

CAREER SEARCH AMERICA

CAREER TRANSITION TOOLBOX WHITEPAPER

TRANSITIONING FROM ABROAD:

HOW TO GET A JUMP-START ON
THE TRANSITION PROCESS WHILE
LIVING OVERSEAS



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INTRODUCTION

A military to civilian transition has many challenges. From adjusting to the civilian workplace to choosing a new career path to interviewing for and landing your next position, there are a lot of tasks to complete on your way to a new career. One thing that can add an extra layer of challenge is living abroad during or leading up to your transition. Though it often adds additional challenges, living abroad also means you have unique experiences that are attractive to potential employers. With that in mind, let's examine how to jump-start your transition process while living abroad.

FRIENDS AND FAMILY

One of the best ways to get a jump-start on a career transition from abroad is to contact family and friends back here in the States. Why do this? Put simply, it's a great way to begin the networking work you'll need to maintain throughout your transition. Family and friends can be a great resource for gathering information about potential companies to work for, what the culture is like at various employers, and with whom you should make contact in general.

Another "friends and family" resource to include on your list of individuals to whom you should reach out as you begin your transition are other former service members. Commanding officers, fellow officers, fellow enlisted soldiers – more or less anyone who knows you well and could provide assistance when developing your network has valuable information to share with you. What's more, you may be surprised how willing friends and family will be to help with your transition.

TALENT ACQUISITION COMPANIES

Talent acquisition companies, more commonly called "headhunters" are firms that help companies with their staffing needs. These firms specialize in finding the right person for a particular vacancy, and they're designed to work for the career-changer. Talent acquisition companies are paid by the companies who would hire you - they're not paid by you personally - so they are a good option for many transitioning veterans. In particular, a veteran with 15-20+ years of service is often a good fit for a talent acquisition company.

What type of career would you find using a talent acquisition company? Since headhunting firms are typically large organizations based all over the world, they hire for careers and positions that are also based all over the world, not necessarily just in the US. If you're interested in international service when you get out of the military, they may be a great way to find a position you might not otherwise discover.

SUMMARY

Veterans who have been living abroad and are now entering the transition phase out of the military will experience an extra layer of challenge. While this can't be avoided, veterans abroad can look to family and friends to help develop their network – an area they may need to burnish having lived abroad – and maximize the skills and experiences they have acquired abroad to find their next fulfilling career. Talent acquisition companies are often a good way to find a career and a position that fits the skills developed by veterans who have lived abroad for period of time, in particular if you wish to remain abroad.

Ultimately though, no matter whether you plan to remain abroad or return home, you can get a good jump-start on the transition process by building your network of contacts and also by considering using a company that can effectively translate your unique experiences into a rewarding career.

KEY TAKE-AWAYS

- Living abroad adds a layer of challenge, but it also means you have something unique to offer potential employers
- Don't be afraid to utilize friends and family to help develop your network, you'll need it to make a successful transition
- Because you have unique skills and experiences from living abroad that are highly valuable to certain organizations, a talent acquisition company may be a good way to find your next employer