

**MILITARY
FRIENDLY
INSIGHTS**



**MILITARY RANK
EQUIVALENCIES**

Kayla Lopez
Sr. Director of Strategic
Partnerships

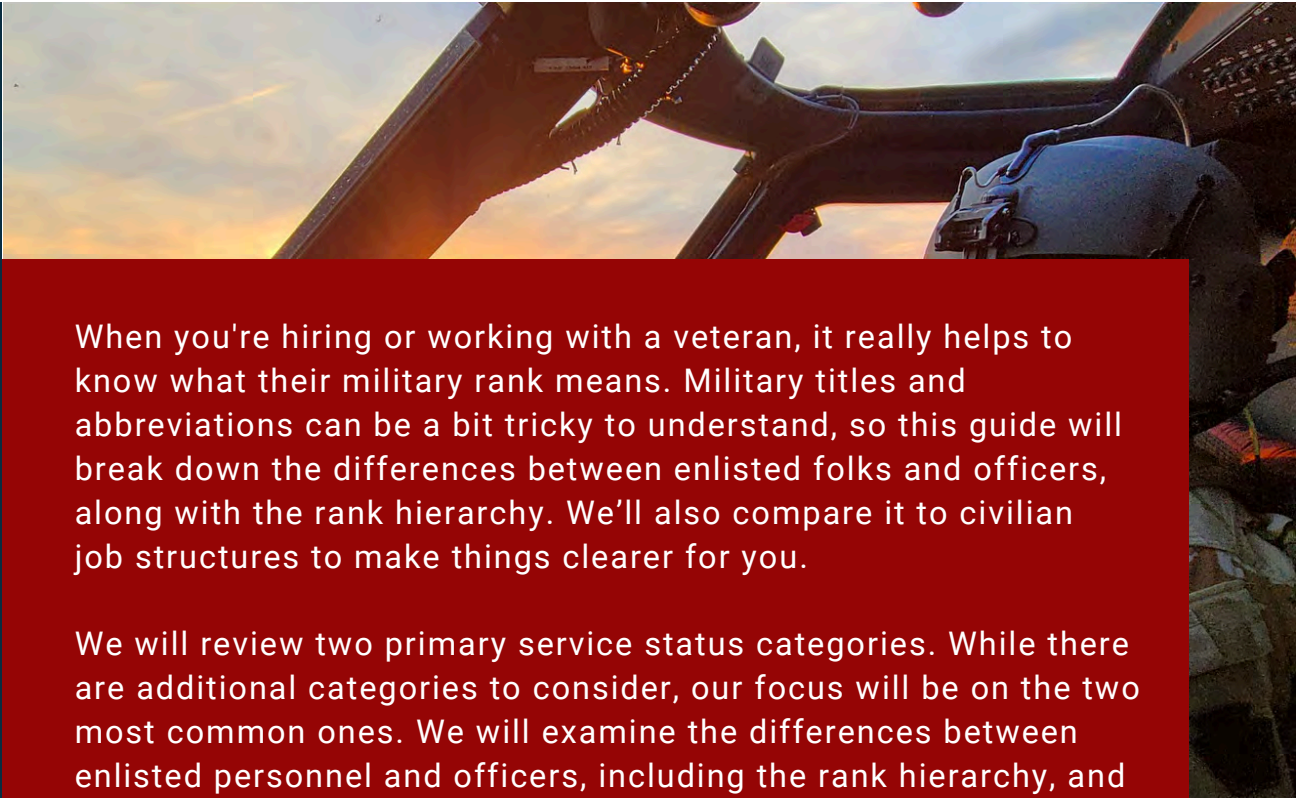


UNDERSTANDING RANKS

Hiring veterans is one of the best moves a company can make. Veterans bring amazing qualities to the table— leadership, discipline, the ability to solve problems under pressure, and quick adaptability to new situations. They're the kind of employees who can tackle challenges head-on, think on their feet, and lead a team through tough times. The issue many companies run into is that they miss out on this fantastic talent because their job descriptions don't really connect with veterans. If you don't tweak your recruitment process to reflect military experience, you might overlook some of your best candidates.

