
The 2018 Resettlement PDF



**Kick start your 2019 by
looking back at 2018**

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Introduction

2018 is coming to a close and we are entering the time of year when many of us start to reflect. It can also be a time to start looking ahead while and beginning to plan for what is next.

Are you leaving the armed forces?

What do you want to achieve?

Have you started to plan?

All important questions that the information within this document may be able to help you with.

For me 2018 has once again proven that there are literally thousands of people out there willing to help.

The content within this PDF is a combination of my own thoughts, but more importantly, the experience and knowledge from people who are going through what you may be as you read this.

This is a testament to those who are passionate about helping service leavers transition back into civilian life.

It's not the prettiest.

There may well be some mistakes but there is plenty of knowledge, experience and insight.

Put the kettle on, grab a pen and enjoy.....

Articles

3 Year Reflection - You will be ok

Last week marked three years since I left the Royal Navy for good.

The personal growth I have experienced since then has been tremendous but it wasn't without it's low points.

In September 2014 I flew home from South Africa after my last stint away. I remember getting home to my empty flat, my girlfriend (now wife) was away at the time and the overwhelming feeling of reality suddenly hit me square in the face.

What the f**k have I done?

I was 24 years old with little qualifications to my name and I thought leaving a secure job was a good idea.

What was I thinking?

48 hours earlier I was part of a ship's company, part of a family, part of something bigger than myself.

Now I was sat alone, leaving what I had grown to know and love since the age of 17 behind. I was rolling the dice without really realising. I was slightly jet lagged, happy to be home but with a complete and utter feeling of emptiness.

What have I done?

To put it in perspective I was leaving a role where I travelled the world, doing exciting things that most people will never experience, all while being paid to be with my friends.

I was leaving this life to work in Project Management, I'll let you take that in.

From the outside this was mad, I had good prospects of promotion in the Navy and It wasn't that I was unhappy, I just somehow knew it was time to move on. My reasons for leaving must have been hard to hear by close family and friends. Although they wouldn't admit it at the time, they must have been understandably worried.

At the time, although I wouldn't have admitted it, I was lost.

It is not until a few months ago that I accepted I should have probably asked for help. At the time. I thought I didn't need it, I thought I was ok. I wasn't, and although I learnt a great deal from that period, I could have made it a lot easier on my self and those around me.

I am happy to say that although there were horrendous times and days where I didn't feel like getting up and walking back into my new alien world, I got through it. I am in a job that I love, and along with the side projects I'm involved with, things couldn't get much better. I still have days where I miss my previous life, but those times are limited now.

My message to you?

If you find yourself at a low or confusing point in your life, having been in the forces or not, just take that next step forward, then the next and you will start to feel better day by day.

If someone offers you a helping hand, take it, they have offered because they want to, not out of pity.

It's natural to be afraid of change, you are only human after all.

Just don't bottle it up.

You will be ok.

The FDM Conundrum

I receive quite a few messages asking me about the FDM ex forces programme so thought I'd share my thoughts.

I couldn't fit everything to into a post, hence the article.

First and foremost, I am and always will be grateful for the platform FDM provided. I have no doubt that without them I would not be in a job I love now.

Did I take a pay cut?

Yes, I was a Leading Seaman in the navy (corporal equivalent) so was on a decent wage, a very good wage when sea pay was in play, which for me, was most of the time. I went in with my eyes open in regards to this, determined that after two years I would be in a position to negotiate a better salary.

This was a gamble but one that has thankfully paid off. I left FDM after the two years as per my plan.

Is the salary different depending on the route you go down?

This is based on when I was employed by FDM so could have changed.

I believe that if you go on the advanced course you will command a higher wage. I ended up doing the 12 week graduate course as I was leaving at a junior rank. Again, for me personally, this experience was priceless as I had no formal experience in IT.

I will admit I did find it frustrating when people who had been a higher rank in the forces were on a higher wage then me for doing the same job.

I got over this by always thinking about my long term aim. It taught me patience.

Did I have to move?

Yes, but I knew this would be the case. I knew I had to be flexible in terms of location. To be honest, it was the best thing that could have happened. The opportunities in North Wales aren't great. I spent 2 great years in Bristol due to my placement.

Was it worth it?

For me personally, 100%. I went into it knowing exactly what I was getting involved with and what I had to do.

I knew that it was two years to prove myself and move onto better things.

Final Thoughts

It is not for everyone and of course it is not perfect. However, there will be frustrations with every company you work for.

I can see why it could be seen as too good to be true and I am sure it hasn't worked out for everyone.

