



ClearanceJobs®

MITRE

5 Strategies FOR HIRING CLEARED VETS

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION: ACCESSING THE TALENT	03
---	-----------

TIP #1: OPTIMIZE AVAILABLE DATA	04
--	-----------

TIP #2: DEDICATED RECRUITERS FOR CLEARED PROFESSIONALS	06
---	-----------

TIP #3: EMPLOYEE REFERRALS, INCENTIVES, EDUCATION & TRAINING BENEFITS	07
--	-----------

TIP #4: OPERATIONAL ADVISORY GROUPS, VETERAN SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS, SPONSORING AWARD CONFERENCES	08
---	-----------

TIP #5: INTEGRATED RECRUITING EFFORTS	09
--	-----------

INTRODUCTION: Accessing the Talent

Each year approximately 200,000 service members separate from active duty in the U.S. military. An overwhelming number of these veterans hold at least a Secret clearance. Due to the strength of the commercial sector over the past five years, defense contracting is no longer the only field for cleared professionals. Demand for cleared talent has blossomed in the medical, telecommunications, education, and financial industries. Almost every employer out there is trying to attract veterans into their organizations, and for good reason—veterans are a proven commodity in a hiring market that is transient and volatile. Veterans are dependable, trainable, and have a host of in-demand hard and soft skills.

The high demand for cleared professionals has many companies asking, “where are the qualified cleared veterans and how do we find them?” The answer is simple—they are out there, but there is frequently a disconnect between the available opportunities and the candidate attraction programs you’re using to entice them.

“Veterans represent one of the largest pools of cleared talent, and in this tight candidate’s market, smart companies absolutely must have a robust military outreach and recruiting program,” said Evan Lesser, founder and president of ClearanceJobs.com. “Whether you have an entire team dedicated to military outreach, or are a small business with limited resources, taking a few simple steps can make an absolute difference in helping to attract and retain veterans to your company. The time

spent considering veteran outreach and candidate attraction is time well spent.”

What is the value of a veteran within your company? The benefits are both monetary (the time and cost savings of hiring someone who knows both the industry and has a coveted clearance) and intangible—the morale and team-building benefits of hiring veterans into your workforce. Gaining access to the talent pool is a challenge, but there are successful, proven strategies for identifying and retaining cleared vets. If hiring more veterans is a part of your talent attraction strategy (and it should be), here are five tips to help you both attract and retain veterans.

“Veterans represent one of the largest pools of cleared talent... smart companies absolutely must have a robust military outreach and recruiting program.”

