Plan to Take Action: Transitioning from Military to Civilian Status

The old adage, “when in doubt, do something,” is especially relevant when expanded to include a thoughtful plan of action related to the job search process. While we recommend that you plan your job search, we also caution you to avoid the excesses of too much planning. Planning makes sense because it focuses attention and directs action toward specific goals and targets. It requires you to set goals and develop strategies for achieving the goals. However, too much planning can blind you to unexpected opportunities. Luck—being in the right place at the right time—plays an important role in the job search. However, we like to plan our luck. After all, luck is when preparation and opportunity meet.

As with any military operation, it is important to establish a timeline and be disciplined in the execution of your planned activities. It is no less important when embarking on your employment campaign. Your mission is to obtain employment; therefore, consider doing the following:

1. Determine the number of weeks or months before you need to start. Remember—it’s never too early to start.
2. Prioritize the employment search activities.
3. Determine which activities can be done concurrently or must be done sequentially.
4. Place activities on a timeline.
5. Execute the plan.
6. Follow up each job search activity with appropriate actions.

Developing a sound yet flexible search plan is critical to conducting a successful employment campaign. Regardless of how much time you have, the time spent planning and organizing your activities will result in a far more effective job search.

To find an example timeline that you might consider using, please click here.
For a helpful resource to aid the identification of skills and civilian credentialing, please click here.