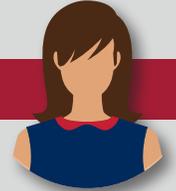




THE FORCE BEHIND THE FORCE

A Business Case for Leveraging Military Spouse Talent



In the U.S. there are

More Than

1 MILLION

Active, Guard, and Reserve Military Spouses



More Than

15 MILLION

Military Veterans' Spouses

An Estimated

5.8 MILLION

Surviving Spouses of Veterans

Military spouses are largely overlooked as a part of a talent pipeline—even despite the fact that they are well-educated and there is a compelling business case to hire them. There is limited research and data available about military spouses, and a business case for hiring military spouses has never fully been articulated. Below, we outline ten abilities, attributes and characteristics of military spouses in an effort to outline a potential business case for hiring them.

Who Are Military Spouses?

93%

GENDER

Active duty military spouses are predominantly female.

FEMALE

AVERAGE AGE

33

YEARS-OLD

AGE

Active duty military spouses are significantly younger compared to their civilian and veteran counterparts. Active duty military spouses are, on average 33 years of age compared to 47 years of age for civilian spouses and 60 years of age for veteran spouses.

CHILDCARE

74%

HAVE CHILDREN
18 AND UNDER
AT HOME



Active duty military spouses are more likely to have children (18 and under) at home compared to their civilian counterparts (74 percent versus 59 percent). Having young children, especially when a service member is deployed, necessitates the need for childcare, is associated with decreased earnings, and a higher likelihood of unemployment.

FREQUENT RELOCATIONS

MOVE
10x
MORE FREQUENTLY
THAN THEIR
CIVILIAN
COUNTERPARTS

Active duty military personnel move on average once every two to three years, 2.4 times as often as civilian families. Military spouses move across state lines 10 times more frequently than their civilian counterparts and sometimes overseas. Frequent relocation can create gaps in employment, inability to start or complete education, unemployment, or underemployment (working in a position inconsistent with work experience or education).



What is the Employment Landscape for Military Spouses?

UNEMPLOYMENT AND UNDEREMPLOYMENT

Military spouses have higher unemployment rates, estimated as much as **3 times higher** than their civilian peers; military spouses are also underemployed; **33%** report they are **underemployed** based on their educational background.

EARNINGS

Active duty military spouses **earn roughly 38% less** than their civilian counterparts. The higher the education level, the larger the income gap between active duty spouses and their civilian counterparts.



LICENSURE TRANSFERABILITY ISSUES

35% of spouses work in a field that requires licensure, and of the 78% of spouses who reported they had experienced a military move during their husband or wife's active duty career, **only 11%** acquired a new professional license or credential after their last move.

ACCESS AND COST OF CHILDCARE

67% say lack of childcare has impacted their ability to pursue employment or education.



PARENTING RESPONSIBILITIES

Military spouses are often de facto single parents due to spouse deployments, geographic separations, or unpredictable service member work schedules sometimes limiting employment choices.

SUGGESTED CITATION

Bradbard, D.A., Maury, R., Armstrong, N.A. (2016, July). The Force Behind the Force: A Business Case for Leveraging Military Spouse Talent (Employing Military Spouses, Paper No. 1). Syracuse, NY: Institute for Veterans and Military Families, Syracuse University.



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WHY HIRE MILITARY SPOUSES?

The Business Case



Resilient Military spouses face challenges including family separations, frequent relocation, separation from friends and family, and difficulty finding employment or finishing their education. Yet, despite juggling multiple responsibilities, they report better coping than the average civilian.

DIVERSE

The active duty military spouse community has a larger proportion of ethnic and racial minorities as compared to the broader civilian population.

Resourceful

Military spouses are often learning to use the resources they have available to them, and they create unique and innovative solutions to problems despite obstacles or challenges.

Adaptable

Military families live with consistent uncertainty. Spousal deployments often occur without warning; families may be asked to move without notice; benefits and allowances frequently change unexpectedly. Despite these challenges, 68% of active duty spouses say they are satisfied with the military way of life.

Entrepreneurial 28% of military spouse respondents have either been self-employed or operated their own business, and 34% indicated they had an interest in online or work-from-home opportunities.

EDUCATED

84% have some college education or higher

25% have a bachelor's degree

10% have an advanced degree

Team-Oriented Military support infrastructure largely depends on at-home spouses relying on one another through social activities, help with childcare, and overall social support.

MULTI-TASKERS

In a study of over 6,200 military spouses, despite juggling multiple responsibilities, 75% reported feeling confident in their ability to handle problems.

CIVICALLY ENGAGED

Blue Star Families, in their 2014 survey of military families, found that 68% of their respondents reported that they had either formally or informally volunteered in the past year—significantly higher than the 21.8% of the general public who formally volunteered with an organization in 2015 as reported by the Department of Labor.

Socially Aware Military spouses often interact with a variety of people of different cultures, backgrounds, ages, and ethnicities. The military exposes spouses to a variety of cross-cultural and social experiences, and interactions with VIP's and the press. Military spouses also are asked to maintain sensitive information for security reasons and understand norms around operational security and safety.

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