Evan Lesser

President and Founder

ClearanceJobs.com





TIP #1: Optimize Available Data

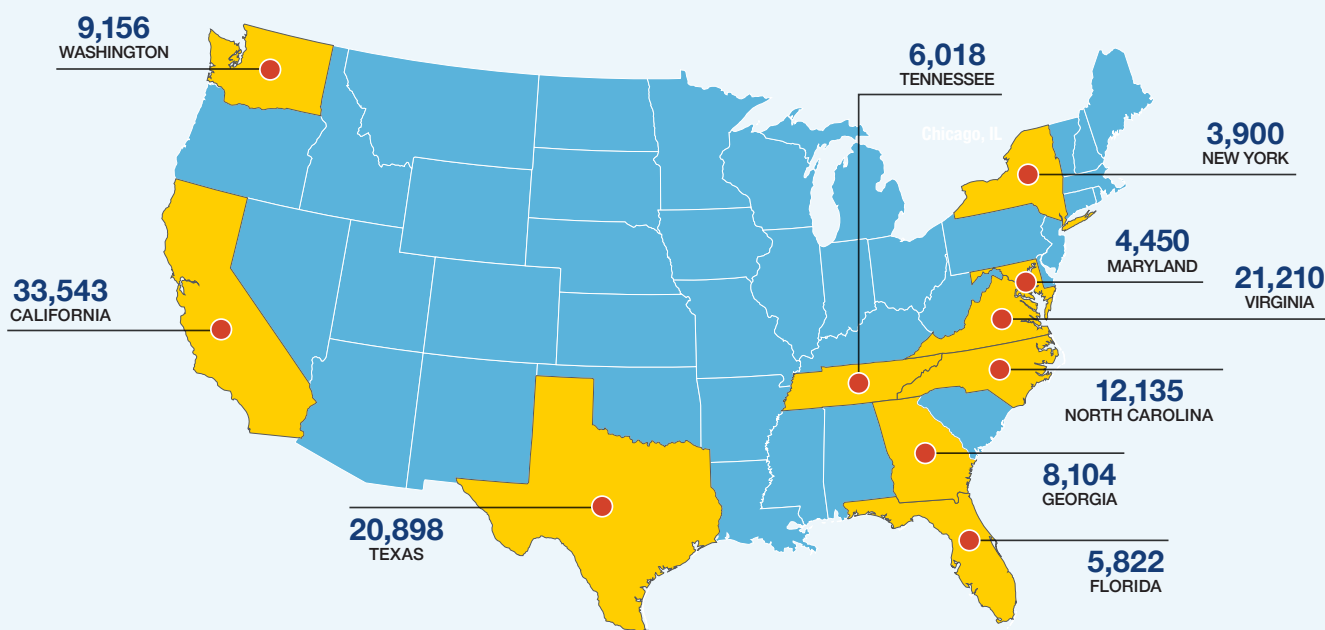
Funding private talent acquisition research can become quite costly. Whether you pay for a source's data or hire a private consultant, the costs add up. Here are two tools with published public data that can assist your talent acquisition research at no cost.

DoD SkillBridge publishes Military Separations Data that will allow you to sort the 200,000 service members transitioning annually. Using the [Visualization Tool](#), the map delivers state-specific data that reflects projected separating military.

You can also sort the data by military installation. If a company wants to forecast the return on investment for participating in a hiring fair at Camp Lejeune, NC, you can sort the Visualization Tool specific to that base. The data yields a projected separating number of 9,371 in Fiscal Year 2019.

This data can be particularly helpful in planning marketing campaigns, participation in hiring fairs, and focused [recruitment marketing](#) within regional areas. It is also useful in budgeting relocation

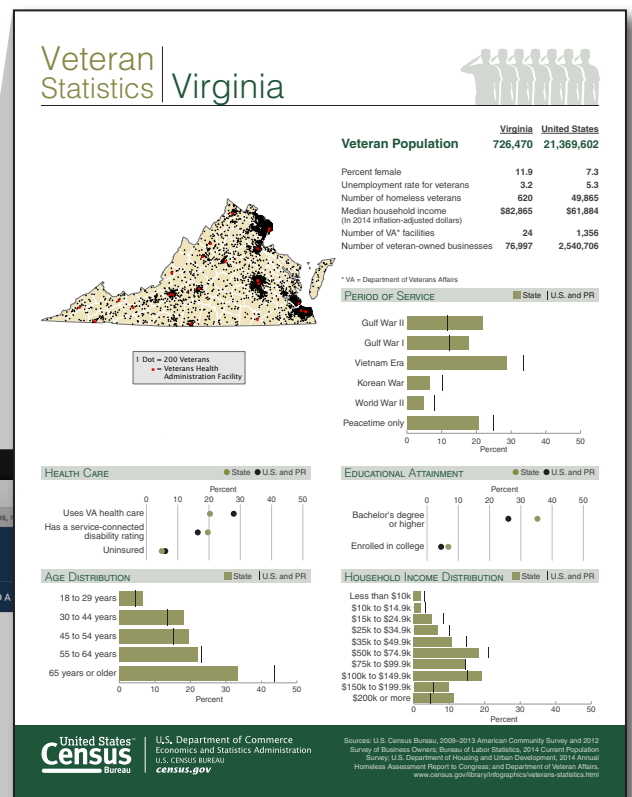
Top 10 States with the Most Projected Transitioning Veterans



incentives for new hires. If you know that your candidates are likely moving from across the country, you can build in relocation pay to the salary or incentives package to make the position more attractive to those candidates. Knowing your candidate market can assist human resources with identifying certain lifestyle perks that those candidates will prioritize. In short, this data can help companies view the big picture in candidate searches.

