



Service Leaver Resettlement Guide

Supported by



Babcock and the armed forces

At Babcock, we stand side by side with the armed forces — not just in the vital missions we support, but in the people who deliver them. Every day, our teams work across critical defence environments, from submarines beneath the waves to secure communications in space, making their mission our mission.

Our commitment extends far beyond the work we do. It reaches into the entire Armed Forces community. As a Gold Award holder in the Ministry of Defence's Armed Forces Covenant Employer Recognition Scheme, and winner of the Best Employer award at the British Ex-Forces in Business Awards in both 2024 and 2025, we are recognised for the way we champion service leavers, veterans, reservists, and forces families.

We actively recruit from the armed forces community — in fact, around 750 people from the community start a new career with us every year. Many more speak to us every year as they begin their journey into civilian employment. We understand the significance of that transition. The shift from service life to a new career is an exciting step, but it can also feel unfamiliar, and knowing where to start can make all the difference.

That's why we've prepared this guide. Whether you're exploring a future with Babcock or opportunities elsewhere, these hints and tips are designed to help you navigate the job-seeking process with confidence. They draw on the experiences of service leavers who have already made the transition — people just like you — and focus on translating your strengths, understanding the landscape, and setting yourself up for success in civilian life.

Together
in purpose.



Keiryn,
Principal Nuclear Safety Engineer
Reservist – Air Operations and Plans

Together
in service.

“Service leavers & veterans, Reservists, Cadet Force Adult Volunteers and military families and spouses all bring a wealth of experience, leadership, resilience and problem-solving abilities to workforces that can add immediate value to any organisation. While transitioning to civilian employment can feel daunting, it is important to recognise that the skills developed throughout military service are highly transferable and sought after by employers across every sector.

My advice is to make full use of the support, networks and opportunities available during resettlement, and to approach the process with confidence. Through initiatives such as the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme and the Armed Forces Covenant, employers across the UK demonstrate their commitment to supporting the Armed Forces community and create meaningful opportunities for those transitioning into civilian careers.”

Neil ‘Jacko’ Jackson
Director, Defence Relationship Management



ARMED FORCES
COVENANT

Understand your transferable skills...

#1

Whether you want to apply your skills and experience to something similar, or you're interested in trying something new - your military background has equipped you with capabilities highly valued in civilian roles. Skills such as:

- Leadership and team management
- Working under pressure and solving complex problems
- Discipline, reliability, and strong work ethic
- Health & safety mindset
- Stakeholder management

Take the time to understand the skills, experiences, and qualifications you possess and more importantly, how you want to apply them in future. Have confidence in yourself and set a plan.

“Your resettlement is YOUR resettlement! Nobody is going to do this for you. You need to work out what you would like to do and how you are going to do it and then go for it.”

Brian White,
former Bombardier, 29 Commando



“Translating your service career into civilian terms can feel daunting, but don’t underestimate your value. You have more transferable skills, at a higher level, than you probably realise. Back yourself, use the tools available, and make sure your experience clearly hits the mark for the roles you want.”

Dan Moran,
Former Army Pilot and Interim Director
of Talent Acquisition at Babcock



Spend time exploring career paths

#2

Once you know what you'd like to do, start searching for roles on sites such as Indeed.co.uk, Career Transition Partnership, and LinkedIn.com that align with this. Review job descriptions, note the repeated skill requirements, and build a short-list of suitable job families based on what skills you have or could acquire during your resettlement period.

Also research employers - looking for companies that align with your values and career interests. Those who are Armed Forces Covenant signatories and/or with strong veteran pathways will have a particular cultural alignment with the armed forces.

"Leaving Service is about more than finding another job. It is about building a future in which you can thrive, both professionally and personally. Taking time to understand your motivations, explore your options and make full use of the support available can make a significant difference."

James Griffin,
Corporate Partnerships Manager -
The White Ensign Association



"Transition is not about starting again. It is about recognising the value already built through service and learning how to translate it with confidence. Service Leavers, Veterans, Reservists, Spouses, Partners and Siblings of the Armed Forces and Blue Light Services bring discipline, resilience, leadership, problem-solving, and a strong sense of purpose into civilian organisations."

That is why early preparation, honest reflection and meaningful conversations with employers can make such a powerful difference."