The main thing is to get all the facts before starting anything.

FDM are not the devil in disguise but they are a company that aims to make money.

This was purely based on my experience and as stated at the beginning, I will always feel a sense of gratitude for the opportunity FDM provided.

Good luck.

The audacity of releasing a book and the lessons I learnt.

Ironic that the author appears to have made himself an authority on the matter of resettlement, yet if you research his background he took the “easy” way through FDM group. FDM group has a very extensive ex forces recruitment process where they do all the hard work for you. I looked into it myself and many a friend has gone through their program.

The point being I fail to see what a person who used this system can bring to the table. And then of course, resettlement isn't rocket science. You'd have to be a bit of a potato to need a book to navigate leaving the army. So much so that if you're the type of person requiring a book, you're probably best off staying in.

What a review!!!

One year ago I self published a book which offered my take on the resettlement process upon leaving the armed forces.

I was not and am still not an expert on the matter.

I wasn't known by anyone.

I didn't really know what I was doing.

It was never on my to do list.

Who do I think I was?

To be honest, I didn't really think about how much negativity it could have potentially attracted. I was just going through the processes. The next thing I knew I was receiving a proof copy in the post.

The one thing I did know is that there wasn't much real advice around unless you really dug deep and connected with the right people. The book was never

going to a best seller, nor was that the aim. It was never going to be hundreds of pages. Again, that wasn't my aim. I wanted to give people short, sharp snippets of advice so they could carve their own way.

So I clicked a few buttons and it was on Amazon.

Linkedin has been my tool to "market" the book but I have never been a salesman and I don't think i'd be a very good one either. I was letting people know it was there. If they wanted a copy then great, if not, I was ok all the same.

Luckily people actually ordered it and even read it!!

Ive always been quite unemotional about achievement but I have to admit that when I saw the first few reviews go up, I was proud of what I had done.

I also felt emotional when the first negative review came through.

I was hurt.

I was embarrassed.

I threw myself a pity party for an hour or so and got over it. I would look at top selling books and take comfort that even the best receive some negativity.

In some ways, my confidence grew due me sticking with it and not taking bad reviews to heart.

I had something to say. and had the balls to put myself out there. I am glad to say the positives outweigh the negatives as it stands. I have come to accept that if I am putting myself out there, people will take aim either way. Even if I was giving away my wages and curing cancer at the same time, someone would have a pop.

The messages I receive saying how much the book has helped them are my fuel. That is what tells me I did the right thing.

If I can give someone the confidence that they can leave the forces and be successful, that is enough for me.

My message to you?

If you have something to say, go with your gut.

There will be more people than you realise who need your help.

Going home, moving forward

Sometimes you have to go back to where you came from, to remember where it is you are going.

I spent a my youth woking out how to get away from the place I had grown up, and even longer staying away once I had.

At first I was driven by spite, eager to prove people wrong and make something of myself. I then told myself that I needed to stay away due to lack of opportunities upon leaving the navy.

I was staying away from the place I knew, where the people I loved were, and the place that helped make me the person I am today.

Why?

I can't really put the feeling into words, but the best way I can explain it is when you haven't been in contact with a friend for a period of time. Not due to falling out, just life getting in the way. The more time passes by, the more awkward you feel about reaching out. Once you take the step to make the call, you wonder where the anxiety came from.

I recently went home and found myself with a spare few hours. It turns out a dog sitter is a hard thing to come by so I had my little companion with me for most of the weekend. I took the opportunity to walk up to the place where my dad and I would go when I was younger. As I looked out to sea, I felt content.

I was home.

I belonged.

Maybe I was subconsciously reaching out to myself and saying it was ok to be here, and that I had nothing more to prove to anyone, especially myself. Or, it could have been the fresh air with a pinch of nostalgia.

Whatever I was feeling, I gave myself an internal nod and walked on. Knowing that if I needed somewhere to scatter my thoughts I could always count on home.

With experience comes confidence. With confidence comes the self-awareness to realise you are enough.

You always have been.

Struggling to find meaning? Try some fresh air...

There are so many out there looking for meaning, especially those who have left the armed forces, but also, those who did not choose that path. Not in the deeper spiritual way, but instead, they are missing something fulfilling, something that provides meaning.

That is why the armed forces had so much appeal to some of us in the first place. The action, adventure and challenges it provided satisfied those needs. The sense of purpose, the sense of trying to live to our potential. The self realisation that there is more to us than we first thought before boarding the train for basic training.

When we leave the forces, or decide its time for a new chapter in our lives it can be daunting. Having spent so long looking out for others we need to train ourselves to look inwards. Of course, there is time for family, community, friends. But one thing is missing in all of this.

