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Mission Critical

Unlocking the Value of
Veterans in the Workforce

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MISSION CRITICAL

UNLOCKING THE VALUE OF
VETERANS IN THE WORKFORCE

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ABOUT THE RESEARCH

This research consists of a survey, Insights In-Depth® sessions (a proprietary web-based tool used to conduct voice-facilitated virtual focus groups) involving more than forty-five people from our Task Force organizations, and one-on-one interviews with forty-two men and women in the US.

The national survey was conducted online in June and July 2015 among 1,022 US military veterans between the ages of 21 and 64 who are working fulltime in white collar occupations. Eligible veterans were those who have previously served on active duty, including those who currently serve in the Reserves or National Guard. Data does not form a representative sample so all conclusions speak to our sample only.

The survey was conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago under the auspices of the Center for Talent Innovation, a nonprofit research organization. NORC was responsible for the data collection, while the Center for Talent Innovation conducted the analysis.

ABOUT THE CENTER FOR TALENT INNOVATION

The Center for Talent Innovation is a non-profit think tank based in New York City. CTI's flagship project is the Task Force for Talent Innovation – a private-sector consortium focused on helping organizations leverage their talent across the divides of gender, generation, geography, and culture. The 86 global corporations and organizations that constitute the Task Force, representing nearly six million employees and operating in 192 countries around the world, are united by an understanding that the full realization of the talent pool is at the heart of competitive advantage and economic success.

UNLOCKING THE VALUE OF VETERANS

Companies across the US are losing their investment in veterans. Up to 30% of recruiting budgets go to sourcing and hiring veterans,¹ yet we find 64% of the working veterans we surveyed are not using skills relevant in a corporate context.

Veterans bring to their employers a highly desirable set of technical and leadership skills which they aren't using

TECHNICAL SKILLS



Social media



Language fluency



Book keeping



Statistical analysis



Computer programming

LEADERSHIP SKILLS



Team building



Relationship/stakeholder management



Managing the career development of others



Transparent decision making

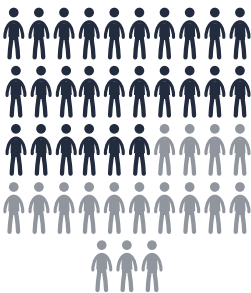


Nearly 9 in 10

veterans consider themselves to be ambitious

Veterans tune out and stall out at work

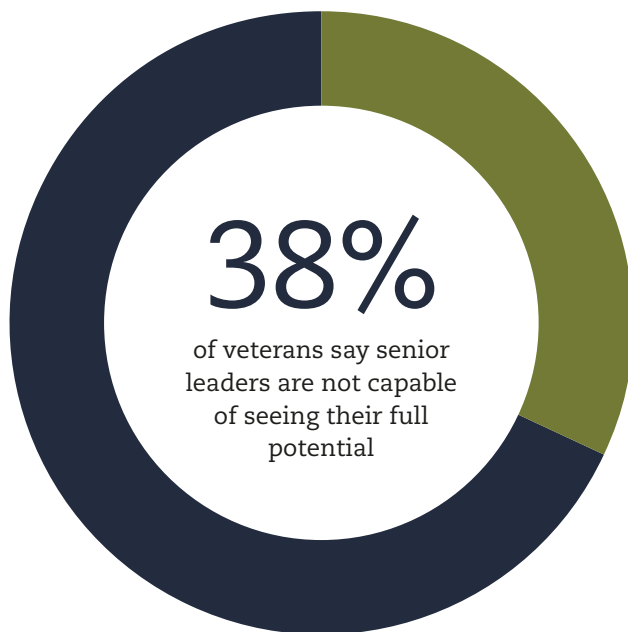
57%
of veterans don't aspire to more senior positions



39%
of the remainder feel stalled

Why are veterans tuning out and stalling out?

