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PHASE 1

Prepare

“Own your transition”

This phase is designed to help you learn about the benefits and resources available to you, understand and communicate the value you bring to employers, and plan for your transition.

MORE ABOUT THIS PHASE

The preparation phase is now. Transition is a process that will occur over your lifetime. However, the first step in what you need to do to discover your benefits, assess your skills, and start to strategically plan are critical elements to set you on the right path.

You should plan for civilian employment as you would for a mission. Recommendations include defining near and long-term objectives and setting them into smaller increments or a longer, broader 12 to 24 month timeline. In owning your transition, you are entering the first phase of tasks that will help you be better prepared for what lies ahead.

You may also want to consider your options—ever thought about furthering your education? How about being your own boss and owning your own business? Your journey doesn't have to end with a job offer—you can lead your journey.

TASK 1: DISCOVER YOUR BENEFITS

Access and align your resources

You're entitled to a lot of resources, and we want to help you access them. You can discover your benefits from any stage of your military to civilian transition. Quick tips include:

- Get to Know VSOs & Their Benefits

Transitional Guide

- Research Veteran-Friendly Corporate Partnerships & Resources
- Take Advantage of Your Government Resources

TASK 2: ASSESS YOUR SKILLS

Know what you possess and how you should promote it

You must assess, understand and articulate the value you bring to a prospective employer. There are resources which exist that can help you translate your competencies, trainings, experiences, etc. into civilian skill sets which can then be marketed. Quick tips include:

- Get Help from Corporate Partners
- Take Advantage of Your Government Resources
- Receive Skills Assessment Assistance & Consider Expanded Programs

TASK 3: PLAN YOUR TRANSITION

Receive the resources to prepare, transition and lead along the journey

As you plan, ensure you have taken into account all the acquired skills, career ambitions, education and formal training you have received over the course of your military career. Quick tips include:

- Create and navigate your own Customized Action Plan
- Financially Plan for Your Transition
- Ask for Feedback Along the Way

TASK 4: FURTHER YOUR EDUCATION OR OWN YOUR OWN BUSINESS

Consider your options, all options

Don't rule out finishing school, starting a new education path, thinking about a training program or even applying for a fellowship. Many resources exist to help you navigate educational and entrepreneurial options. Quick tips include:

- Read up on the GI Bill
- Know what Credits Count from Military to Educational Transcripts
- Attend an Entrepreneur Seminar

TASK 5: CREATE YOUR RESUME

Transcribe your unique military history to become civilian qualifications

Putting on paper your value will help close the deal of those online opportunities and in-person Network meetings. However, we know that translating your military assignments and positions can be daunting. Luckily, resources exist to help. Quick tips include:

- Share Your Resume for Feedback

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- Create Different Versions for Different Audiences
- Post At Least Once

TASK 6: FIND A MENTOR

Add the people element to your wealth of resources

Locate people who can assist you. We often forget that other people may be going through or have experience having gone through, a similar situation. It's always a good idea to hear about lessons learned and hash out "what works" and "what doesn't". While everyone's journey is unique, there are common threads that hold us all. Quick tips include:

- Find a Career Coach or Mentor
- Consider Digital Mentoring Resources & Social Networking Tools
- Join a VSO Member Organization

Read more about the complete roadmap and the different phases that help you prepare, transition and lead.

Transitional Guide

Phase 2

Transition

“Know and market your value”

This phase is designed to help you translate your military experience into a meaningful resume, begin networking, and research companies that are looking to hire.

MORE ABOUT THIS PHASE

There is no one-size fit all approach to transition. However locating a potential employer or that next steps, and securing an offer or acceptance option that will be meaningful to you is important. While Phase I builds a firm foundation, Phase II begins to build the transition strategy in action.

You should plan to set aside time each week for your transition tasks and job search as well as explore fellowship opportunities to help grow your network. Lastly, it's all about bringing that mission to an end successfully. Be sure there are no loose ends and always follow-up.

TASK 7: FIND A JOB

Start with the basics who, what, where, how, why and when

Make sure you capture all that you have done, and all those great accomplishments that conveys into experience. Then decide where you want to be and what you want to be doing. The rest will begin to unfold on your career map. Quick tips include:

- Know What Your Worth
- Use Your Network to Open Doors
- Never Underestimate the Power of Online Resources

TASK 8: MARKET YOURSELF

Tell your story

You're unique and bring a wealth of experience to the table. While everyone's journey is different, how you market yourself needs to be unique. What do you want people who first meet or interview you to remember? Quick tips include:

- Decide What Makes You Indispensable
- Put Yourself Out There
- Craft an Elevator Speech

TASK 9: BUILD YOUR NETWORK

Expand your network one contact at a time

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People can open doors you may not have known existed. Think about those in your community, your service programs, your social networks, etc. Who might be able to make a connection that will matter? Also consider professional networks that can help you transition easier into the civilian culture.

- Attend a Networking Event
- Join Social Networks or Professional Networks
- Build Your Network Every Day

TASK 10: NAIL THE INTERVIEW

Practice with expert tips and tricks

Marketing efforts to include how you market yourself, takes practice. How you develop job leads, contacts and referrals is all based on experience. It doesn't hurt to practice your approach. Consider leveraging peers, friends, and former supervisors as part of this network. Quick Tips include:

- Attend an Event to Assist with Marketing & Networking
- Do a Social Media Check-up on Facebook or LinkedIn
- Access Reading Room Resources to Get Updated Tips

TASK 11: TARGET JOB OPPORTUNITIES

Initiate a target cycle

Find, negotiate and accept a meaningful and financially viable employment opportunity. Search smarter not harder for job opportunities such as using other online platforms; leveraging job centers; and attending hiring events. Quick Tips include:

- Pinpoint Your Location for Where You Want to Work
- Consider Different Career Tracks
- Don't Limit Yourself

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PHASE 3

Excel

“Connect and lead to succeed”

This phase is designed to help you engage socially and professionally with local veteran organizations, locate professional development opportunities, and start serving as a mentor to fellow transitioning service members.

MORE ABOUT THIS PHASE

Learning the culture and core values is what you did in the military, time to repeat that pattern in the civilian culture. You have opportunities in that will help build your civilian career and provide you with techniques to be successful in the long term. This is your opportunity to connect into a whole new mission and environment to start the next phase of your journey.

Visit our Resources to learn more about veteran-friendly resources and companies

TASK 12: CONNECT TO CULTURE

Learn your new environment

Continue your professional development and start to adapt to new management styles and corporate cultures. Consider how your service values translate into corporate values. Understand your career advancement and longer-term opportunities.

TASK 13: HELP REDEFINE LEADERSHIP

Your leadership continues in civilian life

Leading means to create an evolution or strategic process to ensure you are always transitioning and benefiting from the new competencies you are bringing to your career. Below are some tailored tips to pave the way for not only your transition, but pave the way for others.

TASK 14: BECOME A MENTOR

Become the example

As you get your bearings, pass on your experience to others. Join a formal network for mentoring or take an informal protégé or another transitioning service member. Consider what worked for you and sharing your transition story. Don't stop there! Build a veteran culture in your corporate culture. Lead, succeed or get out of the way.