Paul Brenton
Head of Development &
Education, FTG Job Fairs



Use your resettlement time well

#3

Whilst not everyone gets a choice on when their resettlement starts or ends, it can be helpful to have an idea of the above before that period begins. This will allow you to get the most out of the time and resources available to you, putting you into the best position possible.

For example, if you're interested in Project Management you could use this time to study for relevant qualifications, or visit events and workshops related to it.

"My advice for those leaving any of the services is to use your education benefits SLC/ELC's and get yourself into a strong position before pressing 'go'.

You know your strengths, use them and don't undersell yourself. But be honest when it comes to needing transitional support or any development in your new role."

Georgina Smith,
former Flight Sergeant, Royal Air Force



"To assist you in translating your skills and targeting your applications there is lots of support available to you.

If you are still serving, or within 2 years of discharge, you can get full support from a dedicated Career Advisor at Career Transition Partnership.

If you left more than 2 years ago employability support is freely available to you for the rest of your working life, as many times as you need it, from the Forces Employment Charity.

We're committed to supporting that journey and helping individuals recognise the confidence and capability they already have."

James Moore
Employer Engagement
Manager, Career Transition
Partnership



Build a Strong Civilian-Format CV

The foundation to any job search is a CV that accurately and effectively relates your skills and experience.

A good civilian CV should be kept to around 2 pages and includes:

- Professional profile
- Key skills list
- Employment history with achievements
- Education and qualifications
- Certifications (NEBOSH, Prince2, LEAN, HGV, etc.)

One of the biggest obstacles for service leavers however is in having a CV that makes it clear to recruiters that you have the right experience for the role. The majority of adverts are usually written with civilian qualifications and experiences in mind – and are reviewed by recruitment teams who often won't have military backgrounds themselves.

Therefore, take the time to tailor your CV to be 'civilian friendly'. For example, instead of "Section Commander responsible for troop readiness," try "Led a team of 12, managing performance, training, and operational delivery."

For more guidance on CV writing and adaption visit:

[How to write a CV | National Careers Service](#)

[How to Create a Strong Civilian-Friendly CV for Military Service Leavers - Pathfinder International Magazine - the leading UK Military Resettlement Magazine](#)

AI can also assist with adapting your CV and military experience to civilian formats (see page 12).

#4

"The challenge isn't capability, it's confidence in translating your military knowledge, skills and experience into language civilian employers understand. My advice: be targeted, be prepared, be confident, and use every resource available during resettlement and from organisations like Troopr and SaluteMyJob that exist to help you make that connection count."

Andrew Jackson,
Executive Chairman,
Troopr and Managing Director,
SaluteMyJob



Tailor your CV for application

#5

When you know what job you wish to apply for then align your CV and (if needed) cover letter to the job description/advert.

Recruiters and hiring managers will look for evidence in your CV that you can fulfil the role, so pay particular attention to the role requirements.

Here is an example from a Babcock Senior Engineering role:

Essential experience of the Senior Mechanical Engineer

- Proven experience delivering engineering activities across the full project lifecycle, from concept design through to implementation.
- Demonstrated ability to work effectively within multidisciplinary teams, contributing to complex technical solutions and project outcomes.
- Strong track record of producing and reviewing detailed engineering documentation, including calculations, drawings, and technical reports.
- Excellent communication skills with the ability to engage confidently with stakeholders and customers to resolve technical and delivery challenges.

Here is an example of how someone could tailor their employment history to meet this

"In my X role I collaborated daily with cross functional teams including electrical engineers, systems engineers, project managers, logisticians, and external contractors to deliver integrated technical solutions across the project lifecycle."

Make sure you address all key points in your CV and consider a summary at the start of your CV or cover letter for easy reference.

"Don't undersell yourself as the transferrable skills you've gained are extremely attractive to employers."

Daniel Watts,
former Signaller with the
Royal Signals



Leverage your network

Building a strong network is one of the most effective ways for service leavers to uncover job opportunities and understand the civilian employment landscape. Connecting with other veterans, Armed Forces champions, and people already working in roles you're exploring can give you valuable insights into company culture, transferable skills, and what employers are really looking for. Many organisations have active veteran communities, and reaching out for informal conversations can make the transition feel far less daunting.

