Military Transition Workbook

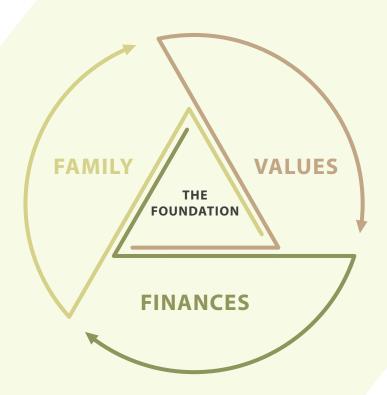
Colonel Ted Studdard, USMC (RET)

Exiting the Service: HAVE YOU PLANNED?

I thought I was prepared to exit the service; I was wrong.

I underestimated the transition and subsequent transformation required to move into my next career and into the next phase of life. What struck me when I was leaving the military was the number of choices I had. This is eye opening and can be overwhelming if you are not prepared. I talk to veterans every week, and from my experience in talent acquisition at a Fortune 25 company, I can confidently say I would have benefitted from assessing my priorities while I was still in the service. Doing so would have helped me navigate this unique opportunity more effectively.

Evaluating and ranking the considerations that I suggest in this book will lay the groundwork for a rewarding new direction. Approaching this a year or two before you exit will offer you time to think without the pressure of having to find work right away.



Family, values, and finances are the foundation for your job search.

As I retired from the Marine Corps, our son Ward was getting ready to go to high school. In prior years, where we were stationed determined where he went to school. Post-service, once we identified our general location, we visited high schools with Ward and spoke with teachers, counselors, and administrators. We gave Ward the option to choose his school. We then chose our home based on his school choice. Include your spouse and family in the decision-making process. After the years of sacrifices they have made to support your career, this is a great time to focus on their needs and preferences. If you've missed special occasions, living close to family might be important to you. How can you help your children to pursue their passions, like finding a specialized program for a kid who is exceptionally talented in acting or basketball?



Take special considerations into account, such as:

- Aging Parents
- School Age Children
- Special Needs
- Medical
- Education

What are the considerations for your family?	

You accepted the values of your military branch and would not have served multiple tours if you didn't believe in the values. The same applies to Corporate America. You will have good days and bad days, but if your values align with your company's values, you're more apt to stay when challenges arise.



- Define your values and assess how well they align with those of the companies you are exploring.
- Are the company's values just on paper, or is the company really living them?
 Go beyond what is written in the corporate values statement; research the corporation and see how it is living its values.

As I was preparing to retire, I talked with numerous service members who had retired before me. I was surprised by the number of times they changed employers. In several cases, they chose an employer whose values did not align with their own and it led to a break-up when challenges arose. Comparing your values to those of prospective companies can help you refine your job search before you exit the service. If you are aligned with the values of a company, you'll know you are in the right place. You will have a connection beyond the job and a richer work experience that will help see you through the challenges that we all invariably face.

What are the company values that are important to you?

Take a hard look at your finances to determine how long you can go without working (i.e., how long you can say "no" or conversely when you need to say "yes" to an opportunity). You do not want to be surprised; the earlier you consider your financial state, the better off you will be and it will shape your approach. Of course, the longer you can go without having to work reduces stress and gives you the opportunity to be more selective. As you review your finances before you retire or exit the service, consider what you need financially verses what you want financially. The two can be significantly different. Sometimes the right offer is the one that helps you to meet your immediate obligations. Having a clear financial picture is a major driver in your post service career search. Know where you stand before you start.

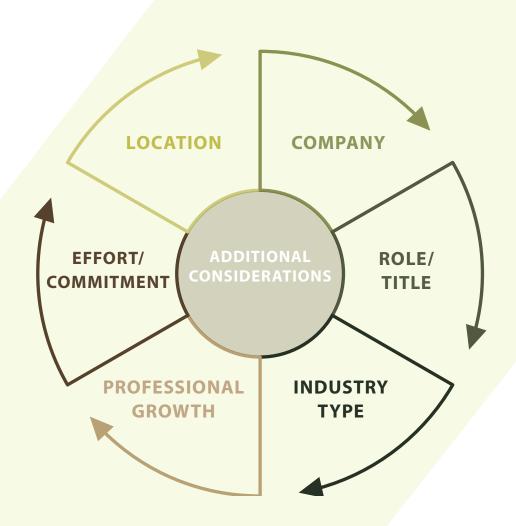


- Estimate your financial obligations (needs verses wants) and the appropriate salary that will fulfill those needs.
- Determine how long you can go without a paycheck from the time you exit the service.
- Do you have a place to live that is within your means as you search for your second career?

What is your financial situation?		

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

Now that you have laid the foundation, it's time to determine what is most important to you and your family regarding new opportunities outside of the service. Consider the following: location, company, role/title, industry type, professional growth, and effort/commitment. These are not in any specific order and there is no right or wrong answer. The key is to think through each of these and put them in the priority that is best for you and your family.



There are different schools of thought around what comes first – pick a location and then find a job, or find a job and let that job determine location. If location is a priority, narrow your search to companies that are located in your chosen area. Your aspiration to work with a particular company might also determine your location.



What factors are driving your choice of location?

- Do you own property that you want to use?
- Do you want to go back to your home of record?
- Do you have family in need of your care?
- Are there specific location(s) or region(s) where you want to live?
- Are there location(s) or region(s) where you do not want to live?
- Are you open to exploring new locations?

What are your top five locations?		

