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"Hiring A Veteran - A Magazine's View"

The Next Sound Investment for Your Company

On a recent Friday evening, Ted Stafford had a problem that was spreading like kudzu up a Georgia hillside. The operations manager for a Fairburn, Georgia consumer products shipping firm, Stafford was about to be overrun. "It was coming up on midnight, and we were obviously so far behind on shipping orders that there was no way we were going to get don," Stafford recalled. "If we left that kind of backlog to the shift coming in, we were programmed for failure."

"So, I asked my 12 guys for four volunteers to work all night long to clear up the back log and give the next shift a fighting chance to get through the weekend."

"All three of the military veterans volunteered without hesitation because they understood what mission failure was about," Stafford said. "The other volunteer was a young kid who had just come on board. The others basically said 'you know, I got plans, bye'."

Stafford, a 28-year Army veteran, said, "What's not to like about a veteran? They're reliable, they have a "Can Do" attitude and they understand teamwork. And," Stafford continued, "veterans show up on time." "Showing up" to work at all would be welcomed at many Georgia businesses. With unemployment at a 30-year low, businesses across Georgia are scrambling to find workers to fill thousands of management, technical, mechanical and administrative jobs.

With the military draft a distant memory and the last war a decade ago, most employers have had no exposure to the military and have little understanding of the armed services. Yet hiring a United States Air Force, Army, Coast Guard, Marine Corps, Merchant Marine or Navy veterans is about the best investment an employer can make.

Moreover, there is a steady supply of talented men and women leaving the military each year, and millions already employed in the civilian workforce. Most veterans have received hundreds of hours of specialized management, professional and technical training from the world's largest and most comprehensive training system-operated by the Department of Defense. Today's modern military is a high technology operation demanding exceptional knowledge and skills. All major military operating systems-command and control, administrative, logistics, intelligence and weapons-are highly computerized. As a result, 92 percent of all veterans use computers while on active duty, 50 percent have experience with Local Area Networks (LAN) and 20 percent have worked with mainframe computers. The men and women who maintain and operate America's state-of-the-art weapons and support services are carefully screened by the military, undergoing strict security

clearances and frequent random drug testing. Veterans are accustomed to assuming high levels of responsibility for equipment that often costs millions of dollars. They understand an employer's property is valuable and essential to the well being of the company.

Perhaps most important, veterans are products of one of the most demanding professions in America. Service members are exposed to rigorous physical and professional training that molds motivated individuals who set high standards for themselves. The military produces men and women who understand working toward an objective until it is achieved, no matter how difficult the challenge.

In addition, veterans operate in culturally diverse, team-oriented settings. They are used to relocation and easily assimilate into new work environments. Each day-every day-America's soldiers, sailors, airmen and marines are on duty on every continent and ocean protecting the nations' vital interests and security. They are paid less than their civilian counterparts and often operate in areas where their personal safety is at risk. Veterans accept these challenges because they believe in their mission and are proud of their country.

As generations of Americans have witnessed, veterans can be counted on to get the job done.



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