointed to excellent qualifications, composure, productivity, skills and leadership as the reason “why they hire” military veterans.

Only 4% of respondents said they hired veterans because “it was the right thing to do” and even fewer, 1%, said they hire veterans “to meet OFCCP compliance requirements.”

“Veterans are not being given jobs with generous hearts and blind eyes. Military veterans are earning their places in the workforce because, as the survey shows, they are qualified, experienced and skilled. They consistently get higher performance ratings and have lower turnover rates compared to civilian counterparts.

And beyond their skills, there are intangibles. They are fast learners, extremely flexible, used to working closely on diverse teams and able to stay focused on a mission regardless of its challenges. They are used to thinking on their feet to overcome obstacles. In the kind of unpredictable economic environment we deal with today, this is the kind of person every company can use.”

- Mike Starich, CEO of Orion Talent

WHY DO YOU HIRE VETERANS?



WHAT IS THE NUMBER ONE REASON YOU HIRE VETERANS?

- “We find that veterans have valuable skills to offer. Strong work ethic.”
- “Veterans are great balanced employees.”
- “Veterans have a foundation of respect and dedication.”

[Ideal Candidates →](#)

Better Hiring Results, Easier to Retain

As a talent population, military veterans are highly desirable for several reasons. First, as candidates they are no more challenging to engage than the general population. Only 22% of survey respondents agreed with the statement “recruiting veterans is more challenging than recruiting civilians.” The majority (62%) disagreed with that statement, with 16% reporting they were “not sure.” Making the effort to recruit veterans is also proving worthwhile for businesses according to hiring, acceptance and retention performance indicators. The majority of survey takers ranked military talent higher in each of those three categories.

MILITARY VETERANS VS. CIVILIANS: THE KPIS

[Veteran Versatility →](#)

The Ultimate Team: Versatility and Skill

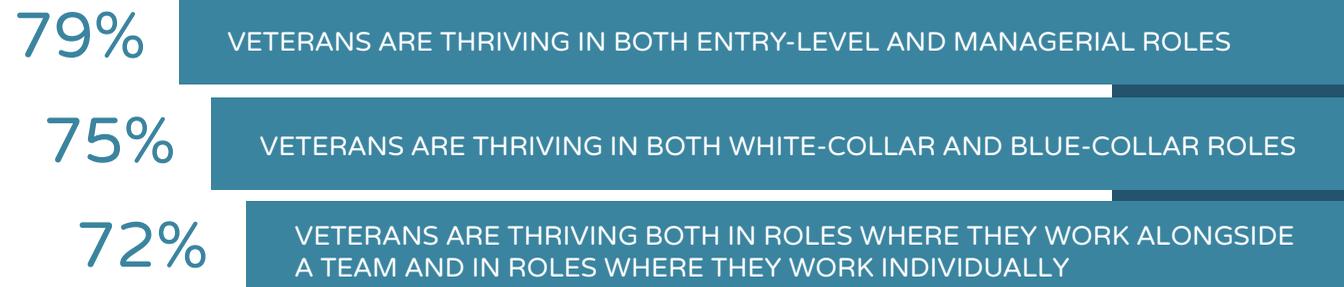
Survey respondents underscored the workplace versatility of military talent when asked to examine the roles where they see veterans are thriving in their organizations. Where and how do they thrive? In all kinds of roles and settings.

“What stands out here is how exceptionally versatile military veterans are as they join and engage in the civilian workforce. They don’t fit one mold or set of roles. Military veterans are working at all levels, in various capacities, schedules and environments.