The U.S. Census Bureau publishes similar, but vastly more specific, data on veterans. Their data is available and sorted by demographic, social, and economic factors. The focus of this data is to collect and use it for policy analysis, veterans program planning, and budgeting. However, this is an

immensely useful tool for targeted talent acquisition operations. The U.S. Census Bureau data is so specific that you can select a state and see every bit of data on that state's veterans, including: percent female, unemployed veterans, number of veteran-owned businesses, age distribution, periods of service, education, health care, and household income distribution. Within a targeted veterans-hiring initiative and diversity platform, this tool can assist in focusing your strategy to the most densely populated areas for your search.



TIP #2: Dedicated Recruiters for Cleared Professionals



This tip may seem like an obvious suggestion, but many companies are not currently utilizing recruiters who speak the language. Cleared recruiting can be the most difficult sourcing niche within talent acquisition, so you should use professionals who understand the industry, what can legally be discussed, and how to interpret what is left unsaid. If your recruiters do not adequately understand the jobs for which they are hiring, they will yield candidates whose backgrounds and experience are not well matched to the positions. Using dedicated recruiters saves the company time and money.

Let's set the scene: a human resources generalist attends an online hiring fair. At that hiring fair, they collect the resumes of 50 applicants. The following week, the recruiter contacts 10 of those applicants for initial screenings with the hiring manager.

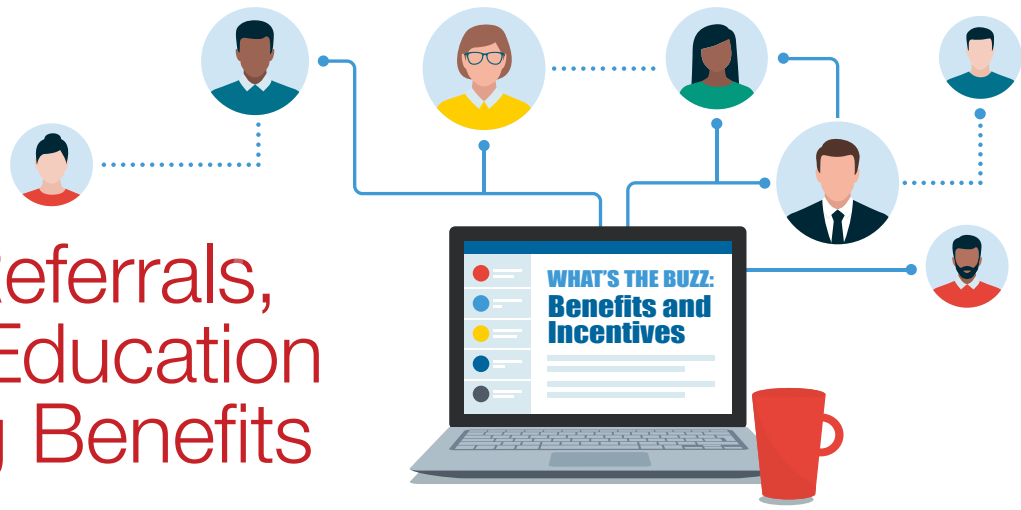


During those initial screenings, the hiring manager determines that few or none of the applicants possess the required background and skills to fill the position. This means that the company has lost weeks of time, and the ROI on the hiring fair is poor. Within the same scenario with a dedicated cleared professional recruiter, a company can expect a higher return of 25 – 50% on qualified applicants—all because the skills and experience needed is clear, and not lost in translation.

Most cleared professionals are weighing multiple offers. Losing time during the recruiting process often means not filling the position at all.