The self.

The time for self.

Self health.

Self development.

Thoughts.

Reflections.

Elevated heart rate.

The most simple but equally important...

Fresh air.

With the environment, with its beauty, it can revive us, it can renew our sense of meaning.

We are hard wired for it, to be outside, to live connected with our surroundings. To live, to struggle, to achieve.

When you take a step outside, everything is active around us, and of course we are part of this nature and the growth it provides.

That sense of adventure and realisation is what pulls people to discover their potential. It's what drew us into the life we committed to in the first place.

Nothing can replace that.

But as you navigate through resettlement or a career change and move on to new challenges, fear and uncertainty will be added. This is only natural.

This fear brings us back to our raw selves.

It makes us feel vulnerable.

For some of you, the last time you truly knew nothing was boarding that train into the unknown.

The first time you got up at 5am surrounded by strangers.

The first day in a new office.

The first day of starting your own business.

The more we connect with this feeling, the more we realise that the dormant self inside us is ready to achieve once more.

If we avoid the environment that we need to thrive, we end up making ourselves foreign to it, by shutting the outside out of our day to day lives, we become comfortable.

When was the last time you just went for a walk?

No phone.

No distractions.

Just you, and the ground beneath your feet.

If we allow ourselves to take this time, our own tank of self care becomes full.

We need this to fire.

In order to do the best for others, we need to do the best for ourselves.

We can't give more than we are able to give ourselves.

Every one of us feels this imbalance at times, we just struggle to identify what it is. We have become so disconnected with our potential that we don't know or how to explain to ourselves what it may be.

But most once that fire has been lit, once that healthy fear is in place, we start to understand.

We start to get curious.

When curiosity knocks, it makes us wonder what we are capable of.

An awakening.

Once this happens, we have a greater appreciation of the better, potential filled versions of ourselves.

Resettlement and more importantly life can be attacked head on.

If you want to find meaning, take a step outside.

Talk Transcripts

Amazon Web Services Insight day

If you take anything else from today just remember these two animals.

Kangaroos and emus.

I'm going to be talking a lot about perspective today so let's start with this.

Read one star review

So ladies and gentlemen I am here to represent all the potatoes out there.

I am not an authority on resettlement but I have been say where you are now and I am here to tell you that with a bit of hard word it will be ok.

After Nearly 7 years of amazing experiences with great people I decided it was time to leave. I loved the navy but knew I had achieved everything I wanted.

Leaving was a gamble, and although those around me didn't say it, I now know they thought I was crazy.

I had good prospects of promotion and no solid plan of what I wanted to do.

Not advice I would follow given the chance again.

With only 5 GCSE's one of them being welsh and a few qualifications I had gained during time in the navy you can probably see why they were worried.

At the time I thought I was was going to walk into maritime security, earn rockstar money and only work 6 months of year!

Nice one Jac

That wasn't to be and there isn't much calling for gunners in civvie street.

That last year flew and I was before I knew it I was leaving my ship for the last time.

My last run ashore was in Cape Town and as you can imagine it was an entertaining week. One minute I was with my friends, the next I was in an empty flat in north wales.

The reality hit me pretty quickly.

What have I done?

Two weeks later I started my new journey

The route I went down isn't important but what I can tell you is that there were times where I doubted what I was doing and I can guarantee for those of you thinking the same in the room.

You are not alone.

The company I first worked for after leaving conducted their training out of an office in Manchester.

I spent Monday -Friday in the worst shared accommodation alone trying to get my head around these new skills that I had to learn.

It was a lonely time.

I missed my mess deck.

I missed the lads

I missed being told I smelt of Fox urine.

You will soon realise ,like I did that you have had the best platform to build from.

The resistant and grit you have will help you succeed.

Other people will also question your choices to your face and behind your back.

A lot of people laughed when I said I was leaving.

They laughed until it worked.

Now they ask how.

I don't care if are a chef, writer or infantry ,due to the experiences and situations you have been exposed to,you can succeed.

I never thought I would find a job that I loved and actually look forward to going to, especially one in IT.

I was a Gunner in the navy and now I work with software development teams to help them become more productive.

Trust me, if I can make that sort of jump there is no excuse that you can't with a little help along they way.

Some will find it easier than others but what you stand for, what you have done and what you have inside will see you through the what ever comes your way.

Weather you decide to go with AWS, which from what I've heard is a fantastic opportunity, or down a different path. The one piece of advice I will give you is that you have to keep perspective.

