

## Rescue your résumé: 6 places to get help

By Adam Stone - Special to the Times

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Link to online version: [http://www.militarytimesedge.com/career/resume-advice/ed\\_strat\\_resume\\_070411w/](http://www.militarytimesedge.com/career/resume-advice/ed_strat_resume_070411w/)

If anyone is a subject matter expert on your skills and experience, it's you. So why is it so hard to write a résumé that conveys those abilities?

"While the military job seeker is an expert in many things, corporate America is not one of them," said **Jessica Richardson**, a former Navy officer who now recruits vets for placement firm **Bradley-Morris, Inc.**

Fortunately, there are people who can help you make that translation.

- **Civilian friends:** The more civilian, the better. "Ask people who don't have any military experience at all to look at it, and try to incorporate their feedback," **Richardson** said.
- **TAP staff:** The Transition Assistance Program typically offers some résumé help, whether in the form of feedback or access to how-to resources.
- **College career offices:** Most schools have support materials available as well as counselors ready to help structure and review a résumé.
- **Nonprofit help:** Counselors at veteran service nonprofits like the Tip of the Arrow Foundation and Hire Heroes USA will work with you one-on-one to get your experience on paper.
- **Recruiting firms:** It's in their interest to help you polish your résumé because a solid résumé will help them place a candidate. "They know what the companies want to see and they can draw that out in your résumé," **Richardson** said.
- **Professional résumé writers:** A pro will sift through your background for the most important experiences to highlight and package them compellingly. Prices range from a few hundred dollars to upward of \$1,000.

### The military difference

Keep in mind that résumé writers who don't speak "military" may have trouble translating your career for the benefit of civilian hiring managers.

Army Master Sgt. **Donnell Davis** found that out the hard way when he separated in March 2010 at Fort Benning, Ga.

"I looked online and just happened to pick a résumé-writing company because they were close," **Davis** said.

That nearby résumé writer knew the form of a résumé but not the details of a military career.

"I knew it wasn't right," **Davis** said. "It was only one page. It didn't speak about who I was and what I had really done. It was really generic."

He tried again, entrusting his résumé to **MilitaryResumes.com**, a service aimed specifically at translating experiences in uniform into a language the corporate world can understand.

"Comparing that résumé against the first résumé I had done, there were things they pointed out that even I hadn't seen," he said.

**MilitaryResumes.com** charges \$249 and up for its services, depending on the complexity of the job. Senior officers may pay over \$600.

**Davis'** new-and-improved résumé drew 17 queries and two interviews within two weeks of his posting it online. He now works as a quality control manager for IronBridge Construction.

"The best thing for me was being able to pass that on to all my battle buddies who were planning to retire or move on. I tell them all: **Get the professionals to do it.**"