LinkedIn is an especially powerful tool for this. By engaging with posts, commenting thoughtfully, and sharing short updates about your transition or training, you naturally increase your visibility to recruiters and industry peers. Over time, these interactions help you build relationships rather than just connections, making it more likely that people will think of you when opportunities arise. A simple message introducing yourself, explaining your background, and asking for advice can open doors much faster than applying cold.

This guide by Prospects gives an excellent overview of how to get started with LinkedIn: [How to improve your LinkedIn profile | Prospects.ac.uk](#)

You can also strengthen your network by attending employer events, insight days, and Armed Forces community sessions, whether online or in person. These settings allow you to meet recruiters, hiring managers, and ex military employees in a relaxed environment, helping you learn about roles, make professional contacts, and build confidence in presenting your experience. The more you engage, both online and offline, the more your network grows — and with it, your chances of finding the right opportunity.

Babcock frequently attend events organised by the CTP, REME, White Ensign and BFRS (and many more besides).

#6



“Start planning early, use your resettlement time wisely, speak to employers, attend events, build your network and don’t be afraid to ask for support. Transition is not about leaving something behind; it’s about recognising the opportunities ahead and translating your military experience into a successful civilian career.”

Neil Dean
Director, British Forces
Resettlement Services

Practice your interview technique

#7

Preparing for interviews in civvy street can feel very different from military promotion boards or assignment interviews, but the fundamentals remain the same: clear communication, strong examples, and confidence in your experience. At Babcock, service leavers should expect competency based interviews, which focus on your past behaviours and achievements, as well as values based questions that explore how you work with others. These interviews are designed to understand how you've applied your skills in real situations, so using the S.T.A.R. method — Situation, Task, Action, Result — will help you structure your answers concisely and clearly. The key is to translate your military experience into civilian friendly language and avoid assuming that interviewers will understand acronyms, ranks, or technical terms without explanation.

Competency based interviews reward preparation, and that includes thinking ahead about situations that show leadership, problem solving, teamwork, safety, communication, or dealing with pressure. Reviewing common interview questions, practising aloud, and researching the employer all help build confidence. UK interview prep guidance emphasises the importance of preparing examples in advance and rehearsing STAR answers so you're ready to articulate your value clearly and professionally. Resources below can help you practise techniques, learn what to expect in UK interviews, and improve the way you communicate your strengths in a civilian context.

Here are a range of resources that can help you prepare for interviews:

1. Indeed – Interview Practice

Free practice interview questions across hundreds of job types, plus self-recording tools.

<https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/interviewing>

2. LinkedIn Learning – Interview Courses

Excellent video-based guides on competency interviews, STAR method, and communication skills.

(Note: Many service leavers get free access through CTP.)

<https://www.linkedin.com/learning>

3. MockQuestions.com

Role-specific interview questions with example answers.

<https://www.mockquestions.com>

4. Glassdoor – Interview Questions

Lets applicants research real interview questions asked by specific employers.

<https://www.glassdoor.co.uk/Interview/index.htm>

Interview Advice

"During the interview it is important that you frame your individual contribution, not just what the team / unit did and therefore utilise 'I' instead of 'We'

Interviewers need to clearly understand:

- What you personally did in relation to the question being asked.
- How you made decisions.
- What impact you had.

If you only say "We," the interviewer may:

- Struggle to identify your personal skills.
- Assume you played a minor role.
- Be unable to score your answer properly.

An example of how a unit / team answer and an individual answer are outlined below, however further detail should be considered in relation to actual deadlines, value of assets, unit size etc.

Unit / Team based answer

"We were tasked with delivering equipment under tight timelines, and we managed to complete it successfully."

Individualised based answer

"We were tasked with delivering equipment under tight timelines. My role was to coordinate logistics and prioritise tasks. I reorganised the delivery schedule, which allowed us to complete the task 24 hours ahead of deadline."

Jamie Portt,
Devonport Recruitment Hub Manager & Forces Family Member



Using AI to support your transition journey

#8

Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools, such as Microsoft Copilot and ChatGPT, can provide practical support throughout your resettlement journey. From identifying transferable skills and building a CV, to preparing for interviews and researching employers.

Used effectively, AI can save time, improve the quality of job applications and help you better understand the civilian employment market. The more detailed the information you provide about your military experience, qualifications and career goals, the more valuable and tailored the response becomes.

However, it should be viewed as a tool to support your efforts rather than replace them. Your experience, judgement and personal achievements remain at the heart of your transition story.