Guys, You are going to be working with people who get cheesed off if they get full fat milk instead of semi skimmed.

That is the world we live in.

Your perceptive on work and more importantly life will be thing that you need to hold onto the most.

And of course, your sense of humour.

In those times where others around you are losing their heads over the spreadsheet that Phil has deleted,

You will be the one who can see the positive and move forward.

Now I've been in IT for just over 3 years now, the first one I was like a duck, calm on the surface but my legs were fighting to keep me above water.

I am learning everyday but I truly believe that that confidence instilled in me from my time in the navy got me through the days of self doubt.

And it will you too.

Whatever you define as success, in resettlement or life you can get there.

Keep perspective and remember what you have achieved.

At the beginning I mentioned kangaroos and emus.

Why?

Because both animals are incapable of walking backwards, they can only walk forwards.

You can do the same through resettlement and beyond.

Thank you.

Warships and Flow

The transcript from my Agile Cymru 2018 talk.

One talk that has turned into three pieces of content. The talk itself, a podcast and an article.

My first dive into documenting over creating content.

Without flow, ships would sink, without flow our teams are at risk of sinking also.

I want to take you back to July 2011, for reasons that we could debate Britain had decided to take action in Libya.

HMS Sutherland found itself just off the coast of Benghazi and we as the crew were primed for action. We had spent weeks training for every scenario possible and speculating about when we would be deployed.

As with most things, we found out on sky news soon enough.

The ship has been in defence watches for a few days which means half the ships company are on watch and the other half either eating, sleeping or resting up on a 6 hour rotation.. 6 hours on, 6 hours off.

This means the ship can be brought to full action stations quickly and efficiently.

So it's now 11pm....

General Alarm

The moment that alarm sounds the ship enters a natural state of flow.

There is no panic, apart from the alarm and machinery there is little noise, only slight acknowledgements as people pass each other up and down the ship

as they make their way to the respective action stations (yes that is a real thing)

From the operations room to the galley, these individual groups of skilled people come together for a common purpose.

During times of war, flow even comes into account when feeding the ships company.

Each person has 7 minutes to leave their station, make their way to the dining area (I say dining area loosely), eat and get back to relieve someone else who needs feeding.

All the while being 'motivated' and 'encouraged' to be as quick as possible. (I am looking at all your project managers out there)

Without the steady flow of people and food, energy and moral would drop, resulting in the fighting capability of the ship being compromised. If our teams are not properly nourished, the result, although not as extreme could be the same.

That junior chef becomes part of the fire support party, the young steward is now part of the damage control team. From the captain to the most junior sailor, if his or her leader could no longer fulfil their duty, they could step in and the ship would stay afloat.

Bottlenecks on warships do not exist, a problem is identified and swarmed upon before it could even be considered an issue.

Cross functional, T -shaped individuals if you like.

If someone walks past a fire onboard, do you think they wait for someone whose job it is to put it out?

No, they raise the alarm and start fighting that fire in the best way possible while waiting for assistance. That individual knows that help will come.

It's part of the flow.

I believe the teams we work with should adopt the same or at least some of this mindset, the same unspoken loyalty to each other, the same want to succeed together. I am under no illusion this doesn't happen overnight, if it did, most of us would be out of a job. But if we believe in the power of Kaizen and stick to what we believe in through the bureaucracy we sometimes face, it can be done.

Now, I spent ALOT of time at sea during my time in the navy. Did I like or even get along with everyone? Of course not, I even argued with the people closest to me at times. Does that mean when it came to it we wouldn't have given everything to help each other out? I will let you make your own mind up.

Now I am not saying that we start running our teams like warships, my aim to bring to life something we all come across in our day to day work. For example, Without WIP limits, fast roping from a helicopter would be impossible, two people on the rope at any one time, it makes sense, it allows flow.

Why are we so cautious when introducing things such as WIP limits to teams. I'll tell you.

Absence of trust, fear, and a shortage of accountability. These three things start and can end with every single person in this room. If we take on board (pardon the pun) even a small percentage of the warship mindset, then the teams we work with can only flourish.

If we are consistent in our actions on a daily basis, without doubt, trust will be built. If we are inconsistent in our own actions, trust will be lost.

Consistent actions build trust.

Now onto our old friend fear. I hear a lot of people talking about fear.

Fear of Scrum, Fear of Kanban, Fear of Agile.

There is nothing scary about frameworks. What is scary, is a team of individuals that don't want to work together or feel they can't due to the environment that has been created around them or the negative mindset that has been allowed to fester. If we manage to build trust and eliminate fear then those around us will soon want the best for each other and expect the best from those around them, that is all accountability is.