THEY'RE INVISIBLE TO SENIOR LEADERS



THEY FEEL MISUNDERSTOOD BY COLLEAGUES

49%

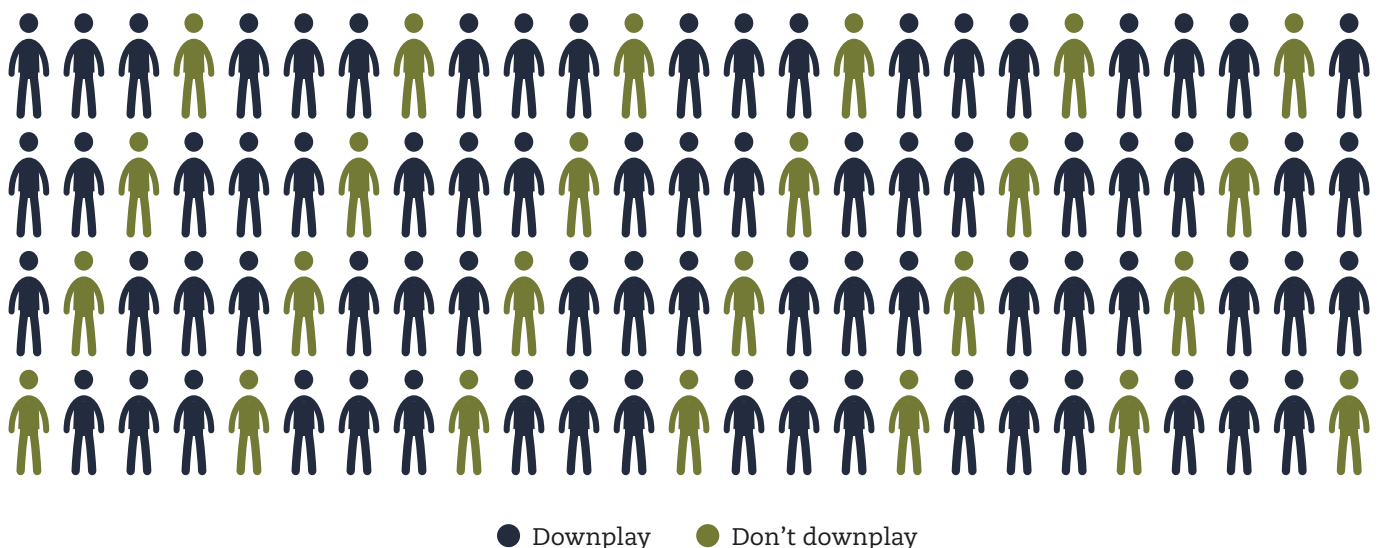
of veterans have had colleagues make false assumptions about them based on the fact that they served in the military

VETS SAY THAT COWORKERS OFTEN ASSUME THEY:

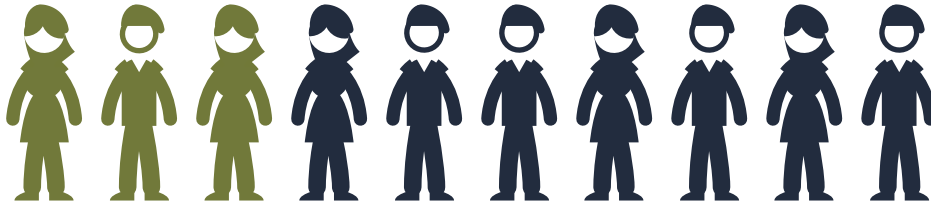
- Have violent tendencies
- Are gun enthusiasts
- Have PTSD
- Have killed someone in combat
- Are politically conservative

VETS FEEL THEY NEED TO DOWNPLAY THEIR MILITARY SERVICE

1 in 4 veterans avoid drawing attention to the fact that they served in the military



