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Answer:

The transition from the military to a civilian job can be difficult. Fortunately, you can follow a few key steps to make the process as smooth as possible and help find a job that's financially and professionally rewarding.

At the beginning of your search, you'll want to reach out to your local Transition Assistance Office to locate resources that can help you with your job search, which includes a mandatory five-day workshop tailored to assist you with every step of the job search, from writing resumes to understanding veterans' benefits. For more information, visit the U.S. Department of Labor website at www.dol.gov/vets.

Next, consider whether you will need additional education and training. For instance, will you apply for jobs that require a two- or four-year degree? Do you need a license or certification to work in a particular field? When you choose which path you'll take, be sure to investigate whether there are veterans' benefits available to help pay for further education. If you'd rather match the skills you gained from your time in the military to a civilian job, get started with an online search. One example of a website that caters directly to military members looking for civilian employment is USAJobs (www.usajobs.gov).

You'll also want to make sure that your finances are in good shape during the transition process. This means creating or building an emergency fund you can tap into in case the job search takes longer than anticipated. In the meantime, you might consider temporary employment to provide a source of income. Think carefully about the pay and benefits associated with a job before you accept an offer. That way, you will know whether it suits the needs of both you and your family.

Along the way, make sure to protect your personal information. Because members of the military are major targets for identity theft, avoid any job sites that seem questionable. Looking for civilian employment is stressful enough without having to worry about financial fraud.

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