

A Study on Transition from Military Operation to Corporate Life

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Abstract—Seging from the military to the corporate world has become a significant field of research as more retired and former military personnel are being absorbed into non, military organizational environments. A number of attributes associated with military officers and servicemen is seen as advantageous in the corporate organization, including; discipline, team building skills, leadership skills, sense of responsibility, strategic thinking skills and working under pressure. On the other hand, while both vocational environments have similar work characteristics, workplace adjustments can be very difficult for returning veterans. This study investigates the transition from military to civilian career by having an insight into the veterans' experiences/opportunities/ challenges faced during their transition from military service to civilian workforce. The study provides insight into the various factors assisting them and making a successful adaptation like organizational support, career counseling, networking opportunities, training programs and inclusiveness at work place, etc. to support transition. According to the research results, military veterans possess strong transferable skills, but face problems of identity transitions, communication difficulties and translating skills from military to corporate. The evidence suggests the contribution of transition schemes, mentors and other organizational supportive practices towards effective career adjustment and job satisfaction for the veterans. The study concludes that, close partnership of military and corporate institutions as well as policymakers are necessary to facilitate smooth career adjustment and allowing the organization to acquire tremendous human capital, leadership skills and resilience of these people.

Keywords— Transition from the armed forces, civilian life, military personnel, employment of former military personnel, career readjustment, organizational resources, transition to the civilian workplace.

I. INTRODUCTION

The author is a veteran of Indian Armed Forces for thirty-Five years. Armed Forces is a unique profession where one is supposed to eliminate the enemy at the Cost of laying down one's life. The history of mankind is the history of war. We in the twenty first century are writing military Campaigns in the world which proves the above belief.

The challenges posed to own the uniform of Armed forces are peculiar. The selection procedures are very strict and stringent to select the right material. The soldier is expected to brave cut his life against all odds. This includes fighting the enemy, terrain, weather/ climate. There are long separation arenas from family life. The financial angle of compensation is meagre. The wear and tear on the soul, mind and body are immense. This leads to associated Combat fatigue and stress

further leading to associated health issues. The country/civilisation salutes the brave soldier for his commitment. The human society accolades the lessons in leadership proved by the soldier. They are bench markers for other arenas of the society. The vastness of plethora of Karmic sphere of a soldier takes its toll on the soldier. This leads to a reduction in the professional service span resulting in early retirement. The soldier has to be resettled in a healthy manner in civil wake of life where half his age is spent after a Challenging Armed forces career. The civil plane of Karma in Corporate in nature with affiliated transition. The transition for a soldier to corporate life is difficult and challenging. It requires meticulous foresight and planning to achieve and maintain the same financial Status. The heads of state are challenged to explain why a soldier was sacrificed.

The transition from military operations to civilian/ corporate life has become a subject matter of interest among scholars and organizations because of the increased number of veteran employees transitioning to the corporate after service end or retirement. Military professionals bring in human capital attributes such as leadership traits, discipline, commitment, strategic orientation, teamwork and crisis, management skills to corporate organizations. Yet, many veterans face adjustment problems as they transition to the civilian and corporate life because the culture of military service is dissimilar from the corporate (Ashforth, 2000).

Research scholars report that transition from military to civilian employment and life is a psychological and social disruptive process characterized by identity constructs and role enmeshment (Shepherd et al., 2020). Veterans encounter problems during the change, including communication barriers, little regard for military expertise, highly structured organization, fewer social networks, and a lack of need gratification (Brunger, Serrato, & Ogden, 2013). Anderson and Goodman (2014) have found that career transition theories are best explaining the fear and uncertainty experienced by military veterans as they try to carve room in the civilian jobs market. Corporate culture requires accommodation, informal social conversations and autonomous decision, making that may seem in conflict with military operational approach (Cardow, Imbeau, Apiata, & Martin, 2021). Therefore, a military life, to, corporate transition can be arduous at a self and organizational levels initially for a veteran.

According to research, career counseling, mentoring, working networks, and organizational support make it easier for veterans to adapt to new employment surroundings

(Bahtic, Prikshat, Burgess, & Nankervis, 2020). With effective transition programs, former military employees develop and build corporate culture awareness, stronger employment, related skills, and positive attitudes during the transition period (Black & Papile, 2019). Psychological toughness acquired during military service can further lead to individual career progression and stabilization (Ahern et al., 2015). Over the last few years, the global economies and private corporations increasingly acknowledge the necessity of veteran's employment transition assistance because of their operational competencies, high moral standards, leadership attributes, and voracious application of pressure (Baruch & Quick, 2007). Nonetheless, to fully comprehend the switch from military service to civilian existence, more study is needed. Hence, this study is going to explore the military to corporate life transition experiences, hitch, opportunities and adaptation process. The study also seeks to identify organizational practices that ease veteran reintegration into the civilian employment system.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Ashforth (2000) described role transition as a "multidimensional psychological process" that entails the adjustment from one identity to another. Among military veterans, this entails adjustment to new organizational norms, work environments, workplace relationships, and communication channels.