Many service members have such a diversity of experience that they don't know what they want to do after they exit the military. If you are unsure of your direction, large corporations might offer greater leeway to explore different jobs, like staffing, logistics, and operations. You may have to leave a smaller, more specialized organization in order to explore different roles. Moving from employer to employer can cause you to lose the type of connectivity that we appreciated in the military. Staying with one company enables you to build equity and relationships, become a part of the culture, and find your niche. If you want variety and are ready for the next challenge, company size can be a decisive factor.



- Is there a specific company you want to join? Why?
- What are the top three companies that interest you?
- Would you accept an offer at your target company even if it's not your ideal role?

Describe your ideal company.		

If attaining a particular role or title is the overriding factor, you may not care what company you will work for or where it's located. Keep in mind that titles and paychecks don't always match across organizations. A senior title in one industry or company might pay less than a lower level position in another. Opportunities for advancement vary as well; taking a lower level role in one company can lead to better opportunities over time than a more senior position someplace else. Don't hesitate to ask about salary, the total compensation package, and career mobility when exploring and comparing roles and titles.



- Are you more focused on a particular role/title as opposed to a company or industry? Why?
- Salary and title do not always match across different industries and companies.
 Are you willing to take a reduction in pay or a lower level position to land at a specific company? If so, how much are you willing to give up in salary or your level of responsibility?

Describe your ideal role/title.		

INDUSTRY TYPE

I have spoken with many military professionals who have an intense passion for a particular industry in their second career. Whether you are interested in recycling, retail, forestry, or another type of business, you'll need to be prepared to make decisions based on your drive to get into that field. This could include being in a location that is not desirable, or taking a lower level role. Service members have such a variety of experiences that choosing an industry can be challenging.



- Are you more focused on a certain industry as opposed to a company or title/role?
- What attributes make this industry appealing to you?
- What concessions are you and your family willing to make?
 - Location
 - o Role/Title
 - Salary

What is your ideal industry?	

There are a significant number of people who exit the service at a relatively young age and have many years of work ahead of them. Most want to do their best and continue to grow. These driving forces are ingrained and might influence you to take a job that has less responsibility because doing so can open up exciting growth opportunities as you learn your new role. Once you get your foot in the door and begin learning, your natural abilities and your work ethic will give you what you need to advance.

If you want to grow, do your research and find out if the company or position provides for upward mobility. In the service, you knew there were certain locations and roles you needed to take on to build the experience necessary for promotion. You were aware that accepting difficult jobs led to opportunity; the same is true in the business world. Organizations have spoken and unspoken rules, and you and your family must be aware of them. Increasing responsibility may require relocation, or a stint at the Corporate Headquarters.

If your family is not willing to move, and location is more important than advancement, be aware of this. A position that requires you to move may not be the best fit for you.



- Do you want to grow and have more responsibility within your company?
- Are you and your family willing to relocate for growth opportunities?

what kind of growth opportunities do you want to have?		

EFFORT & COMMITMENT

Assessing the level of effort or commitment you and your family are willing to put into your second career helps you to define a compatible job and company. The higher you go, the more effort and time you need to be successful in that role. If you want a high paying, high profile job, is your family on board with the associated commitment?



- How hard do you want to work?
- Are you looking for a job that just keeps you busy or are you looking for a more demanding role?

What level of commitment are you and your family willing to put into your second career?			

RANKING YOUR PRIORITIES

Now that you've thought about the six additional factors, rank them from most important to least important.

PRIORITIES	RANK
Location	
Company	
Role/Title	
Industry Type	
Professional Growth	
Effort and Commitment	
How would you describe your ideal second career?	

MOVING FORWARD INTO YOUR NEXT CONTRIBUTION

"I trust this guide will bring clarity, focus and peace of mind to you and your family as you move forward."

Colonel Ted Studdard, USMC (RET)

As a new tactics instructor, my commanding officer, Colonel Bob Fawcett, USMC, said to me, "No matter what the circumstances are, there is always time to think." He is right, whether working under pressure at the Pentagon, in field training, or in combat. There is always time to think. We are wired to move and act with a sense of urgency, but, in this case, we definitely need to take some time to think and reflect with our family before moving forward. This pause will help make your move more successful and more rewarding. I trust this guide will bring clarity, focus and peace of mind to you and your family as you move forward.

I hope this workbook helps you as you prepare for this period of transition and transformation. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to me through any of the channels below:



www.TedStuddard.com



www.facebook.com/ColTedStuddard



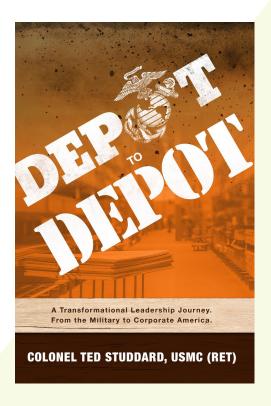
@TedStuddard



@TedStuddard



www.linkedin.com/in/tedstuddard/



My upcoming book, Depot to Depot, comes out in October, 2019. If you've enjoyed this workbook, I'm sure you'll enjoy it as well. You can follow along with the book's progress on the channels provided above – please read the synopsis below:

Thirty-six hours after graduating high school, Ted Studdard was on his way to Boot Camp at the Marine Corps Recruit Depot, Parris Island, South Carolina. He started as a private on a journey that would span four decades, touch five continents, encompass two wars and end up as a leader at The Home Depot, the #1 home improvement retailer in the world. His stories, observations and experiences as a leader—from desert combat, to the the halls of the Pentagon, to the aisles of The Home Depot—are sure to enlighten and inspire. Much more than a leadership primer, "Depot to Depot" provides a great illustration of the transformation that veterans must make as they begin their personal journey from the service back into civilian life. Proving that they are a huge reservoir of human capital that can be leveraged by Corporate America to reinforce our national economy.