— SOME HIDE SERVICE-CONNECTED INJURIES AND DISABILITIES —

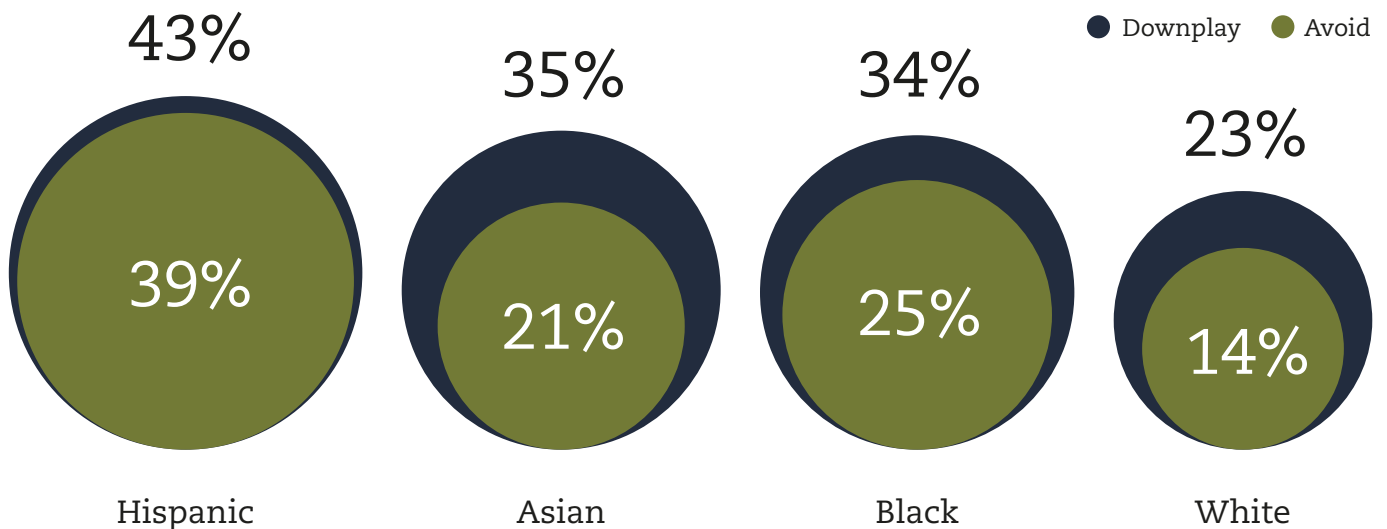


30%

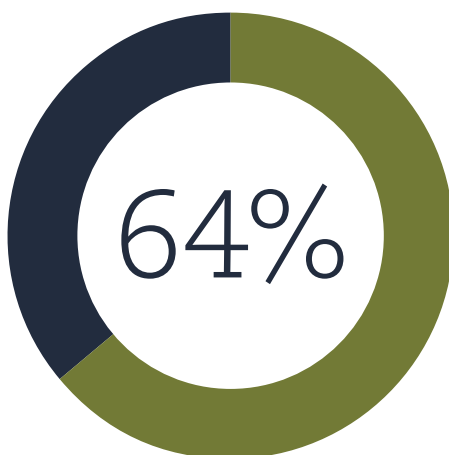
of veterans with a service-connected injury or disability haven't disclosed it to their employers

—— VETERANS OF COLOR ARE MORE LIKELY TO DOWNPLAY ——

Veterans of color are more likely than white veterans to downplay their military service or avoid telling others that they served in the military



—— MANY VETERANS LACK THE SENSE OF MEANING AND PURPOSE THAT THE MILITARY PROVIDED ——



of veterans say they felt a greater sense of meaning and purpose in the military than they do in their current job

Veterans want work to allow them to:



Promote global health



Grow spiritually



Protect the environment



Save lives



Develop deep camaraderie



Improve the lot of humankind



Provide social services

Help veterans fulfill their potential

Only 13% of hiring managers are familiar with the few veteran resources available to help veteran candidates.³ Here are some ways to connect veterans and civilians at work, educate them, celebrate them, and unlock veterans' potential:



Connect veterans to both civilian and veteran mentors. That way, they can get a range of feedback on their style and approach.



Make clear to veterans that the company is ready and willing to accommodate any disabilities or reserve duty for a smooth transition to civilian life



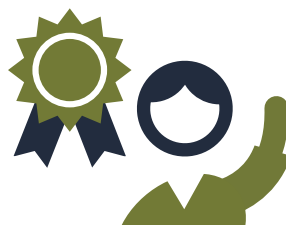
Provide educational materials especially to managers of teams with veterans. These would celebrate veterans' potential and debunk false assumptions



Have a Veterans' Employee Resource Group, and include both veterans and civilians to further normalize veterans and their activities



Connect veterans to philanthropic efforts of the company outside of the veterans work group



Celebrate veterans who have risen to senior levels of the company as role models



Frame veterans' roles in terms of the meaning and purpose they bring

Sources:

- 1 "Best for Vets: Employers 2015," Military Times, <http://bestforvets.militarytimes.com/best-employers-for-veterans/2015/>
- 2 Bureau of Labor Statistics, "Employment Situation of Veterans—2014," US Department of Labor, March 18, 2015, <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/vet.pdf>.
- 3 Society for Human Resource Management, "SHRM Poll: Military Employment," February 20, 2012, <http://www.shrm.org/research/surveyfindings/articles/pages/militaryemploymentshrmpoll.aspx>.

Mission Critical: Unlocking the Value of Veterans in the Workforce

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THE CENTER FOR TALENT INNOVATION (CTI) is an NYC-based think tank which focuses on global talent strategies and the retention and acceleration of well-qualified labor across the divides of gender, generation, geography, and culture. CTI's research partners now number 86 multinational corporations and organizations.

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