

When you need a military conversion resume

When you leave a military career, you have a diverse and unique set of skills and work experience, but probably need a “military conversion” resume. The things you can do are valuable in the civilian workforce – but only if private-sector employers understand how your abilities can be of value to their business. Unfortunately, employers sometimes find it difficult to understand how your military skills can benefit a civilian business, and may pass over your resume in favor of another applicant who presents easy-to-understand civilian job experience.

With all of your years of experience, you have what it takes to present yourself as a well-rounded professional with a wide range of expertise. You’ve got a distinct advantage when transitioning into the civilian workplace – you have years of loyalty, dedication and varied experience to offer civilian employers. Your first goal is to look at samples of resumes, both military conversion resumes and civilian resumes, to compare the differences. What you’ll find is that military resumes are far more detailed and conforms to a rigid format that isn’t required of civilian resumes. Examples of military conversion resumes are available online, and bookstores carry many, many books offering advice on creating resumes, so finding samples isn’t difficult.

As you start your new civilian life, retool your old military resume with civilian terminology. Remember that most civilian employers aren’t familiar with the arcane job classifications and acronyms that you’ve become used to in the service. So find creative ways to describe jobs, skills, supervisors and facilities with non-military words. By examining a few military conversion resume samples, you should be able to come up with creative ways to convert your old military resume into a civilian resume. Once you’ve done that, you’ll have a distinct advantage over any civilian candidate with similar qualifications.

Once you’ve got your military conversion resume in hand, give it to a civilian friend whose judgment you trust and ask them to give it a quick once-over. Ask them to read it as if they were a job interviewer. If your resume has too much technical information or military terminology, they should let you know. Also make sure that they “get” the qualifications you’re trying to communicate – if not, add some more information.

Moving to civilian life from a military career, you’ll need a good military conversion resume to show potential employers your strengths, skills and experience in a civilian-friendly way. Once you do that, a new career is a sure thing.