Shipmates are stronger than teams.

If we focus on working to eliminate the 3 things I highlighted while facilitating the environment for teams to succeed, flow will look after itself.

It's not easy.

But I do not think any of us signed up for easy.

Now I have done the easy part by standing up here and telling you why it is important and I want to leave you with 3 things to put into action. I chose 3 things because the number 3 represents a number of things. In this case, a beginning, a middle and an end.

A beginning - Where is your team currently? I am sure you hold retrospectives but how many times does the team come out of them still thinking their voice hasn't been heard. One thing you could do is during coaching sessions ask the other person to write on the board three words.

One to describe how they feel, one to describe how they think the collective team feels and one to describe how they think the team is perceived by the

rest of the business. By the the time you have had a conversation with everyone, you should have a good, honest picture of your team's health. Put these real thoughts and feelings into something tangible, that the team will digest. Personally, I write a weekly summary (more of a blog) that has gone down well in the past. Tell a story. Try and capture the emotion of the week and what has been discussed. You will of course have your own ideas on how to improve things but offer it out to everyone. Build accountability, let them be the change they want to see.

A middle - Focus! Sounds obvious but I mean another type FOCUS. Follow one course until successful to begin with.

This is where patience comes into play, if a team or business are new to the Agile mindset and associated frameworks there will be a slump in engagement if things don't improve as quickly as first expected. As Agile practitioners, Scrum Masters or whatever titles we have bestowed upon ourselves. I am sure we have all faced this situation and potentially had our will bent to miss some things out or simply "shift to Kanban". These are always testing times, but if we can't get the basics right, how can we expect others to believe in what we are trying to create. My advice, if you want to take it, be patient and believe in the mindset, believe in the framework you are putting in place. Highlight every improvement that has been made and draw from them during the harder times. Use them as your fuel and don't lose confidence in your own abilities to help teams succeed. People are always happy to judge at half time, if you retain your confidence throughout there will only be one result by the end.

Nothing is won at half time.

An end - As we all know there is a never an end to continuous improvement but holding up the mirror, not only to the team but to yourself, at regular intervals is key and the third and final actionable item. This doesn't have to be

in a retrospective, this could be simply taking 5 minutes a day and noting down your thoughts and feelings. Nothing will ever replace making a cup of tea and sitting down with a notepad and pen.

What are you grateful for?

What could you improve?

What are you proud of today?

You may not always like what you see, and that's ok, as long as you accept it and move forward. No one likes to be called out on their own shortcomings but if we can't hold up the mirror we can't build consistency.

Three simple tools, tips, snippets of advice.

I wanted to add as much value with this, but the real value comes from all of you.

Ask yourselves.

Will you help your teams be ready when the general alarm goes off?

12 Weeks Of Resettlement

Sunday evenings are sometimes a time of reflection and a great time to help someone out who may need it.

I am going to trial asking a weekly Sunday question/topic that someone might be thinking, but may not have the confidence to ask in regards to leaving the armed forces.

Sunday Resettlement Question #1

Leave your rank at the door.

Is this good advice for those leaving the armed forces?

Has your military rank given you unrealistic expectations when it comes to finding civilian work?

Did you have to change your attitude at all?

Answers

Whilst it's still very early days for me on my transition from the military to the Corporate world. I would say absolutely Jac, leave your old rank at the door! However, you can still be proud of what you achieved regarding ones military career in rank terms, but being humble and respectful that outside of the military it really doesn't mean too much in many cases (I'm thinking of the general population preconceptions of certain ranks in the military, and this is of course my own preconceptions of the general population too). I would also predict that the majority of people will have different opinions of whether the rank they once held truly reflected the level of responsibility, experience, personal quality, leadership and so on and so forth. From my perspective I

strongly believe that it is the person which is being hired and certainly not the rank once held. After all, everyone one in the military has a unique set of experiences and skills to them, and we must all be better at packaging this combination up into a comprehensive narrative which our civilian counterparts can fully understand. This also includes those of whom, who want to start their own business/charity after leaving the military too. I would suggest that the majority of personnel will have had to step up and fill in at a much higher rank at some stage of their career, due to a variety of reasons. What is more important is the thought process of decision making, and understand the full context in which each decision was made for the overall effectiveness of that particular situation faced, and where this fitted into and impacted on the overall strategic vision. Notwithstanding that other transferable skills are important, and that due diligence taken by military leaver will be respected by any quality future employer. I would also suggest that authentically demonstrating real motivation, desire and having an attitude to want to learn and quickly deliver added value, can overcome a lack of experience. However, you require someone who will ultimately take a risk on you, so de-risking as much as you can, back yourself and never be affraid to reach out to other ex-Military which have already taken the leap of faith, as you might be surprised of how much they are willing to help. From personal experience I was, and I'm extremely grateful for it.

