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*Military Transition:
Six Checklist Items to
Get You Started*



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1. Runway

How much time do you have until your active duty expires and you need to be generating income? _____

How much time do you have before you are separated from the service?

Takeoff is more than being out of the service, to me it also means generating income. I have seen the gamut. There are individuals wanting to “double dip” and be earning income while on terminal leave and others with no intention of pursuing a job. They choose to live off of their retirement and/or disability.

Starting point: What is your end of active service date and what is your target date for earning income?

Take out a calendar and do the math for both.

Choose your end of service date _____

Back it up by the terminal leave you will be taking _____

Add the Permissive TAD you will take (different for retiring and separating members) _____

Add any internship Permissive TAD days. _____

The date you stop working in your current role could be 6-9 months prior to separation. It depends on the leave you have saved, whether you are retiring or separating, and if you participate in an internship.



2. Number

How much money do you need to live? _____

Have you done the math? Are you happy with the lifestyle your current income provides? Do you know what that same income is worth in the outside world? There are significant tax advantages incorporated into your military allowances and specialty pay.

Here are a couple of resources to start your research:

<https://www.military.com/benefits/military-pay/calculator>

<https://www.financialfrontline.org/civilian-pay-to-equal-military-take-home-pay/>

Starting point:

- Assess your current pay, allowances, and specialty pay – what is your take home pay? _____
- Convert your non-taxable income into taxable income – what is your take home pay? _____
- Construct a budget for your current location and your proposed location.

- What is the number your new budget tells you need to maintain your lifestyle? _____



3. Resume

Suppose I met you at a networking event and had no knowledge of the military. If I asked you for your resume, how well will it represent you? If that question gave you anything other than complete confidence, your resume is not ready for prime time.

Starting point:

Get professional resume assistance from at least one organization that assists veterans. Some are free and some charge.

Write a chronological listing of all the jobs you have had:

Write a list of your top five skills and how you demonstrated them:

Write a functional resume to show what you bring to your next organization

Give it to others with no military background for review

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Give it to others with no military background for review (*repeated for emphasis*)



4. LinkedIn

What is the message your LinkedIn profile sends? Does it accurately portray and parallel your resume?

Just like your resume, it requires demilitarization which is very difficult for many of us. After you have made a solid effort – get help. LinkedIn should be your professional social media platform of choice.

Starting Point:

- Use a LinkedIn guide that instructs you how to build an All-Star LinkedIn Profile
- Confirm your profile parallels your resume
- Have a professional “civilian” photo
- Join LinkedIn Premium at zero cost for one year (veteran benefit)
- Start searching and connecting. Always connect by using a note to introduce yourself



5. Medical

How accurate is your medical record? How well does it document all of your medical injuries or issues? This is the time to get your medical record in order.

Ensure your record accurately documents your medical history. The medical process can be time consuming. Do not delay in getting this started.

Starting Point:

- Review your record for completeness
- Make appointments for those items you have pushed off
- Schedule your final physical, usually 180 days prior to separation



6. Veterans Administration Claim

The medical item above flow right into your VA Claim. It is helpful to find a colleague who is 6-9 months ahead of you in the transition process. They will readily share their personal experiences with the process.

A key area is how they worked with their Veteran Support Organization (VSO) representative.

Starting Point:

- Seek out local VSO representatives
- Have your medical record in good shape by 180 days prior to separation
- Work with your VSO representative to complete your VA claim
- Schedule your VA appointments as soon as possible



How did you feel about each checklist item? If the list gave you some anxiety, it's time to get started.

What would be the impact on your transition if you had every checklist item fully under control at this point?

I have seen veterans in transition move from near panic to being calm and deliberate – because the checklist gave them direction.

I hope it does that for you. If you want assistance in the process please contact me below.

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