Based on Schlossberg's transition theory, Anderson and Goodman (2014) studied military veterans and discovered that emotional readiness, support networks, and adaptation styles are key elements of effective civilian career transition, but their results also pointed toward counseling and formalized transition programs as beneficial.

Brunger, Serrato, and Ogden (2013) investigated how veterans reintegrate into civilian society, reporting confusion, identity switch, and broken employment transitions as typical concerns, since many skills obtained in the military are not available to the civilian workforce.

Baruch and Quick (2007) found that leading military retiring career transition in second careers shows a correlation between leadership performance in the military and in the civilian economy. Adaptability and strategic thinking surfaced as greatly valued transferable skills.

Ahern et al. (2015) investigated the social and psychological issues of Iraq and Afghanistan veterans' reintegration, reporting employment adjustment as highly correlated with psychological health, marriage stability and social acceptance.

Black and Papile (2019) studied Canadian veterans, listing employment readiness, confidence building, and networking events as predictors of successful transition, with broader education as a strong enabler.

Bahtic, Prikshat, Burgess, and Nankervis (2020) suggested that veterans often must restart from an entry or mid, level job, regardless of their military accomplishments. They emphasized career development workshops as well as employer education campaigns.

Shepherd et al. (2020) elucidated the professional and psychological dilemmas of veterans in corporate initiatives: "lack of civilian experience and perceived in,group/out,group distinctions" and "communication challenges" undermine efforts to advance their professional identities.

Cardow et al. (2021) investigated the transition of New Zealand military personnel to civilian life, concluding that "emotional, financial, and professional support...are essential." They pointed out the importance of community and family support.

Morris and Hanna (2023) probed perceptions of "Civvy Street" among veterans, concluding that similar to the military environment, sense of belonging after transition can be difficult to achieve without adequate identity reconstruction.

Robertson (2014) reviewed previous research on career transition and recommended improved teamwork between the military and the civilian sphere as well as "preretirement planning" and career navigation training.

Roth (2024) studied the role of professional networking in military to civilian transitions, discovering that social capital remains a bedrock for successful civilian careers.

Sachdev and Dixit (2023) analyzed the cultural transition from a meta, synthesis perspective, reporting "a hindrance of civilian organizational communication systems and work practices" as common ways to experience culture shock.

Shue et al. (2021) noted that career obstacles among veterans include "organization, related, role, related and personal issues" that are compounded by limited understanding of military experience on civilian resumes and interviews.

Karre et al. (2024) emphasized "individual and contextual variables" such as career preparedness, psychological persistence, support networks, financial resources, and organizational climate as contributors to a successful transition.

III. AIM

The Aim of this research paper is to analyse the dynamics of Transition from Military operations. to corporate life to ensure that the society justifies its role in resettling a soldier in civil corporate life.

IV. METHODOLOGY

The author has used his thirty-five years service experience in Indian Army as a barrier to analyse the problem and the dynamics of resettling a soldier. The experience of serving in the Armed forces including facing combat situation as well as the risky hazards of the profession gives a unique insight into finding a solution for smooth transition into corporate life. The Internet has been referred to as a guideline, however the vast exposure of active service and a degree in MSC Defence and Strategic Studies from Defence Services Staff College, Wellington goes a long way in shaping this research paper. The author has himself retired and settled into a second innings in academics and has a first hand experience of the problem in hand.

V. DISCUSSION AND RESULT

Military operations-Overview

- A. *Structured Hierarchy*. The military environment is a structured hierarchy. Legally few Fundamental rights, as given in the Constitution of India, are forfeited. On a legal command given by a senior a soldier is expected to lay down this life. It is the concept of duty unto death
- B. *Discipline and Command System*. The Armed forces maintain a disciplined command Control System as it is a job requirement. It leads to a rigid personality and a protected 24x7x365 environment leads to combat fatigue.
- C. *Mission Oriented Approach*. The military tasking is always pinpoint and of exacting Standards. The rational prestige depends on it. It is a high pressure environment.

Corporate Environment

- A. Flexible structures. It is a flexible structure where the pivot is a well-motivated team and good leadership. However the boundaries are drawn.
- B. Profit Driven Goals. The aim is very well defined as to achieve maximum profits. It is a corporate war for money.
- C. Collaborative Decision Making. The Business world is about joint decision making as a part of a joint think tank.

Key Differences

- A. Command V/S collaboration. The Armed forces are autocratic decisions and the corporate is about collaboration decisions.
- B. Fixed Roles V/S dynamic roles. The Armed Forces are about Fixed Roles in combat for security oriented tasks. The Corporate Culture is about dynamic roles is a economic set up to achieve maximum profits.
- C. Risk V/S innovation. The Armed Forces have an inherent risk involved in the tasking. There is no surrender in the face of death. Corporates have innovative bent of mind which revolves around profit generation.