Ps, the level of rank is not the critical thing here, and there is ample examples out there to prove this to be the case 😊

I think this is good advice for anyone who thinks that the rank they have in the army has any bearing on wages, respect and seniority in any civilian job.

In my transition I would say the only thing that matters is your adaptability, character and ability to learn extremely fast.

My advice to anyone leaving is you can have, be and do anything you want as long as you want it enough and are willing to put in the work before you leave. Make sure you know everything you can know about what your getting into before you leave. Yes you won't have any experience but you will know the lingo and understand the principles.

Get data smart and improve your organisation's performance in the Information Age.

My advice is to stand against rank bias in oneself and that of potential employers. Rank should have little bearing on one's potential outside. That said there are employers and even some military recruiters and charities who ask your previous rank. I personally refuse to be defined by rank and politely point this out.

Sunday Resettlement Question 2

CVs

What is the best route when leaving the armed forces in your opinion?

The CTP template?

Paying someone to write it with/for you?

Go at it alone?

Get advice from someone in the industry you are trying to get into?

There are no wrong answers, this is all about helping others who may not have the confidence to ask for help....

Answers

It was a shy week so no answers on this but it is covered again in a later question.

Sunday armed forces resettlement question #3.

Should someone leaving the forces be prepared to take a wage cut in the short term?

Or does their rank determine the wage?

Answers - This was a particularly emotive and valuable thread.

Jac Hughes I think it depends largely on knowledge, skills and experience (KSE) vs demand in the market place really. I applied for a role which was on an equitable salary (but in central London so would need a commute) and ended up going with my real wish of starting my own business. So if you have relatively unusual KSE which are in high demand then you may well be pleasantly surprised. Salaries seem to depend on a great many factors from level of responsibility through to how flexible the working location and conditions might be.

It totally depends on the field of work people go in to and the organisation's ability to see the value that a service leaver can add to roles.

If someone is taking a step into a new role completely like I did, it is not unknown for there to be a salary drop (to begin with) but that is a great chance to showcase your ability, set yourself apart with a strong work ethic and commitment to your new role. The best thing about a "civilian" career is the fact that your performance is what dictates your salary increases, bonus and progression and not time served or rank.

This issue I found when leaving is knowing where you should be pitching yourself based on skills. Being offered a contract without knowing what the average market is offering for a similar position is a tough one. It is not that easy to gauge.

I don't think that there should be any expectations on wages as it is totally different depending on what it is you do.

Personnel leaving the military are in a unique position where they can completely change career direction if that is the desire. If you are starting out on a completely new career then you would almost definitely be expecting to adjust expectations regarding pay.

The Bottom line is if you want to get in to an industry that is difficult then offset the wages with your pension . I took a 50% Pay Cut that still left me on the same money as in the forces with my pension added on . Within 2 years I was making the same wage as I was in the forces and the pension was all extra. Get a foot in the Door , Be humble , work hard and prove your worth . Your worth what they think your worth its got nothing to do with rank .

Prepared? It should be expected if a service leaver does not invest in themselves.

A Sgt Maj could be less qualified for a civilian job than a Pte. A Sgt Maj has perhaps done 22 years in the military. Perhaps that same Sgt Maj also joined at 16. They'd be 48 and certainly in need of a second career should they not choose, or not be selected, to commission. That same Sgt Maj probably does not have a particularly competitive academic background, having left education at 16. They might, but it's unlikely. The education that the military offers for OR is (quite frankly) pathetic. A quick example: an OR (from Pte-Sgt Maj) is mandated to receive 21 days of formal education. Contrast that with the c.365 days an officer (2Lt - Lt Col) is mandated to receive. That's over a 22 year career. Military personnel would and should benefit from formal education to facilitate a successful transition in to the civilian workplace, and to enable the attainment of a realistic (not rank entitled) wage.

Departure from the military as a Sgt Maj would mean leaving (or being dismissed from) a job that was paying them $>1/3$ the average wage in the UK. A good wage - c.£45k.

Should a Sgt Maj (or any rank) walk in to a job that pays the same wage with limited or no experience of the civilian workplace? Not only should that Sgt Maj (or other rank) be 'prepared' for a decrease in salary, they should probably expect it if they have not 'prepared'. Their rank should not, determine their wage. Their ability should.

