

Translating military skills to civilian skills

As you create your résumé or prepare for an interview, avoid military jargon and terms. Most civilian employers will not understand military jargon, abbreviations and acronyms. Use the following guidelines to prevent this problem.

Write out terms and explain what they mean when necessary.

For specialized military training, list the names and number of hours of professional and technical training you have taken. Only include training if it relates to the job.

Briefly explain any course that may be pertinent to the job. For example write, "Management and Supervision" as a course title. Then add the course content: equal opportunity law; giving and receiving positive and negative feedback; and giving directions.

Use civilian equivalent phrases and titles. Civilian recruiters will not take the time to translate your résumé into civilian terms and may not see you as qualified for the position. Below are some military terms with recommended civilian equivalents.

MILITARY TERM	CIVILIAN EQUIVALENT
NCOIC	Supervisor, manager, coordinator
TDY/TAD	Business related travel
PCS	Relocation
NCO Academy	Leadership management training
War College	Executive military leadership school
Command and Staff College	Senior military leadership school
Basic Officers Course	Entry level officer leadership course
Basic training	Introductory military training
O7 and above	President, senior director, chairman of the board, managing director
O5 and O6	Chief executive officer, chief operation officer, program director
O4	Senior administrator, department head, program manager
O1 to O3	Executive, administrator, manager, project officer
WO1 to WO5	Director, specialist, facilitator, technical manager, technical specialist
E7 to E9	supervisor, department manager, operations manager, senior advisor
E4 to E6	Assistant manager, line supervisor, section leader, task leader, supervisor foreman
E1 to E3	Production workers, assembler, technician, assistant, apprentice, team member