

Civilian Resumes for Military Personnel

In writing a resume to work as a civilian, it is important to emphasize your experience as a military officer or enlisted, but to do so in a manner that makes complete sense to a civilian.

Quick tips:

- Translate military jargon into civilian terms
 - Assume the hiring manager knows nothing about the military
 - “Commanded”= “Supervised” or “Directed”
 - Quantify your statements: “250 personnel,” “\$3M budget,” etc.
- Focus on skills, qualifications and accomplishments that are *transferable*
 - Soft skills: decision-making, resourcefulness, teamwork, performing under pressure, leadership, flexibility, attention to detail, self-motivated
- Do not use acronyms; spell out all affiliations
- If you’ve held numerous ranks and duties, choose the ones with the most responsibilities/are most relevant to the position for which you are applying
- Offer brief explanations for any phrases or titles that may not be self-explanatory
 - Example: if you attended NERS (Navy Enlisted Recruiter School), describe it as an in-depth, three-week sales training course
- Consult your commanding officer to see if he/she has experience advising others transitioning

Translating your duties for civilians:

1. Write out everything that you do in your job, using whatever language makes sense to you
 - If you have writer’s block, try explaining your job out loud to someone, preferably a civilian
 - This may end up being a lot of information, and employers won’t have the time to read through all of this, so it’s important to consolidate your responsibilities. Break these duties down into categories based on skills:

Management and Leadership:

- *Led an infantry team in combat operations, providing tactical and technical guidance to subordinates and professional support to both superiors and subordinates in the accomplishment of their duties*

Communication:

- *Received and implemented combat orders, directed deployment of personnel in offensive, defensive, and retro grade operations*

Research:

- *Assisted in the performance of reconnaissance operations*
- *Used maps and map overlays, performed intersection and resection, and determined elevation and grid azimuths*

Technical:

- *Operated in an NBC contaminated area (here is an example of why acronyms may be confusing)*
- *Employed, fired, and recovered anti-personnel and anti-tank mines*

Creative/Resourceful:

- *Called for and adjusted indirect fire*

Organizational:

- *Supervised construction of hasty fortifications and receipt, storage, and issue of ammunition*

2. Once you have your skills covered, consolidate them and present them in a cohesive and coherent manner that any civilian can understand:
 - *Led an infantry team in combat operations, providing tactical and technical guidance to subordinates and professional support to both superiors and subordinates in the accomplishment of their duties*
 - *Directed subordinates and superiors by providing tactical and technical guidance*
 - *Received and implemented combat orders, directed deployment of personnel in offensive, defensive, and retro grade operations*
 - *Communicated urgent orders and directions effectively to team of 150 personnel*
 - *Assisted in the performance of reconnaissance operations*
 - *Used maps and map overlays, performed intersection and resection, and determined elevation and grid azimuths*
 - *Surveyed and analyzed terrain to determine optimum equipment placing and usage*
 - *Operated in a NBC contaminated area*
 - *Employed, fired, and recovered anti-personnel and anti-tank mines*
 - *Operated and maintained equipment worth \$1.5M in nuclear, biologically and chemically contaminated areas*
 - *Called for and adjusted indirect fire*
 - *Forecasted and adjusted decisions in a high-pressure environment*
 - *Supervised construction of hasty fortifications and receipt, storage, and issue of ammunition*
 - *Supervised improvisatory construction projects*

You may also choose to use an online translator. We recommend the following, but be sure to phrase the duties in your own words, applying them specifically to your situation:

<http://www.military.com/skills-translator/mos-translator>

<http://www.acinet.org/acinet/moc/default.aspx?audience=WP>

Navy: <https://www.cool.navy.mil/index.htm>

Army: <https://www.cool.army.mil/index.htm>

These last two provide you with descriptions of civilian jobs that most closely relate to your military position, so be sure that they accurately describe your responsibilities. Select “Credential Search” at the top of the page and enter your job title.

3. Now you have translated explanations for your military duties. Be sure to tailor each job description to the specific job you’re applying for. Consider whether the skill is relevant to the position (and if not, eliminate it), and tailor the way you phrase it so that it best fits the potential position.

Sarah Jones

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- Objective:** A full-time marketing position utilizing leadership and communication skills in a high-paced environment
- Education:** **The University of Tennessee, Knoxville** May 2013
Bachelor of Arts in Political Science
GPA: 3.23/4.00
- Navy Enlisted Recruiter School** Jan. 2006
- In-depth, three-week sales training course
- Honors:** *National Defense Service Medal*
- Experience:** **United States Navy** 2006-2011
- Administrative Clerk (2009-2011)*
- Reported to the Executive Officer of the Joint Intelligence Directorate at the United Joint Forces Command
 - Directed administrative tasks for a 131-member multi-service directorate
- Command Mail Orderly (2009-2011)*
- Oversaw daily outgoing mail; sorted and distributed incoming mail to appropriate staff members
 - Maintained daily schedule for Commanding Officer (CO)
 - Responded to all visitor requests
 - Provided full support in telephone coverage, screening all incoming calls
- Directorate Information Systems Security Officer (ISSO) (2009-2011)*
- Served as the main point of contact for all computer accounts, assisting with all technical issues
- Leading Petty Officer (2008)*
- Managed five junior personnel in the Mission Support Office
 - Authored daily outgoing correspondence
- Supply Clerk (2007)*
- Provided assistance with and processed travel claims
 - Scheduled travel arrangements for CO
 - Handled sensitive materials daily using discretion
 - Generated numerous documents in a timely manner, including correspondence, evaluations/fitness reports, awards, messages, directives, and reports
 - Procured all office supplies; updated and maintained supply log book
- Naval Reserve Canvass Recruiter (2006)*
- Identified target populations for enlistment into the US Naval Reserve
 - Conducted interviews, enlisted recruits and counseled those rejected for service
 - Tracked results of recruiting efforts, formulating plans to improve applicant members and qualifications

John L. Smith

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Objective

A part-time position in Industrial Engineering utilizing organization and interpersonal skills

Education

The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Master of Science in Industrial and Information Engineering

May 2013

GPA: 3.5/4.0

Bachelor of Science in Engineering, Industrial Engineering

May 2010

Major GPA: 3.7/4.0

Overall GPA: 3.1/4.0

Experience

The United States Army

Aug. 2002- Feb. 2006

Civil Affairs Specialist

(2005-2006)

- Helped develop over \$1.5 million in humanitarian aid and reconstruction projects in Baghdad, Iraq
- Oversaw for retention duties of approximately 50 soldiers

Infantryman

(2002-2005)

- Directed subordinates and superiors by providing tactical and technical guidance
- Communicated urgent orders and directions effectively to a team of 150 personnel
- Operated and maintained equipment worth \$1.5M in nuclear, biologically and chemically contaminated areas
- Forecasted and adjusted decisions in a high-pressure environment
- Supervised improvisatory construction projects
- Surveyed and analyzed terrain to determine optimum equipment placing and usage

Honors & Awards

Outstanding Master's Student, University of Tennessee, 2011

Dean's List, six consecutive semesters, 2006-2010

U.S. Army Achievement Medal, 2004

U.S. Army Commendation Medal, 2003

Activities

Veterans Administration, Knoxville Clinic

May 08- Aug. 2010

Volunteer

- Addressed customer concerns in telephone conversation using communication skills
- Assisted in various office duties to ensure smoothness and efficiency for the team
- Hand-delivered important inter-office documents