Reverse it. Imagine a civilian joins the military (as an OR) with a degree in engineering. They'll earn $<£19k$. They serve 4 years. Leave. Get a job as an engineer. Should they then earn c.£19k? Why? Because they earned that previously? Because they held the lowest rank in the military? Of course not. They might earn less (but will probably earn more) as a qualified engineer in the civilian workplace. I have experience with that precise example. The admirable job of returning trolleys at a supermarket would pay $>£19k$. That's not sarcastic.

A Sgt Maj's (potential) ability to have successfully performed in a hierarchical military environment does not map across to a civilian environment. Why would it? Sure, there are transferable skills (if articulated in an industry-relevant way), but as a whole, the military is one of a kind. Where else do you legitimately deal in bullets and water? The military does not help. It provides 'Mickey Mouse' qualifications. An NVQ in the Carriage and Delivery of Goods? I would rather not put that on my CV and write a more pithy personal statement - thanks.

There are many units that start work on a Monday at 1030, have Wednesday afternoons off 'for sports' and finish at 1130 on a Friday. That is not a long week. Of course, exercises require more intensive commitments as do

operations, but on the whole, the standard working week leaves an overwhelming amount of time for personal development. In my opinion, on the whole, that time is not seized appropriately for SP that are transitioning out of the military. There are obviously exceptions to that generalisation. Again, the military doesn't help with the qualifications it offers. Perhaps SP should facilitate their own transition academically, after all, it's no surprise that the military does not offer great education.

Overall, my point is this. One can study and make a successful transition out of the military as a Pte, Sgt Maj, Capt or Brig, suffice to say, one could equally earn more after that transition. Equally, the most junior of ranks has potential to earn more than the majority of their seniors. A soldier that embraces CDRILS with some motivation, tenacity and direction can achieve great things outside of the military, or indeed, in it.

I hope any rank that leaves the military has a successful transition, they have probably sacrificed that which most would not. That successful (so be it if success is defined by wage) transition will not be found in a cereal packet though, it will be earned by all ranks accordingly. Military rank in the civilian workplace is - for the most part - irrelevant.

I hope this offers a more comprehensive insight for those in, or thinking about, leaving the military.

I was very fortunate in the fact that when I joined decent qualifications were still available. There is a generation of service personnel with next to nothing due to "intermediate trade measures" courses designed to reduce the duration of the training pipeline but came at a cost of losing civilian accreditation. Defence diplomas are utterly worthless as no civilian employers have heard of them and if they aren't on the NFQ or QFQUAL register they don't really equate to that much. There is still very much a "them and us" approach to education,

as you've pointed out. The Forces need educated individuals but there is no opportunity for in-service degrees for ORs. Surely offering such opportunities would benefit the military whilst aiding retention.

On the first question, I believe that having done some analysis of their financial position, a Service leaver should only aim for jobs that meet their financial need and not compare the wage before to the wage after as the jobs may not be like for like (some will, some won't).

This second question really gets me going though. Rank on leaving service is absolutely no determiner of wage deserved in civilian employment. And nor, while we're at it, is pension they might be in receipt of. Time and again I have come across employers who think they can moderate someone's wage because they were a particular rank on leaving or (and this really grips me) because of the pension they're receiving. Both are utterly irrelevant and a disgraceful prejudice against the people concerned. No-one should stand for it and if asked, should politely but firmly rebuke the person asking.

I took a 10k pay cut on leaving but made a 5 year plan that would mitigate the pay cut in the short term. Also what rank? In civ div, organisation's want to know experience that they understand and is demonstratable for their roles. They understand very little on rank structure. My advice plan early for leaving and prepare to sacrifice in the short term to achieve in the long term.

When serving we spent up to two years planning and preparing for a 6 month operational tour and yet so few service personnel, approaching transition, spend anywhere near that when preparing for the rest of their lives!

I have just accepted a new contract as a H&S Trainer/Advisor in my last few months. I was prepared to take a wage cut as I had very little experience in the H&S side, however my training experience helped.

Personally I feel that rank has no weight in "civie street" it's how you come across and showing the will to work hard and gain experience. Unfortunately there are many ex service personnel who feel they are entitled to something which they are not. I feel lucky that a company has taken me on so really I owe them something in form of hard work and showing they made the right choice.

I think you need to minus your Xfactor off you're current pay and use that as a starting point (knowing that you may still need to take a salary drop as well).

Q1. Wage Cut - Most certainly if you don't prepare, which is the most important word in the question.

