

Women Veterans in Transition

A Research Project of Business and Professional Women's Foundation



Understanding the Complexity of Women Veterans' Career Transitions

1. Overview

The transition from the military into the civilian workforce for women veterans may be a longer and more complex process than previously thought by those working with women veterans. Women veterans responding to Business and Professional Women's (BPW) Foundation survey *Women Veterans in Transition* tell a compelling story about their triumphs and challenges as they transition.

“One day you were in the military, the next you were home in a whole different world.”

Women Veteran in Transition Survey Respondent

Separation from the military and entry into the civilian workforce is often viewed as a time-limited event by those providing transition supports. While the official physical separation occurs within a limited time frame, results from a recent survey of women veterans indicates that the psychological transition can take place over an extended period of time even for those who have successfully secured post-military employment. Standardized transition activities may not be taking into account the full breadth and range of the needs of women veterans. Similarly, employers seeking to engage women veterans in the workplace may not know everything necessary to take full advantage of this growing source of intellectual capital.

An initial look at the results of a 2007 survey of women veterans, undertaken by BPW Foundation as part of a pilot study on the career transition experiences of women veterans, indicates that the transition from the military into the civilian workforce is a multi-dimensional process for women veterans, and decision makers may need to look at a number of factors in order to craft programs and services that more fully support women veterans moving into the civilian workforce. This reality has implications not only for the types of resources needed by women veterans as they transition but also the timing and duration of those resources.

2. Research Rationale

Background

As an organization dedicated to empowering all workingwomen to achieve their full potential and to partnering with employers to build successful workplaces, BPW Foundation actively seeks out information about under-recognized or under-utilized groups of workingwomen. Its goals include helping to create a more accurate picture of the role of women in the workforce, and through its research projects and educational programs, to inform the development of programs and resources that help workingwomen make successful career transitions.

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For information on how your organization can support the Women Veterans in Transition Research Project, contact 202-293-1100 or foundation@bpwfoundation.org