Another benefit to using a dedicated recruiter for cleared professionals is the ability of that recruiter to build trust within the community. The recruiter is, in many cases, the first point of contact a professional will make with a company. If the recruiter understands the nature of the work being performed, can speak the professional jargon of the candidate, and answer the candidate's questions about the role, the candidate will be engaged and interested in learning more about the company. When a recruiter does not fully understand the full spectrum of duties within the job description, it lends to a feeling of uneasiness or distrust for the company.

TIP #3: Employee Referrals, Incentives, Education and Training Benefits



The bottom line is this—cleared veterans know other cleared veterans. When companies incentivize direct employee referrals, current employees are motivated to help spread the word for open positions. Monetary incentives vary, but on the whole, employees will refer colleagues to their company if they are happy with the company culture.

Other than monetary incentives, it is important to offer benefits that keep employees happy. Many cleared veterans are looking for positions with companies that offer education and training benefits to support their long-term professional growth. There are many ways to offer education benefits to employees. Most often, companies choose to offer tuition reimbursement, tuition assistance,

and/or employer-sponsored scholarships. Tuition reimbursement is the safest option for companies, where employees pay the cost of tuition up-front and receive reimbursement from the company later. Ongoing training is a regular part of military life. Don't assume veterans will arrive with GI Bill benefits to apply toward professional development and obtaining certifications with your company. Make it clear you want to invest in them, as well.

The most attractive benefits packages for employees are those that extend education and training to spouses and children. The Society for Human Resource Management cited, "One of the biggest shifts in employees' financial priorities has been away from saving for retirement and toward paying off student loans."*

Veterans Offer a Unique and Diversified Skill Set

Employee working groups or task forces related to veterans can be a great way to incorporate the team spirit, leadership, and mentorship qualities veterans embody.

Don't treat veterans like entry-level employees, but don't assume they'll know everything to expect from a civilian employer on day one. Working groups, employee resources, and mentoring programs can help make veterans feel comfortable on day one.

*Education Benefits Present a Learning Opportunity, Feb. 2019





VETERAN SPOTLIGHT

BENEKA BALI

MITRE

As a MITRE project leader managing 23 engineers and scientists on a Remote Sensing Project, I direct work that helps warfighters perform Missile Warning, Missile Defense, Battlespace Awareness, Technical Intelligence and Battlespace Weather Detection functions.

My goal is to deliver capabilities that enable warfighters to execute their missions successfully. As an Army officer, I served my country and gained battlefield experience when my unit was deployed for CTJF-180. I understand the critical importance of having the right information and tools at the right time. Later, I worked for the United Nations in Darfur. In 2010, it was time for me to take my career in a different direction. I chose MITRE because it offered interesting and unique career paths where I could apply my skills and gain new ones, all while serving the public interest. MITRE was the right fit for me.

I graduated from West Point in 2000, and the Army gave me the leadership training and experiences I still leverage when managing and coaching others. The skills I learned in the Army have helped me succeed at MITRE.

MITRE values the abilities veterans have, and it also values diversity. When not at work, I also give back to the veteran community. I have been an advocate for Homebase, which helps Veterans and their Families heal from invisible wounds: traumatic brain injury (TBI), post-traumatic stress (PTS), and related conditions.

TIP #4:

Operational Advisory Groups, Awards Ceremonies, and Veteran Service Organizations

Difficult times call for innovative solutions, and the challenge of recruiting cleared veterans calls for just that. Much like focus groups help marketers test their products and messaging on potential audiences, Operational Advisory Groups assist companies in identifying their strengths and weaknesses in reaching fellow vets. These groups are made of invitee-only participants from every military occupational specialty within each branch of service. Participants are the best-of-the-best in their particular fields. Working groups include contributions from all parties, and can help generate new ideas and provide feedback on potential employees. Advisory Groups can also participate in conferences and network with other exceptional professionals. The contacts made may not always be transitioning out of service themselves, yet they serve as excellent contacts for talent acquisition.