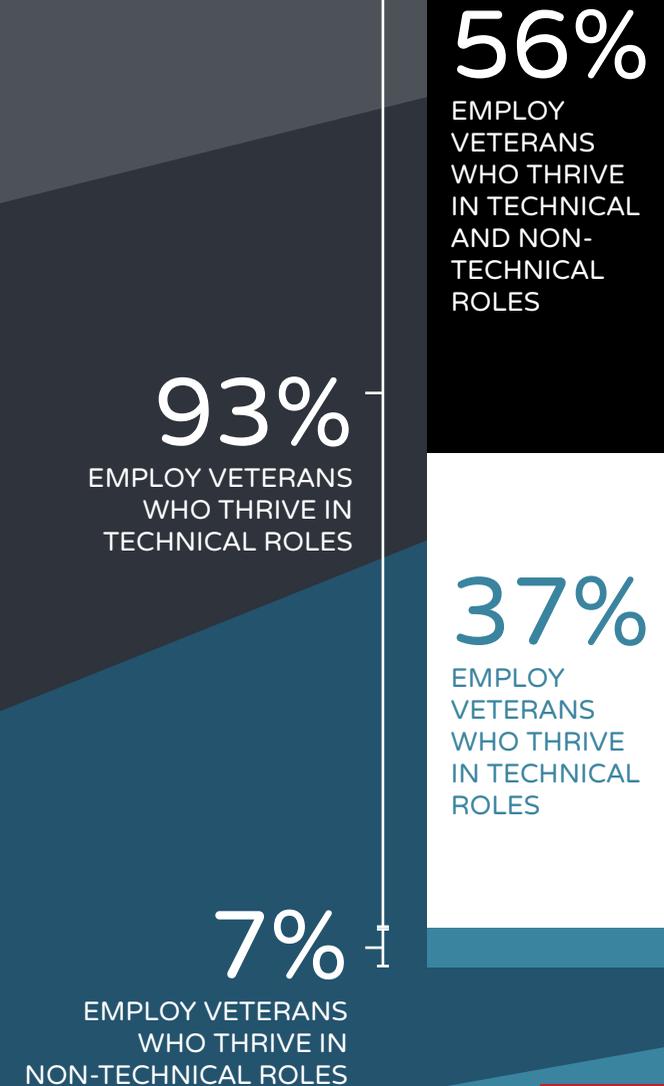
This might go against the one-dimensional picture many people have of those who serve in the armed forces. This survey shows that you can’t put veterans in a box, which makes them an even more attractive, adaptive talent pool in today’s workplace where we are seeing the highest quit rates since the dotcom years.”

- Tim Isacco, Chief Operating Officer of Orion Talent

VETERAN VERSATILITY



TECHNICAL VERSATILITY



[Standout Skills →](#)

Technical Competence and Self-determination

Two areas of aptitude rose to the top when examining the skills of military veterans: technical skills and the ability to be self-directed in one's work. A large majority of businesses that employ veterans (93%) have veterans in their organizations who are thriving in technical roles. Only seven percent said that veterans are thriving only in non-technical roles.

Veterans also demonstrate the ability to work autonomously and independently. More than half of respondents (54%) said veterans in their organization are thriving in roles that require little supervision and that allow employees to work more autonomously. Another 35% have employees that fall into both categories, those that require more supervision and those that require little.

Only two percent said that the veterans in their organization thrive in roles that require more supervision and managerial oversight. This finding is positive news for both veterans in search of work where independence and self-direction are valued and for employers who need workers who can succeed without heavy oversight.

DO VETERANS THRIVE IN ROLES THAT REQUIRE LITTLE OR MORE SUPERVISION?

54%

Roles that require little supervision

35%

Mix of roles that require little supervision and roles that require more

2%

Roles that require more supervision



[Challenges →](#)

Recruiting Challenges

While 99% of businesses report that they are recruiting military veterans, 62% of them say they are giving essential recruiting work (creating job descriptions, interview questions and communications) to resources that are not trained in, experienced with or dedicated to veteran recruitment. That lack of experience among a majority of internal recruiting teams may be playing out in candidate engagement, particularly in the interview process.

According to the survey, the top three challenges in the interview process for military talent are:

1

Ensuring veterans understand how job/workplace expectations are different than in the military environment

2

Effectively exploring the military candidate's background and qualifications from the military

3

Understanding how military skill sets correlate with civilian skill sets to select the most qualified candidates to interview

Each interview challenge underscores the need for talent acquisition team members to have an understanding of various working environments in the military as well as the types of skill sets and qualifications military service yields.

[Opportunities →](#)

The Opportunities to Improve Veteran Recruitment

According to respondents, the most effective recruiting practices are those that allow their businesses to tap into resources with greater military experience, including specialized recruiting firms, referral networks and military job fairs.

