

From Military to Mainstream

Your Roadmap to Success

5 years until Retirement

1. Review Your Finances
 - a. Start paying down debt
 - b. Purchase a new car, so it is paid off before you get out (if needed)
 - c. Start saving or increase your savings into TSP or IRA
2. Job Hunting
 - a. Explore jobs in the industry you would like to apply
 - b. What certifications or degrees are you missing to be hired?
 - c. Where are jobs located? Will you need to move?
3. Network
 - a. Complete your LinkedIn Profile and begin soliciting recommendations
 - b. Volunteer in your community in areas that will provide value to you when you are job hunting, i.e., new skills, job experience, etc.
 - c. Order a contact card to provide to those you meet
4. Medical/Dental
 - a. Document, document, document – stop self-medicating. Get to medical and get that knee or back pain documented.

2-3 years until making the Transition

1. Review Your Finances
 - a. Start paying down debt
 - b. Purchase a new car, so it is paid off before you get out (if needed)
 - c. Start saving or increase your savings
 - d. Get a part-time job if needed to pay down debt and start saving more money.
2. Job Hunting
 - a. Explore jobs in the industry you would like to apply
 - b. What certifications or degrees are you missing to be hired?
 - c. Where are jobs located? Will you need to move?
3. Network
 - a. Complete your LinkedIn Profile and begin soliciting recommendations
 - b. Volunteer in your community in areas that will provide value to you when you are job hunting i.e., new skills, job experience, etc.
 - c. Order a contact card to provide to those you meet
 - d. Increase your networking online and by attending job/career fairs. Connect with hiring managers online and offline.

4. Medical/Dental
 - a. Document aches and pains – get them resolved.
 - b. Get all family member's medical and dental needs taken care of ... especially if you have children going off to college.
 - c. Learn about VA benefits, Tricare Standard, Tricare Prime, using out of Network, etc.
 - d. Investigate the cost of Delta Dental for Retirees – many individuals opt-out and pay out of pocket.
 - e. Advocate for you to get fillings replaced, crowns and implants completed while on active duty. Crowns and implants will cost approximately \$3,000.00 each after you leave the service.
5. Education
 - a. What education plan do you have available? GI Bill, VA Disability, etc.
 - b. Employers want to see a bachelor's degree – if you don't have one, start now while you have Tuition Assistance.
 - c. Certifications – get or keep your credentials up to date i.e. Microsoft, Electrical, IT, etc.
6. Begin Working with Your Career Coach
 - a. Develop your transition strategy
 - b. Address fears and concerns
 - c. Begin to design your ideal life

1 year from Transition

Review items in 5 years until Retirement and 2-3 years until making the Transition. Complete as necessary. Then... proceed below

1. Review your finances
 - a. Are you ready to retire, or do you need to save more money?
 - b. Aim to be debt-free – no car payments, credit cards, student loans, etc. – only mortgage, utilities, food
 - c. Figure out what your retirement check will be. Can you live on it right now? Try! (bank the remaining check)
 - d. Get a part-time job or start a small business to increase your revenue so you can put more money in the bank.
 - e. Make maximum contributions to TSP or IRA. (Make a catch-up payment)
2. Employment
 - a. Get a part-time job to pad the nest egg. This job will also be a safety net for making the Transition if you are staying in the local area. The part-time job may transfer to a full-time position.
 - b. Continue to research job openings – get any missing qualifications i.e., degree, certifications, experience, etc.
 - c. Start going on interviews.
 - d. Send a thank-you note after each job interview.
3. Resumes
 - a. Write your resumes or invest in a resume writer. Yes, you will have several. One chronological resume for each niche. Federal resumes have a unique format. Be

prepared for some companies to ask you to provide your resume in their preferred format. *Functional skills resumes are no longer used.*

- b. Get your resume proofread by others.
 - c. Keep it updated.
 - d. Post resume to LinkedIn. Build your LinkedIn network. Solicit recommendations.
4. Medical/Dental
 - a. If you are relocating, will there be a military installation you will use? Learn your options.
 - b. Set aside the first year's lump sum Tricare payment. You do not want your monthly check reduced by even a small amount. Pay this upfront.
 - c. Explore your dental insurance options. You may choose not to pay for dental the first year. But ensure you get all dental work completed before getting out of the service.
 5. Secure the venue for your final celebration reception/party.
 6. Network, network, network
 - a. Attend online and offline career fairs.
 - b. When sending holiday cards include your contact card. Let people know you are job hunting.
 7. Continue working with your Career Coach

Six months before you Transition

1. Plan Your Celebration
 - a. Send out Save the Date cards so family traveling can make arrangements
 - b. Secure location and caterer
 - c. Set a budget for the invitations, ceremony, flowers, gifts, clothing for family, alcohol, etc.
2. Final Physical
 - a. Schedule your final physical
 - b. Schedule your VA physical
 - c. Schedule final dental
 - d. Schedule eye exam if needed
 - e. Get your truck driver physical and eye exam – *if applicable*
 - f. Get your FAA Medical Certificate(s) – *if applicable*
3. Shop
 - a. Shop for a few new quality civilian pieces of clothing
 - b. Thank you notes and note cards – replenish your supply
 - c. Contact cards – do you need to order more?
4. Job Hunt
 - a. Continue your job search with the help of your Coach
 - b. Continue to Network and increase the intensity

