



# MILITARY FRIENDLY® INSIGHTS:

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WHY ALIGNING MILITARY HIRING  
WITH DIVERSITY INITIATIVES IS A  
SMART MOVE



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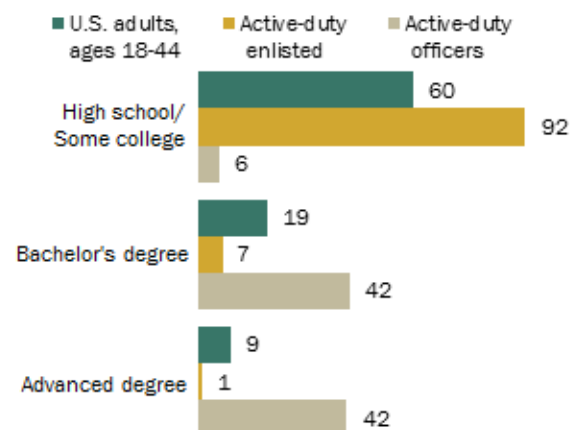
# THE MILITARY MARKET

When companies talk about diversity hiring, military veterans might not be the first group they think of—but they should be. Veterans and military spouses come from all walks of life, with different races, genders, and cultural backgrounds. Their experiences are diverse, and they bring a lot more to the table than many realize. Aligning military hiring with your company's diversity initiatives is more than just checking a box—it's a smart way to build a stronger, more innovative team.

Veterans are a goldmine of diverse skills and experiences. The military is one of the most diverse organizations around, promoting people based on what they can do, not where they come from. Veterans have experience leading teams from all backgrounds and working in high-pressure situations where the stakes are high. Adding them to your team doesn't just help meet diversity goals—it gives you employees who know how to work hard and work well with others. The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs says veterans are great at "working in diverse teams and solving complex problems under pressure" (VA, 2019).

## Roughly four-in-ten active-duty officers have an advanced degree

% of \_\_\_ by educational attainment, 2015



Note: Includes only the four military branches of the Department of Defense. The 12% of adults ages 18-44 and less than 0.5% of enlisted personnel and officers without a high school diploma are not shown. Educational attainment is not known for 0.6% of enlisted personnel and 9.7% of officers.

Source: Active-duty enlisted and officer data from Defense Department "2015 Demographics: Profile of the Military Community" report. U.S. adult data from 2015 American Community Survey (IPUMS).

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Bringing veterans into your diversity and inclusion (D&I) strategy means tapping into a group of people who are mission-driven and adaptable. They don't just meet your diversity needs—they make your whole team better. Veterans bring fresh ways of thinking, solving problems, and leading.

Did you know that the **veterans who served in the last 30 years are the largest group of living veterans**? According to estimates from the VA, veterans from the Gulf War era—covering August 1990 to now—actually outnumber those who served during the Vietnam War as of 2016. Just a heads up, if a veteran served in multiple eras, they're counted in the earliest one.



Using data to look at the Veteran population as a whole, we can learn much about the Veterans of Today. The example below shows a variety of Veteran characteristics, such as cohort, insured and non-insured status, disability rating, and more.

### Key Statistics by Veteran Status and Period of Service

Key Characteristics of the Veteran Population	Statistic	Veteran Cohorts						All Veterans	All Non-Veterans
		Post-9/11	Pre-9/11	Vietnam Era	Korean Conflict	World War II	Peacetime Only		
Age	Median (Years)	35	47	68	83	91	59	64	44
Gender	% Male	83.0%	85.7%	96.8%	97.3%	95.5%	90.6%	91.4%	45.3%
Race and Hispanic Origin	% White	65.4%	69.6%	82.7%	88.0%	91.7%	79.0%	77.7%	62.1%
Educational Attainment	% With Some College	46.3%	43.9%	36.9%	24.0%	20.0%	35.2%	37.5%	29.9%
Employment Status	% Employed	77.3%	75.8%	26.8%	5.5%	2.4%	45.8%	44.2%	61.2%
Occupation	% In Service Industry	17.0%	13.9%	12.3%	14.1%	11.7%	13.7%	14.2%	18.9%
Individual Earnings and Income	Median Individual Income (\$K)	41,988	51,302	36,000	27,894	25,599	34,991	37,297	22,991
Health Care Coverage	% Without Health Care Coverage	5.6%	4.8%	1.0%	0.1%	0.2%	3.8%	2.9%	10.6%
Use of VA Healthcare	% Who Use VA Healthcare	36.4%	29.4%	40.7%	38.2%	36.3%	26.8%	34.9%	0.4%
Disability Status*	% With at Least One Disability	14.7%	16.5%	32.9%	55.7%	74.3%	30.1%	30.1%	14.8%
Service-connected Disability Status	% With a Service-connected Disability	35.9%	26.4%	23.3%	10.8%	12.9%	10.8%	21.8%	0.1%
Service-connected Disability Rating	% With 70% or Higher Rating	38.1%	26.0%	39.1%	22.0%	25.9%	24.2%	34.1%	29.1%
Home Ownership	% That Own a Home	57.6%	71.7%	82.7%	82.7%	72.0%	76.8%	75.7%	61.9%
Privately Owned Vehicle (POV) Status	% With One or More Vehicles	96.8%	95.9%	95.1%	92.2%	77.9%	93.7%	94.2%	90.8%
Marital Status	% Married	55.7%	64.1%	69.0%	64.4%	46.4%	62.7%	63.3%	47.8%
Household Earnings and Income	Median Household Income (\$K)	73,953	82,286	57,895	43,098	37,718	55,979	59,995	55,998
Presence of Children	% With No Children at Home	56.2%	65.7%	98.6%	99.9%	100.0%	91.7%	86.6%	70.8%
Presence of Person(s) 65 or Older	% With Person(s) 65 or Older Living in the Home	4.3%	13.6%	83.8%	100.0%	100.0%	49.3%	57.1%	25.8%

\* Disability (as defined by Census Bureau) includes six basic areas of functioning and limitations in activities - hearing, vision, cognition, and ambulation, difficulty bathing and dressing, and difficulty performing errands such as shopping.

