Military Skills for Veterans in Consulting

GREENCASTLE

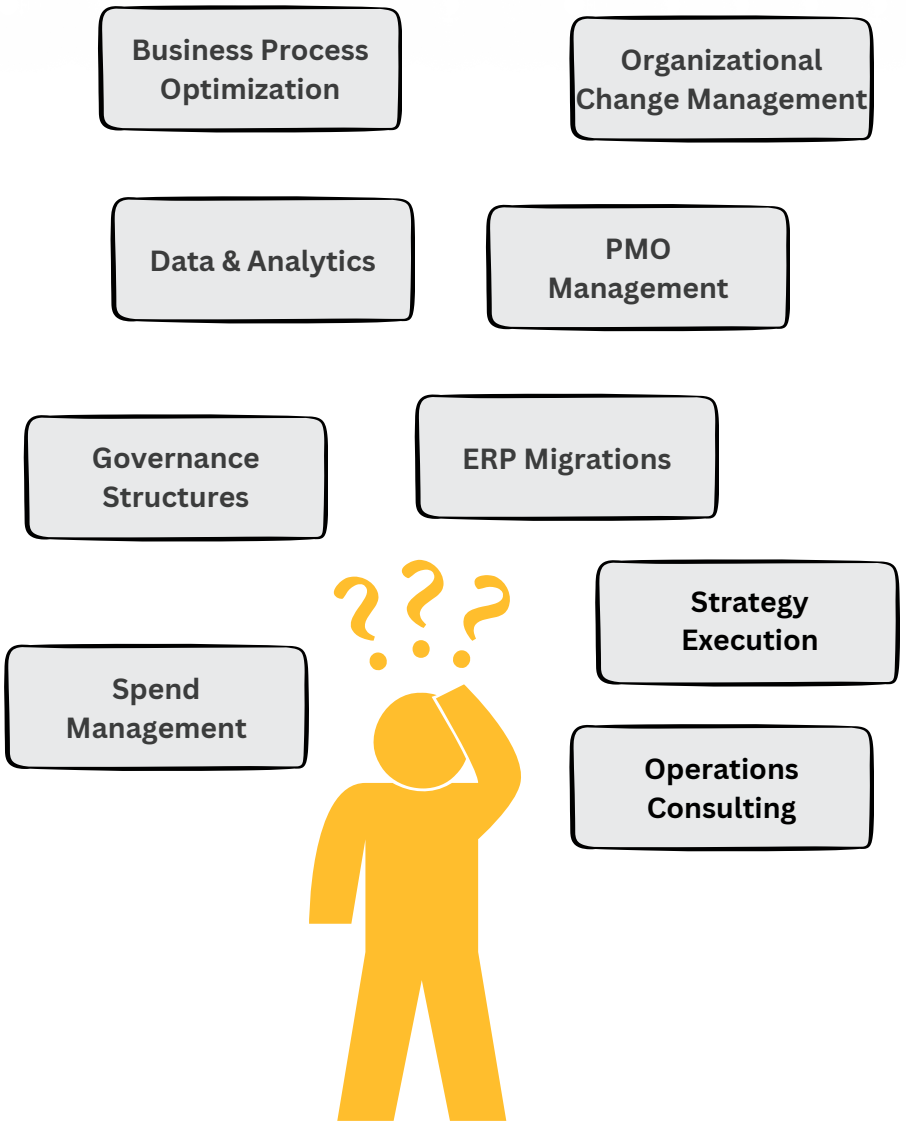
The Veteran Job-Seeker

Picture this, while searching an online job board, a service member comes across an opening for a project manager role.

Desired Skills and Experience:

- *4-year degree; PMP credential preferred*
- *5+ years of technical team management*
- *Demonstrated knowledge of managing throughout the project lifecycle*
- *Demonstrated proficiency with project management tools; JIRA and Confluence preferred*

Every transitioning service member finds themselves in a version of this scene at some point. As they're reviewing the qualifications for a job posting, they begin to question if they have the necessary skills to be considered.



The specialized jobs service members perform while in the military don't always translate directly to marketable, hard skills in civilian life. Very few companies include "must be a licensed parachutist" or "4 years of experience planning live-fire training" in their hiring announcements.

That doesn't mean these skills don't hold value, but service members must find ways to demonstrate how these skills can be, "value-adds" for a potential employer. More importantly, service members must highlight the skills they have developed during their military service that directly translate to civilian workplaces and provide immediate value for the organizations they want to join.