5. Finances
 - a. Review again – how are you doing? Will you be debt-free? Emergency savings?
 - b. Learn what resources will be available to you in case of an emergency – Navy Relief, etc.
 - c. Explore the unemployment rules/laws for the area you will be living. How soon can you apply if you do not have a job?
 - d. Cell phone plan – will you be able to downgrade your plan?
 - e. Start looking at local grocery store ads, etc. to see what groceries cost if you do not have commissary privileges...how will this impact your budget?
 - f. Will you be selling leave days?
 - g. If you are in Base Housing start to design your exit strategy. Plan for cleaning expenses too.
6. Family
 - a. Pay attention to changes in the behavior of those that may be feeling anxious, scared, etc.
 - b. Communicate – it is ok to let family members know that things will be changing and what to expect.
 - c. Get family checkups, etc., before your EAS or EOS.
7. Continue working with your Coach
 - a. Update the resumes if needed
 - b. Plan YOUR ideal life – dream, challenge yourself, create your next life – not the life someone else wants you to have.
 - c. Vent – your coach will provide the safe confidential place for you to express yourself.

90 days until your Transition

1. Maintain Your Warrior Mindset
 - a. Be aware of that little voice in your head – stop the negative self-talk
 - b. Review your Circle of Influence
 - c. Continue to exercise and to eat healthily – don't slack off because you are getting out of the military
2. Admin Details
 - a. Ensure your terminal leave papers are completed
 - b. DD 214 – ensure it is accurate
 - c. Get to your medical appointments
 - d. Decide on a permanent mailing address, so you do not lose your mail when you transition. Only first class mail is forwarded. Change your address for magazines, church, and school bulletins.
 - e. Sign a release of information for civilian doctors so records can be sent to them or to another Provider.
 - f. Plan your exit from Base Housing.

3. Military Gear
 - a. Inventory the gear that you must turn in...find the missing items.
 - b. If you pay for missing gear – keep the receipts.

60 days until your Transition

1. Review the above list and highlight all items that still need your attention.
2. Meet with your Coach
 - a. Share those scary, uncomfortable feelings, so you remain sane.
 - b. Review your job hunting and networking strategy – make changes if necessary.
 - c. Work with your Coach on completing all items that you have not completed on this checklist.
3. Celebration
 - a. Order flowers for spouse or family members – stay within your budget
 - b. Address invitations and put stamps on them.
 - c. Follow up with caterers and the venue for your celebration.

30 days until your new life begins

1. Finances
 - a. Review your new budget
 - b. Complete your Tricare or other medical insurance paperwork. Write your check and get this ready to be mailed; signup online or in person.
 - c. Dental insurance – get ready to complete the application or know you will pay out of pocket.
 - d. Life insurance – make a final decision on what company you will use, etc.
2. Mindset
 - a. Meet with your Coach
 - b. Be prepared for a mixture of emotions
3. Celebration
 - a. Review your budget
 - b. Follow up with caterer, venue, DJ, etc.
 - c. Shop for last minutes party supplies, clothing, gifts, etc. – remember your budget
 - d. Organize Base access if your celebration is held on a military installation.
4. Administrative
 - a. Identify what still needs to be completed from previous lists.
 - b. Review your DD 214 for accuracy – one more time.
 - c. Security Clearance – find out if it will remain active and the adjudication date.

After you make the Transition

1. If you Retired

- a. ID cards – get a new ID card for you and all eligible family members
- b. Register with the Veterans Administration
- c. Register to Vote.
- d. Take your DD214 to the DMV and update your drivers license.
- e. If you are not working – visit your unemployment office to see if you qualify for benefits. This will vary from state to state.
- f. Review your new budget.
- g. Sign up for Tricare, Delta Dental Retiree, etc.
- h. Build your LinkedIn network. Solicit recommendations before people forget who you are.
- i. Update your Veterans status on your federal resume when you receive your VA rating.

2. If you are going to college

- a. Ensure your GI Bill paperwork is in order
- b. Ensure your FASA is completed for Pell Grant and other loans
- c. Work with your Coach to balance the stress of homework, school, job, and family.
- d. Register to Vote.
- e. Take your DD214 to the DMV and update your drivers license.
- f. Review your new budget.
- g. Research life, health and dental insurance for students.
- h. Build your LinkedIn network. Solicit recommendations before people forget who you are.
- i. Update your Veterans status on your federal resume when you receive your VA rating.

3. If you transitioned at EAS

- a. If you are working – enjoy your new career!
- b. Register to Vote.
- c. Take your DD214 to the DMV and update your drivers license.
- d. If you are not working – visit your local unemployment office to learn your options.
- e. Review your new budget.
- f. Research life, health, and dental insurance options.
- g. Build your LinkedIn network. Solicit recommendations before people forget who you are.
- h. Update your Veterans status on your federal resume when you receive your VA rating.



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