Source: 2016 American Community Survey Public Use Microdata Sample

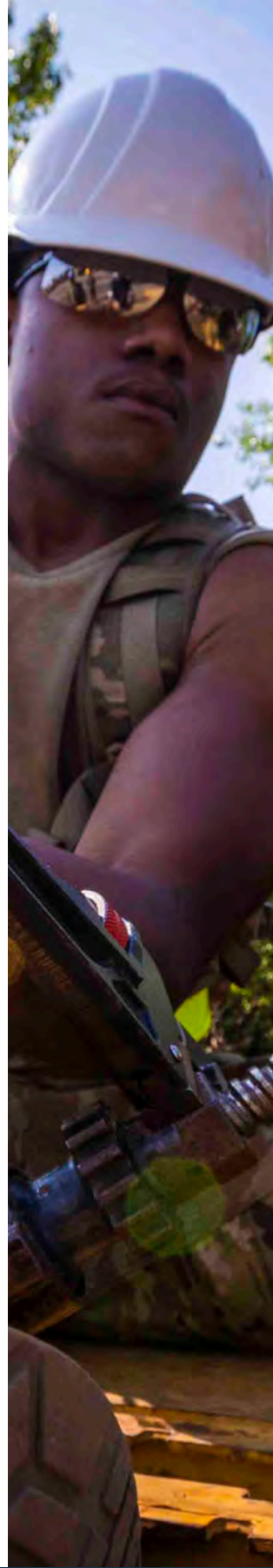


Veterans come from diverse backgrounds, so including them helps companies meet their diversity and inclusion goals. Focusing on veterans in your D&I efforts can also help with a big challenge many industries face—finding diverse leaders and technical experts. Veterans are natural leaders, thanks to their military training, and many have technical skills that are hard to find. If your company is struggling to find diverse leadership or technical talent, hiring veterans is a practical way to solve that problem.

The Department of Defense (DoD) invests billions of dollars each year in readiness and training to strengthen the capabilities of our military forces. This significant investment not only enhances operational readiness but also focuses on developing leadership, accountability, and strategic thinking among service members.


By hiring military talent, your organization can leverage one of the most advanced training systems in the world. The DoD has dedicated resources to continuously improve these programs, ensuring that junior forces receive top-notch leadership training from seasoned military leaders. This expertise can directly benefit your teams, fostering a culture of leadership development within your company.

Embracing and welcoming the military mindset can enhance your organization's leadership strategies, as senior leaders in the military are specifically trained to mentor and develop their teams effectively. This approach can lead to improved performance and collaboration within your workforce, giving your company a competitive edge in today's market.



**In 2024, the DOD requested \$843 Billion Dollars for the defense and readiness of our US Forces.**

<https://www.defense.gov/News/Releases/Release/article/3326875/department-of-defense-releases-the-presidents-fiscal-year-2024-defense-budget/>



Veterans are already used to working in diverse environments, and they bring that mindset to civilian workplaces. Their experience working in teams with people from all kinds of backgrounds gives them an edge when it comes to creating a more inclusive work culture. And when you have that kind of culture, innovation will take off.

One interesting thing about military leadership is how teams are formed. In the military, you don't get to choose who you work with; your teammates are assigned to you. This unique setup means that leaders have to quickly figure out the strengths and skills of each person, no matter their background. It's all about making the most of what everyone brings to the table!

Military leaders are trained to spot and tap into the diverse talents within their teams. They know that every individual, whether they're a seasoned pro or just starting out, has something special to offer. This mindset helps them create a strong sense of collaboration and unity, which is crucial for achieving their mission.

Aligning military hiring with diversity goals not only strengthens your team but also enhances your brand. Committing to hire veterans and military spouses signals your dedication to supporting employees from all backgrounds, which is crucial in today's competitive job market. This connection boosts employee satisfaction and productivity. Veterans bring valuable experience to civilian roles, approaching teamwork with inclusivity and collaboration. They excel at recognizing unique strengths in their coworkers and blending those talents into cohesive teams, fostering the diverse perspectives essential for innovation in fast-paced workplaces.

When veterans feel supported in a diverse, inclusive environment, they stick around longer. That's a win for your workforce and your bottom line. It's also a win when it comes to attracting talent. But hiring veterans isn't enough—you have to set them up for success. Veterans thrive in environments where they feel valued and part of the team, and that's where diversity and inclusion initiatives come in. Because when your employees feel included in environments they are more engaged, more productive, and more innovative. When you invest in veterans, they invest in your company.

So how do you make this happen? First, recognize that veterans already bring diversity to the table. Set specific goals for hiring veterans and military spouses, just like you do for other groups in your diversity strategy. Make military recruitment a priority in your strategy, and you'll see results.

In the end, aligning military hiring with your diversity and inclusion goals isn't just the right thing to do—it's a smart business strategy. Veterans bring unique skills, fresh perspectives, and problem-solving abilities that strengthen your company. When you bring them into your diversity efforts, you're not just filling quotas—you're building a more innovative, resilient workforce. And as diversity becomes even more important to corporate success, veterans will continue to play a key role in shaping the future of work.

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