1. Translate Military Experience into Civilian Language

Many service leavers struggle to explain what they have done in terms civilian employers understand. AI can translate military roles and achievements into commercially relevant skills such as project management, leadership, risk management, logistics, operations and stakeholder engagement.

Examples:

"Translate my role as a Royal Engineer Troop Sergeant into language suitable for project management jobs."

"Explain my military leadership experience in a way that would appeal to a manufacturing employer."

2. Build a Targeted CV

AI can tailor a CV to specific job descriptions by identifying transferable skills, highlighting relevant achievements, improving wording and increasing applicant tracking system (ATS) compatibility. See our suggested prompt:

I am a UK Armed Forces service leaver and I want you to help me rewrite my CV so it is fully civilian-friendly.

Your task is to:

- 1. Translate all military language, ranks, acronyms, equipment names and job titles into clear civilian terms.*
- 2. Highlight my transferable skills such as leadership, communication, problem-solving, teamwork, project delivery, safety awareness, logistics, and technical capability.*
- 3. Rewrite my responsibilities and achievements using civilian-understandable language and measurable outcomes (numbers, scale, results).*
- 4. Remove military jargon unless it is directly relevant to the civilian role.*
- 5. Tailor the CV to match the type of civilian role I am aiming for. Ask me what job(s) I'm targeting if I haven't already stated them.*
- 6. Structure the CV using standard UK CV conventions (profile, key skills, experience, education, certifications), following UK guidance such as:*
 - clear layout,*
 - consistent formatting,*
 - focusing on relevance,*
 - avoiding personal details that are not required.*
- 7. Suggest improvements based on best practice for UK civilian CVs.*
- 8. Give me a revised, fully rewritten CV at the end.*

Here is my current CV (paste below):

[INSERT YOUR CV HERE]

3. Prepare for Interviews

AI can act as a mock interviewer, asking competency and behavioural questions while helping candidates structure answers using techniques such as STAR, although we strongly suggest NOT using AI during a live interview or conversation, or reading AI responses verbatim. See our suggested prompt:

I'd like you to act as a professional job interviewer. Please interview me for a civilian role based on the job title I give you.

Your role:

- *Ask me one interview question at a time.*
- *Include competency-based, behavioural and scenario questions.*
- *Tailor them to someone leaving the Armed Forces.*
- *After each answer, give constructive feedback and suggest improvements.*
- *Use the STAR method as a coaching framework.*
- *Continue until I say "end interview."*

My target job role is: [INSERT JOB TITLE]

4. Identify Suitable Careers

It can recommend civilian career paths based on military experience, qualifications, interests and salary expectations.

5. Research Employers

Before interviews, AI can help candidates understand organisations, industries, challenges and opportunities so they can have more informed conversations.

6. Understand Salary Expectations

AI can provide guidance on salary benchmarks for specific roles, sectors and regions, helping service leavers understand their market value.

7. Develop a Career Transition Plan

You can use it to create structured transition plans covering qualifications, networking activities, CV development, job applications and interview preparation.

8. Improve Networking

AI can help write introduction messages, networking requests and engagement strategies to help service leavers build professional connections. It can also be used to help you update a LinkedIn profile.

9. Use AI as a Skills Coach

It can explain new subjects, recommend learning resources and create study plans for areas such as project management, cyber security and operations leadership.

10. Prepare for Assessment Centres

Use it to help you practice presentations, group exercises, psychometric tests and commercial awareness questions.

We wish you the best of luck in your job search. For more information on careers at Babcock visit:

www.babcockinternational.com/careers/

For more information about our armed forces commitment visit:

www.babcockinternational.com/careers/armed-forces-commitment/

For further support on your resettlement journey or to access jobs, events and networking opportunities then please visit our partners and supporters:

Career Transition Partnership:

www.modctp.co.uk

Reserve Forces' and Cadets Associations:

www.gov.uk/government/organisations/reserve-forces-and-cadets-associations

Armed Forces Covenant:

www.armedforcescovenant.gov.uk

Forces Employment Charity:

www.forcesemployment.org.uk

The White Ensign Association

www.whiteensign.co.uk

British Forces Resettlement Service

www.bfrss.org.uk

Forces Transition Group

www.ftgjobfairs.com

Troopr

www.troopr.co.uk

SaluteMyJob

www.salutemyjob.com



