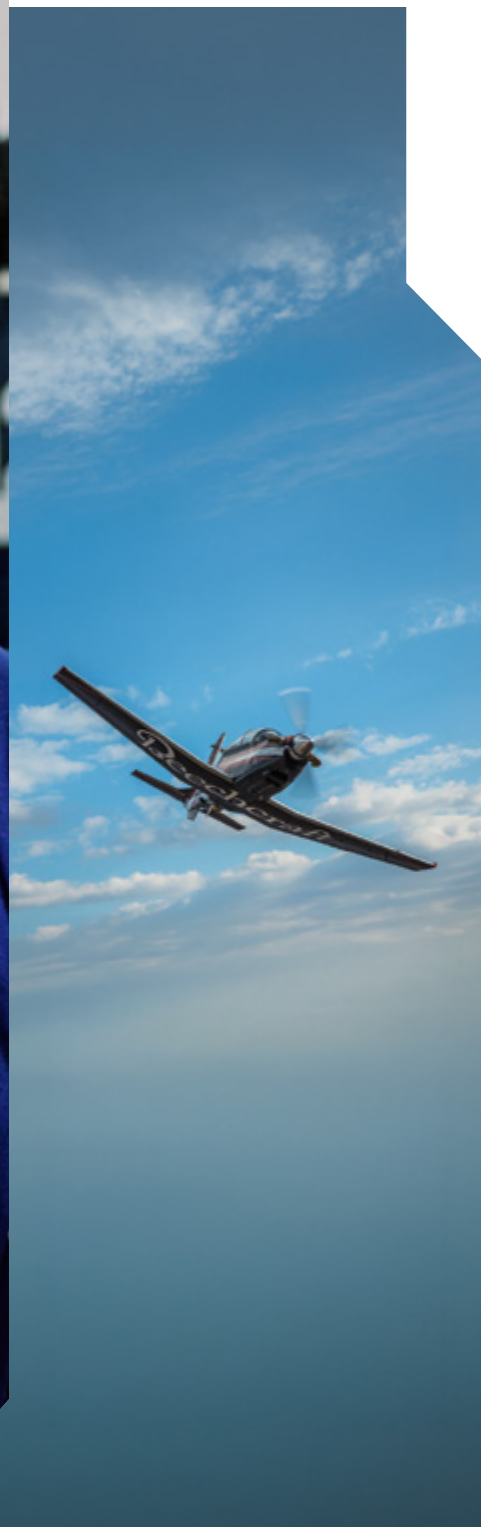
Cessna | Beechcraft
BY TEXTRON AVIATION

VETERANS WORK HERE



MILITARY-TO-CIVILIAN TRANSITION GUIDE

THE ULTIMATE PLAYBOOK FOR THE MILITARY COMMUNITY

FOREWORD

Despite 33 years of service to our nation – including multiple combat and peacekeeping tours – my transition into the private sector was one of the most difficult periods in my life. As an honorable soldier though, I conducted an after-action review to capture my lessons learned. A summary of my notes is presented in this transition guide so you might benefit and enjoy an easier transition into your new civilian career.

I began my transition woefully unprepared for the challenges that awaited me. I was wildly shooting resumes downrange in hopes of hitting an unseen target – a blind, Kentucky windage-style approach. I received no feedback in return. It wasn't until I put structure to my problem and began using military problem-solving tools that my performance and results improved. Sun Tzu, a military strategist and philosopher, became my guide:

"If you know the enemy and know yourself,
you need not fear the result of a hundred battles."
– Sun Tzu

I realized to achieve success in my military-to-civilian transition "war" I needed to properly prepare for combat. So, I studied the "enemy" (the recruiter), their methods of war (the application process) and myself (by defining my own career interests). Soon, I stood victorious.

"I will never leave a fallen comrade!"
– Warrior Ethos

The Warrior Ethos, the principles that define my values, was the driving force behind the development of this guide. I won my transition battle, and I knew I had to turn around to help the next transitioning military member. Whether you are transitioning into the private sector from active duty or a Department of War (DoW) civilian career, looking for civilian employment while continuing to serve in the reserve component, or completing your advanced degree, exploring a change in civilian careers, or are a military spouse, I am confident these tips will help you endure the rigors of your transition and lead you to an overwhelmingly successful career in the private sector.