What do respondents feel they need in order to improve veteran hiring? More talent and more training. The number one solution, by a 48% landslide, was to have “more qualified candidates” while the second most-cited solution was “training to more effectively engage veterans.”

3 MOST EFFECTIVE WAYS TO RECRUIT VETERANS



“Employers do and should want veterans for the skills and experience they bring to an organization. Yet many hiring teams lack an understanding of veteran backgrounds and encounter difficulties throughout the entire hiring process.

Today’s job-seeking veterans have a vast number of employment options to choose from. If a company is serious about recruiting and retaining military talent, it needs a well-thought out plan to secure qualified veterans for roles that enable them to excel.”

- Mike Starich, CEO of Orion Talent

[Takeaways →](#)

Top Takeaways

Hiring military veterans is something most every business strives to do. And why not? Their technical skills, workplace versatility and ability to work autonomously are unmatched. For businesses, concerted veteran recruitment is both an opportunity to embrace a topnotch talent pool and a challenge to compete for these stand-out candidates by strengthening veteran hiring programs and proficiency. Here are three central points from the survey to keep in mind as your business explores its strategy for recruiting veterans.

1 | Embrace the Employability and Versatility of Veterans

In the face of one of the tightest talent markets in U.S. history, today's military veterans offer employers an impressive talent pool of capable, versatile candidates who are easier to recruit and hire. Veterans are more likely to receive an offer after an interview, more likely to accept the job and more likely to stay on the job longer. Once on the job they are proving capable in all areas, from entry-level work to management, from working within teams to working on their own, and from technical roles to non-technical ones.

2 | The Experience Factor

As the survey reveals, talent acquisition leaders see engaging specialized recruiting firms, building a strong referral network, and attending military job fairs as the most effective ways to access and engage this valuable talent pool. The common thread among those three tactics is the focus on getting closer to resources—both people and organizations—that have experience with and connections to the military talent pool.

3 | More Structure, Better Engagement

How can a business gain more experience with this unique and desirable talent pool? Adding more formality to veteran recruiting may be the first place to start. Most businesses are informally recruiting veterans rather than with a strategy or program, which likely means using a general recruiting process for a specialized talent pool.

Employers can start by assessing how, where and when they are engaging veterans. Are they effectively targeting military talent? Regarding communications and the recruitment life cycle, are they taking into account the fact that certain skills and experience will not sound and look the same in a military environment? Are they encouraging veterans to apply through direct engagement, such as on bases, at job fairs and through veterans' organizations?

“The survey’s findings point to what military veterans and those who recruit them know well—experience is everything. Employers do and should want veterans for the experience, skills and commitment they bring to the job. However, knowing how to engage veterans and having an understanding of how active duty experience applies to a civilian job also takes some knowhow and skill.”

- Mike Starich, CEO of Orion Talent

[About →](#)

About the Survey

Orion Talent's 2018 Veteran Hiring Survey: Exploring the Bottom-line Value of Hiring Veteran Talent, utilizes data from an online survey of 114 professionals who recruit and hire talent, from VPs and directors of HR and talent acquisition to owners, recruitment program directors, procurement professionals and hiring managers.

Top Five Industries Represented



MANUFACTURING



PROFESSIONAL SERVICES



HEALTHCARE



TECHNOLOGY



CONSTRUCTION

Number of Full-time Employees

< 500 EMPLOYEES **52%**

501 - 10,000 EMPLOYEES **29%**

> 10,001 EMPLOYEES **19%**

Survey Dates

**June 13 to
July 16, 2018**

About Orion Talent

Headquartered in Cary, North Carolina, Orion Talent provides a total talent solution for businesses nationwide, including skilled talent acquisition, recruitment optimization and military hiring solutions. As a military recruiting leader for 27+ years, Orion Talent has a long history of supporting veterans in their search for meaningful careers and has found employment for more than 43,000 veterans. Orion Novotus, an Orion Talent company, provides a full range of recruitment optimization and consulting solutions. Orion Talent has offices nationwide, a dedicated team of 200+ recruiting experts, and holds more than 400 hiring events each year.

OrionTalent.com →

