

Translating military skills to civilian skills

As you create your resume or prepare for an interview, avoid military jargon and terms. Most civilian employers will not understand military terminology, abbreviations and acronyms.

Use the following guidelines to prevent this problem:

- Write out terms and explain what they mean when necessary.
- For specialized military training, list the names and number of hours of professional and technical training you have taken. Only include training if it relates to the job.
- Briefly explain any course that may be pertinent to the job. For example, write "Management and Supervision" as a course title. Then add the course content: equal opportunity law; giving and receiving positive and negative feedback; and giving directions.
- Use civilian equivalent phrases and titles. Civilian recruiters will not take the time to translate your resume into civilian terms and may not see you as qualified for the position. Below are some military terms with recommended civilian equivalents.

| Military term | Civilian equivalent |
|---------------------------|---|
| NCOIC | Supervisor, manager, coordinator. |
| TDY/TAD | Business related travel. |
| PCS | Relocation. |
| NCO Academy | Leadership management training. |
| War College | Executive military leadership school. |
| Command and Staff College | Senior military leadership school. |
| Basic Officers Course | Entry level officer leadership course. |
| Basic training | Introductory military training. |
| O7 and above | President, senior director, chairman of the board, managing director. |
| O5 and O6 | Chief executive officer, chief operation officer, program director. |
| O4 | Senior administrator, department head, program manager. |
| O1 – O3 | Executive, administrator, manager, project officer. |
| W01 – W05 | Director, specialist, facilitator, technical manager, technical specialist E7 – E9, supervisor, department manager, operations manager, senior advisor. |
| E4 – E6 | Assistant manager, line supervisor, section leader, task leader, supervisor foreman. |
| E1 – E3 | Production workers, assembler, technician, assistant, apprentice, team member. |