Greencastle sees consulting as a natural fit for many transitioning service members — the skills required to be a successful consultant are inherent to successful military service. Take a look at the 5 skills we think translate from military service to consulting and see where your skills align.

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5 Military Skills for Success in Consulting

Effective Communication 1

Concise and effective communication is a must-have in the military. The success of a mission can often hinge on how well a plan is communicated to team members. Effective communication ensures team members understand their roles and are prepared to perform them when needed.

Much like the military, effective communication is a key success factor for consulting work. Leaders must be able to articulate organizational goals to the workforce. Likewise, staff must be able to synthesize complex issues down to actionable decision points for leadership when necessary.

Whether it's collaborating with a project team or presenting to a group of executives, service members are trained to communicate effectively across diverse audiences.

Teamwork 2

Teamwork is an essential element in both the military and civilian workplace. Effective teams enable organizations to achieve goals and meet critical deadlines. Military personnel operate in a variety of team dynamics throughout their time in service and have the experience to know when to lead and when to work as collaborators.

Service members come from all walks of life, which leads to a variety of personalities and skill sets that need to be managed effectively for teams to be successful. This experience is a huge advantage in the consulting world where teams face similar challenges. Project teams often include employees from a variety of functions across an organization and success on these critical initiatives hinges on a team's ability to work cohesively, a role that service members are more than qualified to fill.

Performance Under Pressure 3

Service members are expected to perform their best work regardless of the environment they find themselves in. Tight deadlines and challenging assignments are often the norm in the military. The calm decision-making capabilities that allow service members to succeed are directly transferable to consulting projects.

Major milestones, like new software implementations, can be extremely stressful events for businesses. Issues can quickly pile up if team members allow that stress to impact their work. The ability to work effectively in times of added stress is a standout quality service members can bring to the workplace.

Problem Solving 4

The military places a huge responsibility on its service members to be able to think on their feet and quickly identify solutions to problems as they arise. Murphy's Law is something every service member has learned to respect and appreciate. The idea that anything that can go wrong will go wrong may seem pessimistic, but it's this exact style of thinking that forces service members to think critically about how a mission is planned.

Radios malfunction, trucks break down, and almost always at the worst possible time. Service members are expected to adapt to and overcome these challenges whenever they present themselves. Whether it's developing a contingency plan to recover that broken truck or retesting radios before a mission starts, service members are trained to consider every possible outcome and develop risk mitigations to ensure success.

Meticulous planning and risk management are hallmarks of all military operations and key skills for veterans to leverage in their civilian careers. This level of analysis and critical thinking saves businesses time, resources, and money.

Adaptability 5

Keeping up with changes in technology and global market trends means that businesses are in a near-constant state of change. Maintaining a competitive advantage requires employees who can quickly adapt to new ways of working.

Service members are well-versed in reacting to change and quickly developing solutions to overcome issues. Equally important as knowing how to adapt is knowing when to. Service members are trained to recognize when plans are not working and drive the group to adapt as needed.

Adaptability is key in virtually every consulting career. Showcasing this skill is a way for veterans to demonstrate their ability to embrace innovation and effectively respond to change as necessary.

Who We Are

Greencastle specializes in strategy execution, operations consulting, and data analytics. Our clients rely on us to drive success in their most critical projects. We are 100% veteran-owned and entirely veteran-operated.

Our success is directly attributed to the highly skilled veterans we employ. Military service has set the foundation for veterans' ability to deliver on can't-fail initiatives.

	Top veteran hard skills		Top veteran soft skills
1	Business Management	1	Leadership
2	Project Management	2	Interpersonal Skills
3	Customer Service	3	Management
4	Data Management	4	Communication
5	Program Management	5	Analytical Skills
6	Financial Management	6	Team Leadership
7	Sales	7	Problem-Solving
8	Operational Planning	8	Teamwork
9	Engineering	9	Strategic Planning
10	Quality Assurance	10	Public Speaking

LinkedIn 2023 Most In-Demand Skill

According to LinkedIn's 2023 Veteran Opportunity Report, many of the key skills that veterans leave service with are also found in the top 8 of the 2023 Most In-Demand Skills list.

Transitioning to a career in consulting is a unique challenge that can expose veterans to a variety of exciting challenges and opportunities. Service members are well-equipped to succeed, provided they find ways to apply their military skills in this new environment.

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