# Where do Veterans work?

*“Veterans are entering a UK economy and jobs market that is still feeling the effects of the 2008 recession, eleven years after that event and subsequent others, and facing an uncertain future. Any effect on the UK’s employment market of the decision to leave the European Union will not be clear for some time. Over the last few years, however, the employment rate in the UK has grown considerably, with 2016 marking the lowest levels of unemployment recorded in a decade as the UK unemployment rate has fallen. It is widely accepted that the majority of working age Veterans who leave Service go on to have successful and diverse alternative careers. An observer does not need to look far in the UK before finding Veterans filling roles throughout the civilian jobs market. In fact, 85% of UK Service personnel who accessed Career Transition Partnership (CTP) services as they left the Armed Forces in 2014/15 were employed up to 6 months after leaving Service”* – Royal British Legion

The UK’s servicemen and women operate in a highly professional, high-tech dynamic environment. They have acquired the type of skills that employers highly value in this modern digital economy, **so where do Veterans work**?

## Defence Industry

Ex-service personnel are well suited to the Defence Industry. Their technical knowledge in trades and engineering and their attitude and understanding of the operational environment, together with the ability to “translate” between the uniforms and industry, are invaluable.

## Project or Program Managers

Veterans have experience in juggling the demands of complex projects. Throughout their military career, they have balanced human resource, critical supplies, and time constraints to meet objectives. Their leadership skills enable them to manage and motivate diverse teams to ensure the project is completed on time, with the available resources, and above standard. Veterans have transited from the military to programs supporting the military. They are subject matter experts and proven to be transformational team leaders.

## Engineering

Military candidates are well trained and schooled in the technical aspects necessary to succeed as a sales, product, or developmental engineer. Veterans often come with advanced degrees and hands-on experience which can contribute to the bottom line. This background, combined with communication and management skills, gives a company great flexibility and a broad spectrum of capabilities.

## New Business Development Manager

Understanding the structure of the Ministry of Defence means that Veterans can use their contacts and networks to find key personnel and opportunities necessary to generate new business. That ability, combined with their determination and knowledge, ensures success in securing contracts.

## Field Service or Maintenance Technician

Many Veterans represent some of the best electrical, mechanical, and electronic talents anywhere. Technically trained with real world experience, they frequently work on the same equipment they operated and maintained in the military. A Veteran’s reduced learning curve and solid fundamentals, mean as a technician they can work on the most intricate of equipment and systems. A Veterans excellent communication skills, professional presentation, and maturity can assure success.

## Transportation

A great many Veterans are employed with freight and shipping companies, including railway undertakings and in some instances make up more than one-fifth of the workforce. Some as drivers, others in management and operations the move from military life to the transportation industry is considered an easy transition.

## Private Security

Many male and female Veterans move into the booming industry of Private Security, be it Close Protection, Maritime Security, site security, training and military support, or other specialisations. Former military personnel are much more likely to contract in such roles than their civilian peers and are in high demand.

## Installation, maintenance and repair

This far-reaching category encompasses plumbers and electricians, telecommunications specialists, mechanics, and other skilled workers. It’s also one that includes a significant population of Veterans.

## Government Agencies

Having left military service Veterans still contribute to the UK in supervisory roles, nationwide. A large number of veterans work in the Police, Prison Service, Ambulance Service and other groups and agencies.

## Filling The Skills Gap?

Not just a UK phenomenon, the change in operational tempo as well as defence cutbacks see many Armed Forces personnel now looking for new careers in Civvie Street.

Repeatedly, I hear that Veteran skills just do not translate to industry. Veterans can be typecast as lacking experience in the “real world”, that their leadership style is “autocratic”, or are “institutionalised”. These are all examples or stereotyping and conscious bias, and simply not true!

There are many approaches one could take to addressing skills shortages; I believe that one of the best solutions is to employ Veterans.

Targeting industries will take time so the sooner you start, the better. Sometimes you will be introduced to people who simply do not ‘get it’. They do not understand the value of your skills and how they apply to their industry - Soldier On!