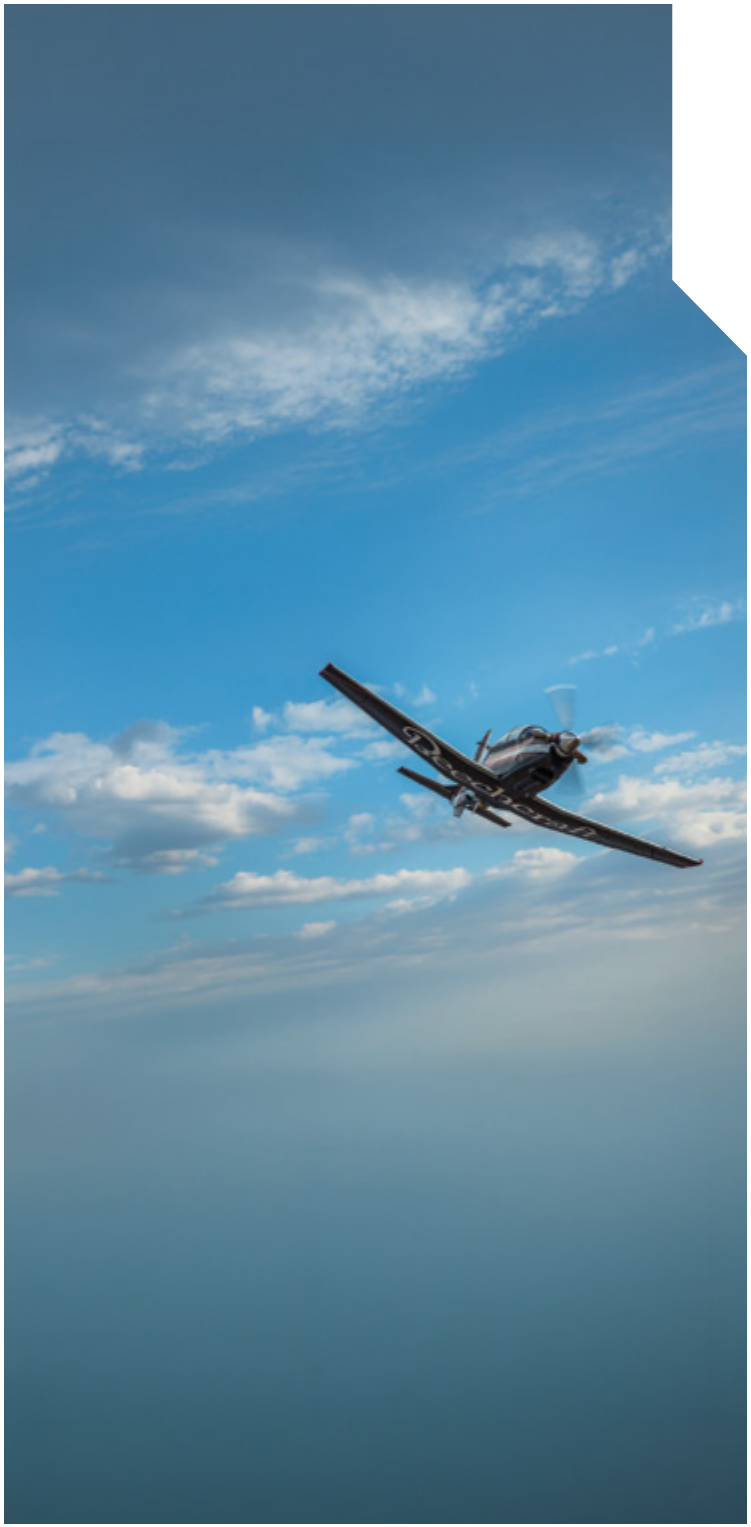
“Charlie Mike,”

John C. Buckley, II
Colonel, U.S. Army (Retired)
Textron Aviation Senior Manager – Military Programs

Cessna | Beechcraft
BY TEXTRON AVIATION

VETERANS WORK HERE

This guide uses military terminology such as “war,” “enemy” and “combat,” as a strategic lens to help translate your operational planning experience into career transition success. These terms are not literal. Recruiters and hiring teams are not adversaries. On the contrary, they are key players and important potential allies in your success. This framework simply enables you to approach the hiring process with the same discipline, preparation and strategic mindset that defined your military service.



CREATING FLEXIBILITY

Your military-to-civilian transition will never go exactly as you planned. Creating flexibility by studying all the options available besides transitioning directly into a second career may be beneficial. You can evaluate the possibility of participating in a SkillBridge internship, or going to school, or joining the National Guard and Reserves. Planning for these branches or sequels may present alternative directions you never previously considered in your military-to-civilian transition war.

