

Veterans' Newsletter

December 2009

Use Networking to find your next job

By Nathan Russell

Networking as a way to connect to job openings has an unfair rap. For many, a vision of networking includes an overcrowded scene that resembles speed dating and involves handing out as many business cards as possible.

Here is help to rethink and reinvent networking. With some new ideas and techniques. It can become a winning strategy in a successful job search.

Networking is defined as, "the cultivation of productive relationships for employment or business". My working definition is, "people helping each other". The truth is, we all need help and support, especially in this unprecedented and difficult employment market. While estimates vary, experts report that only 20 percent of all job openings are advertised. The fact is that by the time a vacant position is posted online or advertised, the hiring manager likely has exhausted his or her network and is overwhelmed with a tall plain vanilla pile of applicants.

The best way around this is to know decision makers at a host of companies in your targeted job search industry and job function. Make a plan to identify and seek out these hiring managers. One way to find them is to research potential employers online, navigating through their web sites to departments and individuals linked to your occupation.

Another way is to join professional associations, school alumni groups and other related organizations in your sector, where employees from target companies and positions gather. These individuals know people and information that can lead to inquiries, conversations, activities, more individuals and businesses that can form an active and productive job search network.

Other items of interest :

An Overview of VA Home Loans

The VA Loan Guaranty Program began in 1944 in order to give soldiers returning from war the same opportunities to own homes as their civilian counterparts. Today, the general purpose of VA home loans is to provide veterans with secure home financing in appreciation for their service to America. The program is administered by the Veterans Benefits Administration, an organizational element of the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs.

The VA loan is made by a VA approved mortgage lender with a portion backed by the good faith and credit of the U.S. Government. The benefits of the VA loan program create one of the safest and most secure home financing options for VA eligible borrowers.

Which College Will Give you Credit for Military Service ?

Your service in the military may have earned you up to a full semester of college credit. Military.com connects you to hundreds of schools who recognize the work you've already done. Make sure to get college credit for military service.

New Redesigned VA Website

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs rolled out the first phase of a large scale renovation for its website. The first and most visible step of the renovation consists of changing the website's look. Some of the major changes include improvements in the navigational structure that provide consistency among all sites and consolidate major topics ; a slide show section that showcases current VA events or hot topics ; and a "Quick List" with links directly to important applications such as Veterans On Line Applications and MyHealtheVet. To view the new version of the website, visit www.va.gov.

VA to Launch Women Veterans Study

The Department of Veterans Affairs is launching a comprehensive study of women veterans who served in the military during the Vietnam War to explore the effects of their military service upon their mental and physical health. The study, which begins this month and lasts more than four years will contact approximately 10,000 women in a mailed survey, telephone interview and a review of their medical records. The study will assess the prevalence of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and other mental and physical health conditions for women Vietnam veterans. The study will be managed by specialists in the VA's Cooperative Studies Program and is projected to cost \$5.6 million.

Beneficiaries. Vets Shielded From Health Reform

The national health reform bill passed by the House last month and the Senate version to be debated in early December pose no threat to current health care benefits provided to military families, retirees or veterans, say advocates for these beneficiaries as well as congressional committee staffs. The House passed Affordable Health Care for America Act (HR 3962) states in Section 311 that "nothing" in the bill "shall be construed as affecting" authorities used by the departments of Defense and Veterans Affairs to provide TRICARE programs or VA health care benefits. To learn more, read the full article on Military.com.