One key thing to keep in mind when recruiting military talent is understanding the differences in military ranks and how they relate to civilian jobs. Each rank represents not just a level of authority but also specific skills and responsibilities. When recruiters understand these distinctions, they can better match veterans with roles that fit their experience. For example, a non-commissioned officer (NCO) might have solid leadership skills managing teams, while an officer may excel in strategic planning. Knowing these details helps you appreciate the depth of experience veterans bring.

SERVICE STATUS



When you're hiring or working with a veteran, it really helps to know what their military rank means. Military titles and abbreviations can be a bit tricky to understand, so this guide will break down the differences between enlisted folks and officers, along with the rank hierarchy. We'll also compare it to civilian job structures to make things clearer for you.

We will review two primary service status categories. While there are additional categories to consider, our focus will be on the two most common ones. We will examine the differences between enlisted personnel and officers, including the rank hierarchy, and compare these structures to civilian job roles for clarity.

01 Enlisted

Enlisted members are those who join the military and hold ranks below officers. They start as recruits and advance based on experience, performing essential technical and leadership roles in daily operations.

Rank Structure:
E1-E9

02 Officer

Officers usually have a college degree at the time they enlist and are responsible for leadership, strategic planning, and decision-making. They oversee operations, manage enlisted personnel, and execute military missions.

Rank Structure:
O1-O10

04 ENLISTED

E1

Civilian Career Equivalent: Early Career - Entry Level

E1's Typically are in initial training, boot camp and advanced individual training. This rank is entry level in all branches of service.

E2

Civilian Career Equivalent: Skilled Position – Entry Level

The E2 rank is typically awarded after the initial period of training. Normally is issued after a time period of service.

E3

Civilian Career Equivalent: Entry level Skilled Position Team Leader

The E3 rank is normally earned after 2 or three years in service. The service member has displayed and mastered mid-level skills in a specialty.

E4

Civilian Career Equivalent: First-line Supervisor/Team Leader

E4's may be responsible for a squad, 4-12 individuals, serving as squad leader. E4s are technically skilled and proficient in their expertise.

E5

Civilian Career Equivalent: Supervisor, Project Lead or Team Leader

E5's are normally in charge of a squad of up to 12 individuals and millions of dollars worth of equipment. E5's teach individual and collective training.

E6

Civilian Career Equivalent: Senior Supervisor, Department Manager, Process Improvement

E6 is a mentor, conducts annual reviews and recommends team members for promotion. Often responsible for millions of dollars worth of equipment. Will step in for duties of the E7



E7

Civilian Career Equivalent:
Expert in their field, Large
Department Manager,
Director, Leadership Role

An E7 is typically a section leader with up to 50 individuals. They utilize challenging performance oriented training to excite and motivate the team.

E8

Civilian Career Equivalent:
Manager/Leader in area of
expertise, Strategic Leader,
CEO, VP, Director

E8's hold formations, instruct E7's and assist the unit commander in daily unit operations. E8's supervise administrative duties but their principle duty is training.

E9

Civilian Career Equivalent:
CEO, COO, VP, President, Sr.
Director, Strategic Leader

AKA CSM and commander, E9s coordinate the unit's Mission Essential Task List (METL) and training tasks to create a team approach to training. The CSM leaders then select the specific tasks, which support task to be trained during this same period.

E9+

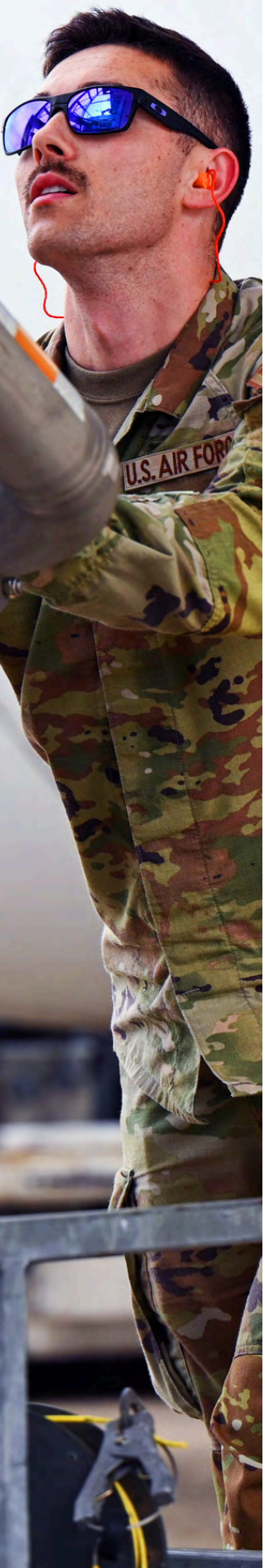
Civilian Career Equivalent:
Large Enterprise CEO, VP,
President, CFO, Sr. Executive