LEARN BY DOING: TAKE ADVANTAGE OF SKILLBRIDGE

Before conducting combat operations, my team and I spent hours and hours practicing our individual and collective skills. We started in the classroom and progressed to performing our tasks in mock or simulated environments that closely replicated real combat situations. We were learning by doing, honing our skills to attain successful outcomes. This concerted effort enabled us to successfully apply complex skills in unfamiliar environments.

SkillBridge internships fit within our military tradition of learning by doing, giving transitioning service members the opportunity to apply their finely honed skills in an unfamiliar environment, one where they will soon find themselves working – in your new career field and job.

WHAT IS SKILLBRIDGE?

1. An opportunity to experience civilian work through apprenticeships, internships, or industry training during your final 180 days of active duty.
2. An unpaid experience to evaluate the career you are pursuing, and which skills can enable you best.

3. The goal is to help you find meaningful employment with a reasonable expectation of comparable living wage and post-service employment. But there are no guarantees of employment after completing the program.

4. You continue to receive your military compensation and benefits while participating in the program, which is typically 90–120 days long, but can extend to a maximum of 180 days.

SKILLBRIDGE HELPS YOU IN YOUR TRANSITION

1. "Learn by doing" the civilian work you are passionate about.

2. Gain first-hand knowledge of the civilian work culture and how you can successfully apply your skills within the unfamiliar civilian work environment.

3. Educate an employer on what type of a high-performing employee you can be, expose the relevance of your skills and experiences to the job and reveal your character.

4. Fill knowledge and information gaps about your career field and about a company or business culture.

5. Experience civilian leadership and ways to collaborate with stakeholders, peers and supervisors.

6. Possibly earn valuable certifications and licenses.

7. Increase the probability of getting a job offer and a great start to your new career.

SKILLBRIDGE BENEFITS THE COMPANY OR EMPLOYER TOO

1. Helps them find top talent within the military community.

2. Expands the military community knowledge that they hire members of the military community.

3. Provides a free evaluation of your skills and experiences and a free assessment of your character – even before making a hiring decision. Consider it a 90–120-day interview.

4. Gives them the opportunity to refine or enhance your skills to those required in a specific job or series of related jobs.

5. Presents the chance to educate you on why you should work for them when you complete your internship.

6. Gives them access to a motivated and highly trained workforce.

7. Increases the likelihood of post-service employment for and retention of participants and others in the intern's network.

HOW TO GET STARTED IN SKILLBRIDGE?

1. **Determine your eligibility.** You must have completed at least 180 continuous days of active service and have 180 days or fewer remaining before your discharge date.

2. **Get approval.** Get approval from your unit commander. It is recommended that you seek approval at least 9 to 12 months before your separation date.

3. **Discover internship opportunities.** Visit the DoW SkillBridge website (*https://SkillBridge.osd.mil*) and visit the "Find a SkillBridge Opportunity" page which has search functions to identify a company aligned with the program.

- You can search by Keywords (e.g. a career or job title) or location (where you wish to intern)
- You can also click on the Partner tab and type in Textron Aviation

4. **Reach out to SkillBridge partner companies.** Most companies will want you to apply and interview for their internship opportunities.

CHOOSE THE RIGHT OPPORTUNITY

1. Treat this search for an internship like you do a job search.
2. Confirm the Internship opportunity is aligned with your targeted career field.
3. Verify that the company hosting the internship is one you could work for at the conclusion of the experience.
4. Research the company and its SkillBridge internship reviews to ensure it is a valid and useful opportunity.
5. Examine if the company offers additional benefits like career training, certifications, or licensing in areas or with equipment necessary for your career field.
6. Ask if the company will provide a military veteran mentor throughout the internship experience.
7. Request that the company creates informational interview opportunities with other employees within the same career field or related job.
8. Consider that the company's investment in SkillBridge is to find someone who has a high probability of converting to a full-time employee.

REMEMBER, AS AN INTERN:

1. You are still a government employee. So don't accept gifts from the company or otherwise violate your ethics.
2. You are NOT an employee of the company.
3. You are training and learning by doing, not displacing an employee.
4. You MUST keep your chain of command informed and updated.

SKILLBRIDGE RESOURCES:

- **DoW SkillBridge:** *https://skillbridge.osd.mil/*
- **DoW SkillBridge Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ):** *https://skillbridge.osd.mil/faq.htm*
- **DoW Transition Assistance Program:** *https://www.dodtap.mil/*
- **DoW SkillBridge Resources Page:** *https://skillbridge.osd.mil/resources.htm*
- **National Association of State Workforce Agencies, Hilton Honors Military Program:** *https://www.naswa.org/partnerships/hilton-honors*