Transferable skills (common to Military and Corporate)

- (i) A. Leadership: The inherent quality of both setups to take decisions under pressure can be viably employed.
- (ii) Accountability. The command control structure and hierarchy in both the set ups is of exemplary standards with an aim to achieve sustained services.
- (iii) Strategic thinking. The Calibre of decisions and the stakes involved in both environments are of strategic dimensions - A Do or DIE situation.
- B. Teamwork and collaboration.
 - (i) Strong unit cohesion. A well knit team is the hallmark of Armed Forces and corporate. It is established to attain result against all odds.
 - (ii) Trust Building. Mutual spirit of corps, faith, trust and respect are the hallmarks of both set ups.
 - (iii) Coordination. A well oiled machinery where all parts move in mutual coordination so that they can sustain the

pressure of tasking with difficult odds and yet deliver results.

- C. Crisis Management. The two set ups are expected to deliver success in difficult no go situations. Their professional integrity revolves around this motto.
- D. Problem Solving Ability.
 - (i) The two environments require tactical thinking so as to work out a plan after appreciating the situation and available options.
 - (ii) Quick Decision Making. Military and corporate job requirement is about taking quick decisions under pressure and create a Plan where a normal psychology gives up.
 - (iii) Risk Assessment. This features an appreciation of risk in terms of life, men, material, money, resources and time barriers.
- E. Communication skills. The flow of info and smooth transfer of orders require a aim for Clear and concise communication. The mash up of the command and control structure require a balanced approach for a Lubricated Channel of flow of information, ideas, decision and orders.

Challenges in Transition

- A. Cultural Shift. A stint of two decades or more in uniform harness leads to a fixated mind, and personality. The change to Corporate occurs around 40's. The best part of human life is over by then financial burdens are weighing heavily in this age group. The Culture in corporate is different. You have to start from scratch again barring few common parameters.
- B. Lack of Corporate Experience. The Armed Forces persons have Compatriots who have two decades experience in a job profile in corporate and two decades as Students before that. There is a huge lack of corporate Experience.
- C. Identity Change. The military harness gives a very strong blue point in the personality of service personnel. It is difficult for them to re-attire themselves into Corporate dynamics.
- D. Cultural Differences.
 - (i) Formal V/S Informal environment. There is an inner rift in Armed forces personnel to adjust to the to and from dynamic environment of Corporate that is very informal. Vice versa is also true.
 - (ii) Authority V/S Equality. The Armed forces environment is a closed well knit Authoritative and Autocratic environment. Equality and joint Manship are the pivots of Corporates leading to adjustment problem.
- E. Skill Translation Gap. The Curriculum vitae of Military personnel is transformed by Professional to make it recognisable and comprehensible by corporates. The human factor also feels challenged.
- F. Psychology Angle. Loss of identity culture shock and adaptation issues take a heavy toll. The lack of job security pay protection, financial adaptability/ insecurity for the individual and his family dynamic play heavily on the psyche.

G. Opportunities. The attainment of same professional / social status as before is challenging and requires an intensive research requires and effort, Lot of liaison, Contacts and references are required.

Training and Development.

An in-depth study before taking the plunge into corporate and training programs on a constant basis are required to keep the ship float. This involves soft Skill, education degrees and internship during service period.

The concept is that being Forwarded makes you forearmed. The orientation on Work-Life Balance is a must do Aim.

The way forward and Recommendations

The way forward and Recommendations emanate from. the quotation Change is the only constant. The soldier knows he is pitched for a short stint in Armed forces and has to move into corporate for survival.

A meticulous road map plan is required at individual level. The soldier before entering into forces should plan his second innings and instantly fuel his efforts throughout the Armed forces Career. He should plan his family's welfare and investments accordingly. He Should update his educational qualifications and skills to stay abreast of the impending change.

The Organisation/Armed forces should aid the soldier and arm the soldier with resettlement schemes hand in glove with Government support and developing a Corporate interface. These must be frequently updated/upgraded in order to stay current with modern developments.

The Society's Responsibility towards the welfare of the soldier is paramount. The soldier sacrifices his youth for the citizens of the Country. Society should help him rebuild as well as a reward for his sacrifice.

VI. CONCLUSION

The present dynamic have to be monitored for improvement for all stakeholders and lessons from the past and foresight and planning for the future will see the day through. "OUR SOLDIERS deserve it".

Transitioning from a military culture to corporate culture can represent a daunting and overwhelming experience. These individuals experience challenge at the professional, psychological and social levels. Despite having outstanding leadership skills, discipline, flexibility and operational understanding, military veterans lack a fundamental understanding of organizational culture of the civilian workplace and are unclear as to how to best transfer their military experiences into the corporate world. Table 1, below, indicates that career counseling, access to networks, organizational support and transition programs provide needed assistance with the transition.

Furthermore, the review of this literature revealed that great strides could be made in managing key elements involved in the transition process such as identity restructuring

and emotional adjustment. With organizational support and life coaching, the likelihood of positive career outcomes and satisfaction from work increases. As this study endeavors to show, corporate entities would be well advised to develop programs targeted at these competencies as well as create truly inclusive workspace in which the transfer of skills and experience can be maximized.

In conclusion, this thesis maintains that successful transition from combat zones must be a collaborative effort involving the military institutions, support organizations, workplace organizations and concerned politicians. Streamlined resettlement strategies hold the potential to foster not only the stable employment of ex, combatants, but also the furthering of their leadership roles.

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