E9+ Ranks are appointed to serve as a spokesman to address the issues of enlisted soldiers to all officers, from warrant officers and lieutenants to the Army's highest positions. As such, they are the senior enlisted advisor to the Chief of Staff.



Even if an enlisted rank appears on a veteran's military experience, it doesn't mean they lack a degree. Many enlisted personnel may have obtained their degree after enlisting, meaning they simply didn't have it at the time they joined the military. In some cases, a degree, training, or additional education is required for promotion or advancement in rank.





01

Civilian Career Equivalent: Early Career - Entry Level

An 01 individual would hold a minimum of a Bachelor's Degree. This is typically the entry-level rank for most Commissioned Officers

02

Civilian Career Equivalent: Low to Middle Management Levels of Responsibility

An 02 with 18 to 24 months in service will lead more specialized weapons units and indirect fire computation centers.

03

Civilian Career Equivalent: VP, Small Enterprise President, Director

Commands company-sized units (62 to 190 personnel), with a principal enlisted assistant.

04

Civilian Career Equivalent: Senior Level, VP, Sr. Director, President, COO, or CEO

Primary Staff Officer for brigade and task force command for personnel, logistical and operational missions. This position typically will hold a master's degree.

05

Civilian Career Equivalent: VP, President, CEO, COO, or Strategic Sr Leadership

Normally commands larger units of 300 to 1,000 personnel, with an E8 or E9 as principal enlisted assistant. They more than likely will have a master's degree and advanced leadership training.

0-6

Civilian Career Equivalent: Sr. Executive Roles, VP, CEO, or COO

Typically commands units with 3,000 to 5,000 personnel, with an E9 as principal assistant. Skilled in leadership and communication. Similar role to a CEO of a mid to large company.



07

Civilian Career Equivalent:
CEO, Vice President,
President, CFO, Senior
Executive Leadership

Serves as Deputy Commander to the commanding general for divisions. Will hold a Master's Degree and often a Ph.D.

08

Civilian Career Equivalent:
Large Enterprise CEO, VP,
President, CFO, Senior
Executive Leadership

Typically commands division sized units (10,000 to 15,000 Soldiers). Often hold a Master's Degree, possibly a Ph.D. Most Senior Level of Management.

09

Civilian Career Equivalent:
Large Enterprise CEO, VP,
President, CFO, Sr. Executive

Typically commands corps-sized units (20,000 to 45,000 Soldiers). CEO of a very large international company. Master strategist of multiple companies with multiple products.

010

Civilian Career Equivalent:
Large Enterprise CEO, VP,
President, CFO, Sr. Executive

The senior level of Commissioned Officer typically has over 30 years of experience and service. Commands all operations that fall within their geographical area. All Pentagon Chief of Staffs are four-star Generals or Admirals. Most senior level of leadership

Just a quick note: This guide isn't meant to directly show someone's ability to do a job. It will help you see how military ranks compare to civilian roles. While military experience can offer insights into a candidate's skills, it doesn't guarantee their performance in a specific job.

Remember, everyone has their own unique experiences and strengths, so look at the whole person, not just their rank. Use your judgment and consider things like relevant skills, work ethic, and cultural fit to get a better idea of how they might contribute to your team!



For the company, it's a smart business move that improves recruitment, performance, and engagement. Supporting veterans isn't just the right thing to do—it's a smart move for any business looking to build a strong, dedicated workforce.

**Take the first step and pledge your commitment,
become a Military Friendly® Member Today!**

www.militaryfriendly.com

The appearance of U.S. Department of Defense visual information does not imply or constitute DOD endorsement.