Military professional awards ceremonies are a hidden gem amongst the best and brightest of military professionals. These events support the branches of service, show dedication to leadership, and recognize individuals for exceptional performance in their fields of specialty. Sponsoring these events allows companies to network with those high performing service members and demonstrates commitment to the private-government partnerships that meet the common mission.



Veteran service organizations help tens of thousands of transitioning and retiring service members every year. There is quite a bit of overlap for organizations that offer multiple services such as emotional support/camaraderie, housing, education, and employment services. However, donating to and supporting veteran service organizations can be a key factor in identifying cleared veterans. Supporting veterans through non-profit venues is philanthropic, but it also increases brand awareness. When companies increase their brand awareness, they also increase the number of applicants on open positions. Whether or not your company donates to these causes, there are many partnership opportunities available to assist veterans in the military-to-civilian workforce transition. Veterans will see straight through a purely transactional approach to hiring – show that you care as much about helping veterans through the full lifecycle of their transition, not just finding a job with your company.

TIP #5: Eliminate Assumptions from Your Recruiting Program



It doesn't matter if you're doing everything right if you're unable to communicate it to candidates. In 2020, focus your recruiting efforts on keeping your talent pipeline warm with better messaging and targeted contacts.

One ClearanceJobs user recently shared how impressed he had been when a recruiter reached out to him and noted specific information from his profile.

"It was obvious he had read my profile in detail. I've attended a lot of cleared job fairs, and the companies act like all they care about is that I have a clearance—like I'm a warm body with a clearance. But the recruiters who have contacted me on ClearanceJobs all called out my profile information in specific detail when they reached out, and it was pretty impressive."

Veterans know they're in demand and their clearance is valuable. However, they also want to know that you're interested in them for their specific skills - not because they check off a few bullets and will save your company time and money.

It is imperative for companies, small and large alike, to take advantage of every strategy. Finding and attracting the best talent amongst cleared veterans can be challenging, but the good news

is that those candidates are out there. A recent study from ClearanceJobs found that 81% of cleared professionals were at least somewhat likely to change employers in the next year. The good news for recruiters is that the right salary, benefits packages, and company culture can attract competitive candidates who are ready to make a change. Lastly, successful employee retention plans are necessary for keeping valued staff already on board. Decreasing turnover and utilizing employee referral incentives are both key factors in corporate success.

EXPERT TIP:

Remember to disconnect from candidates once you have moved on with the selection process.

It's okay to let a candidate know you don't have an opening now, or a specific position is closed.

Disconnecting allows you to connect again in the future.

CLEARANCEJOBS HAS ALL THE TOOLS FOR HELPING YOU ATTRACT CLEARED VETERANS.



DISCOVER AND PIPELINE

ClearanceJobs allows you to search its database using 14 separate filter criteria, including clearance level, geography, and salary. Intellisearch™ is powered by the same engine used by the intelligence community and takes advantage of intuitive searching to find candidates based on concepts—not keywords. Users can flag and make notes on candidate profiles, which are only viewable to the user and/or colleagues. Within the dashboard, users can view personalized metrics based on site activity, profile views, and connections, in addition to receiving additional candidate recommendations.



DIVERSITY CANDIDATES

Users can locate diversity candidates through group searches or keywords. The database has five dedicated veteran and wounded warrior groups allowing recruiters to broadcast hiring needs to the 25K+ group members or connect directly one-on-one with candidates. The keywords search within the database hosts phrases like “wounded warrior”, “10 points”, “30 percent”, or “disabled.” When users combine these key words for diversity with descriptions for ideal applicants, the search is narrowed to identify the best candidates.

*Copy written by Sarah Plaut,
The Write Approach, LLC*

Want to learn more?

Connect with a ClearanceJobs Recruiting
Specialist today at **1.866.302.7264**
or visit our website at www.clearancejobs.com



ClearanceJobs®