

# Transitioning to Civilian Healthcare or Industrial Settings

“What do I want to be when I grow up?”

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# Overview

- \* Arriving At The “Big Decision”
- \* Factors To Consider
- \* Preparing To Get Out
- \* The Job Search
- \* Your Skill Sets / Selling Yourself
- \* Culture Shock – Your New Job
- \* Summary (take home messages)

# Arriving At The “Big Decision”

☺ Contract Up / 20 & Out

☺ Planned Retirement

☹ Bad Day / Spur Of The Moment

# Factors To Consider

## Location, Location, Location!!!

**This decision will impact all your other considerations.**

-  Job search
-  Housing options
-  Tricare or Not?
-  BX / Commissary

# Preparing To Get Out

## Enlisted Folks

- **Get your degree (AS, BS, etc...)**

Don't panic if you can't, ask for conditional employment.

- **Get your certification**

An increasing number of states are requiring certification / licensing of lab staff.

# Preparing To Get Out

## All Ranks

- Take TAP to heart

  - Go multiple times (at different bases)  
if you can – different perspectives

- To SBP or not SBP, still yet another question...

  - What does your retirement check mean to you & yours?

# Preparing To Get Out

VGLI (Veterans Group Life Insurance) or not?

- Advantage: No exam, guaranteed acceptance.
- Disadvantage: May be more costly than commercial policies.

# Preparing To Get Out

Things to bring with you:

- ✓ Contact information for references
- ✓ Performance reports
- ✓ Writing samples
- ✓ Books

Worth the investment:

- Book on common questions asked at interviews

# Preparing To Get Out

Start building up a resume “statement bank”.

- Did this which resulted in that...
- Allows quick tapering of resumes to employer’s specifications.
- Best resumes are custom made and include the key terms used in the ad.
- Civilianize your military job titles

# The Job Search

Safe (comfort zone) employers:

- ARC, civilian hospital labs, military contractors (e.g. SAIC)

Explore other options:

- Equipment vendors you have worked with
- Look for jobs based on skill sets, not specific applications (e.g. GMPs, training, instrument/computer validation, etc.)

# The Job Search

Clinical lab folks have found jobs in

- Dairy Industry (micro applications)
- Wine Industry (pipetting/testing)
- Oil refining (testing)
- Chemical Industry (chemical use/MSDS's)
- Environmental Clean-up (testing/PPE's)
- Pharmaceutical Industry (GMPs/testing)
- Banking (audit checklists/inspections)

# The Job Search

## Use multiple resources

- ❖ Written (i.e. Advance magazine, society journals)
- ❖ Web postings (e.g. Mass. Biotech Council [www.massbio.org](http://www.massbio.org))
- ❖ Web search engines (Google, Dogpile, Ask - try them all)
- ❖ Word of mouth

# The Job Search

**Companies shoot for the moon in their ads.**

- ✓ If you don't apply it's a definite "no"
- ✓ You can turn a maybe into a "yes"
- ✓ Unadvertised specials – surprise job

## **Key word searches**

- Go beyond "Med tech" or "laboratory"
- Try equipment terms, QA, QC, terms you've seen in other ads...

# Your Skill Sets / Selling Yourself

## Writing skills

- ✓ SOPs, validation plans, training plans, performance reports etc.

## Presentation skills

- ✓ Briefings, training sessions

## Managerial skills

- ✓ PME, problem solving, process improvement

# Your Skill Sets / Selling Yourself

## Experience Counts

- ✓ When looking at a company's web site, think about what you've done and how you could make this apply to the firm.
- ✓ Include this in your cover letter.
- ✓ The leaps across career fields are not always logical but the skill sets still apply.

# Your Skill Sets / Selling Yourself

Your approach will be sometimes be different, don't be alarmed...

## Resumes

Laboratory Technician – Provided general laboratory services in support of outpatient and emergency room treatment and care. Hanscom Air Force Base, Massachusetts – November 1978 to January 1981

# Your Skill Sets / Selling Yourself

We're all "Army guys" to many hiring managers.

Don't worry though, there are more of us out there than you suspect.

Some jobs you will know you do not want

# Your Skill Sets / Selling Yourself

Our # 1 Weakness:

## Bargaining for your salary

- If you know someone at the firm, ask what's typical for that HR.
- Try to know your worth (what are similar positions being paid)
- What will your expenses be (commute costs, tolls, subway, etc.)

# Culture Shock – Your New Job

While the military is cross-section of society, you now get to view the whole ball of wax.

- No more prescreening
- Piercings, tattoos, clothing (or lack thereof)
- No 1st Sgt or Commander to refer problem cases to.

# Culture Shock – Your New Job

It's not all bleak though, some of it's actually a lot of fun.

- ☺ Much more say in who you work with
- ☺ Interviewing: You as the hiring manager

## Bad boss or job?

👉 You now have options and can vote with your feet...

# Some take-home messages

- ↳ You have a much better skill & experience range than you give yourself credit for.
- ↳ Don't rule out a job because you don't meet the posted qualifications.
- ↳ Consider applying your skill sets to other industries.
- ↳ If you plan to settle away from a base, consider your Tricare access before refusing an employer's medical plan.

# Some take-home messages

## Rejection:

A little story about the word “no” to help you keep everything in perspective...



"Friendly tip for your next interview--  
the interviewer gets the big chair."

Thanks to: [www.awriteimpression.com/humor.htm](http://www.awriteimpression.com/humor.htm)

# Interpreting Employment Ads

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**SEEKING A CANDIDATE WITH A WIDE VARIETY OF EXPERIENCE** – You need to replace the 3 people that just left.

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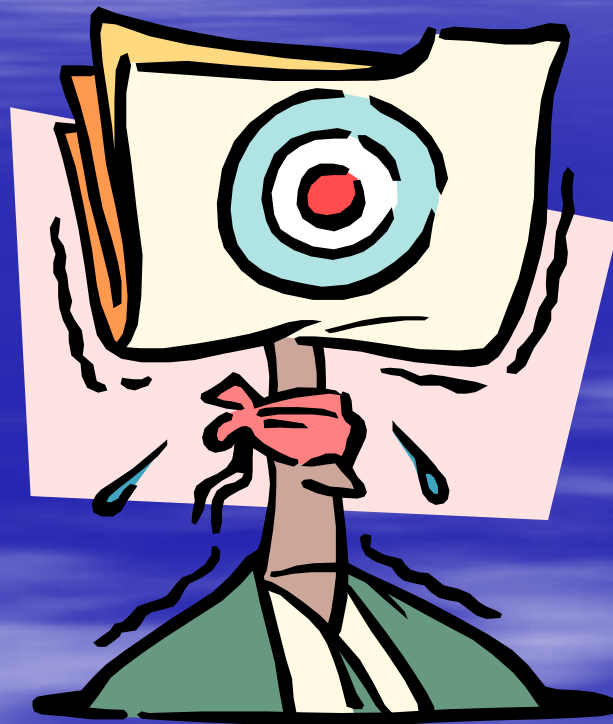
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**GOOD COMMUNICATION SKILLS** – Management communicates poorly so you have to figure out what they want and then do it.

Any Questions?



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