**Trading a Tiger’s Stripes for Pin Stripes**

The Armed Forces are doing a better job of helping the transition to civilian life; there are many initiatives to ease the move to “Civvy Street.”  However, there is undoubtedly more that could be done, including preparation for transition thinking.

An employer should hire a Veteran: it is the right thing to do (given the service Veterans have performed for our nation); it is also the smart thing to do (in a business sense) as Veterans bring a wealth of precious capabilities, skills, attributes, and experiences.

But how does a Veteran Tiger translate those badges of rank, qualifications, and awards to statements of value into a CV? Many civilians do not understand military rank structures. "Generals" and “Admirals" are recognisable as being very senior, but everyone else is a mist - have you noticed how the press think everyone who is serving is a "soldier”?

Many hiring managers and recruiters do not know a Corporal from a Colonel if you describe yourself in your CV as a "Colour Sergeant," or even a generic term like "Junior Non-Commissioned Officer" these may make no sense to them. And that confusion could damage your job search - **Don't take the risk of being underestimated**.

Love it or hate it, the CV is still the expected job search tool to showcase past work experiences, marketable skills, apparent abilities, expertise, and qualifications. Do not go into the detail of describing your positional rank, rather focus on articulating the functional area of your appointment.

To help with the transition to civilian life, you need to be able to explain clearly, using examples that will resonate with a civilian, the skills and knowledge that you have acquired over your career. It is easy when talking to other Veterans to rely on a shared understanding of what it means to be a Private, Sergeant or a Captain, so no explanation is necessary, however many civilians do not share that knowledge. It is essential to be able to explain it to them, or you won’t get the job.

If your career as a Tiger in the PWRR is coming to an end, it can seem difficult to translate your experience to civilian equivalents however it’s not as problematic as you might think - stick to some basic guidelines, help yourself make the transition smoother and ensure the skills you learned earn you the recognition you deserve:

* Avoid military jargon on your CV, and in conversations, especially interviews. Those making the hiring decision may not know the difference between a Lance Corporal and a Lieutenant Colonel.
* Use civilian equivalents when describing your role, detail your responsibilities in that role and the relevance to the position you seek.
* Do not expect the hiring manager to understand how your military training equates to the supervisory skills they're seeking.
* Look for ways to translate military training and Army experiences into civilian language.
* Do include military-specific honours and awards in the experience section of your CV. But articulate the challenge, action, and result story as well as the leadership skills employed to achieve them.
* Always include certificates that relate to the position you are applying for. In certain technology sectors, most of the certification you receive in the military is identical to civilian certification.
* Do not forget to focus on the soft skills that are inherent to military experiences, such as the ability to work and contribute to a team, and capacity to work under extreme pressure and see projects through to completion.
* Highlight where you initiated change that increased your unit's productivity, saved money, or increased effectiveness. Translate the outcomes into measurable results.
* Do not wait until you leave to send your CV out. All employers are willing to receive unsolicited applications; many will even hold a position open for a qualified applicant, most will advise you what additional courses would be useful.
* Take time to ease into civilian life, you have earned it. Going straight to work in an office can be a culture shock.

Finally, consider your career goals when transitioning from a military to private sector role. Changing from the focused mission of the Armed Forces, a Veteran Tiger may find the politics and internal drama of corporate environments not as fulfilling and lacking in purpose. If that sounds like you, then consult with experts to help guide your future job search, to target company cultures and industry sectors that suit you and what knowledge, skills, and attitude you bring to a potential employer.

Transitioning from the Army to Civvy Street requires hard work and planning. Well executed, it can be exciting, and a purposeful mission filled with rewards and meaning.

There’s been a subtle yet noteworthy change to suits being worn these days: a Union Jack flag pin, or a Veterans badge, sometimes both in the lapel of the jacket.  Are lapel pins appropriate? Those ones definitely are!