Plan your exit strategy, understand civilian street, commercials and get advice from people who have been there and succeeded, but be very aware of those who think they have. Anything is possible but it comes back to the first question about preparation. So the answer is about you the individual.

No prep - Pay decrease.

Much Prep - Pay equivalent or above.

My experience was a poor transition if I am honest, I didn't do enough and landed a mediocre position. I realised to late but have recovered and I am now moving in the right direction.

I wish I had prepared.

There is no rank in civvy street.

Rank stand for nothing in the commercial civilian world and neither does military service or general military experience. If you don't have a 'trade' that can be directly cross connected with a civilian career path, expect a pay drop

to work your way up from to prove your worth to the company, there are exceptions though.

In reality highly trained, qualified experienced engineers in all branches of the armed forces, can and do earn equivalent or more than their forces salary with the right commercial company who value their engineering backgrounds, experience and qualifications in a world severally short of high quality engineers and engineering managers.

You talk about acceptance of a pay drop but with an immediate pension you can take a role that pays less (with potentially less stress, closer to home, better work/life balance) that still leaves you on your last military wage.

But money isn't everything, I was happy to go from a fairly high tempo, living next to work, not really away from work at evenings or weekends role (that I enjoyed) to a 9 to 5 Mon to Fri, step out of work forget about it until 9am, role. There was a month in between were I was working to get the same salary I was on in the military (with on target sales) but I was miserable with the hours and the role, therefore, didn't mind a wage "cut" when I took the next role because of my IP.

And none of that has prevented me for maintaining the financial responsibility I had whilst serving or spending my remaining wages on whatever I want.

I was only asked once if I received a military pension at interview. When it came to the questions at the end of the interview, I asked what the interviewers pension was, he responded that was private, I said I rest my case. I didn't get the job.

My own ethos, although the pension helps, is do something that motivates you rather than the money motivating you. I'd work one day a week if it was something that really inspired me, met my own aspirations etc. That said it's

all based on your own situation financial or otherwise. Sometimes you may just have to chase the larger wage.

I left as a Leading Marine Engineering Mechanic submariner on about £27k a year in 2000. First role as a trainee accountant was £10k. The drop was significant and a bit of a shock. Fortunately I was prepared and had savings to support me and some good friends and family that helped.

The drop was a good investment and set me on the way to qualifying as an accountant and a lucrative second career. On a further note, studying for further qualifications in my last 18 months and taking resettlement management courses for at Plymouth College of Further Education helped get me the trainee accountant role.

I think the right mind set is more important than rank. Also the ability to adapt the experiences and skills gained in service to civilian and commercial careers.

Most service careers involve continued learning and development. If a service leaver can continue with this mindset when they leave by undertaking relevant civilian qualifications then they should do well in second careers.

Yes but it is all about the pros and cons I start my new job today there is a pay cut but I don't have to use my own car so I'm £250 better off but what goes in to my bank is £60-£100 a month less than when in the army.

Rank has no bearing on civilian pay unless you have a direct contact in a specific industry. Having been through the process I have the following observations : 1: CTP is not fit for purpose in the main and requires a thorough update to offer a more direct approach into industry. 2: ELCs should be utilised early and are fantastic. 3: the job fairs held by CTP are poor and more like a cattle market; avoid at all costs and network yourself. 4: research your chosen

path 3 years out and prepare, train and develop the skills needed. 5: develop your CV which matches the job descriptions and skills needed.

Lastly; find 1 or 2 very trusted recruiters having met face to face and seek help and guidance to maximise your cv. It may be needed to take a role down, however, my experience proves this is short lived and I have been able to find roles and salaries much greater than my highest in the military. Finally, finally, be prepared for the tax hit if you have had a full military career. It's painful lol

I totally agree with your post, especially about CTP and the job fairs. I honestly wish that I had researched the job market sooner.

I agree CTP is a joke and not fit for purpose. Unless you fit into one of their presupposed 'boxes' they aren't interested in what you want to do for a career.

As someone who left after 6 years of service, with a family living in services family accommodation, I can say that the salary expectations were for an increase going in to the civilian market as the monthly outgoings were going to be increasing.

I aligned myself with a role that utilised as much of my skills and qualifications that I had gained from my time in the forces as possible, with a mind that I would take a slight drop in my take home pay, in excess of my bills and outgoings, for a potential long term gain in salary after sufficient experience.

I can imagine that some people may even have stayed in the army longer than perhaps they would have liked to, due to financial reasons pertaining to the increase in living costs associated with moving from services to civilian accommodation, counting on their half pension after a full career to supplement this expected decrease, but this isn't an opinion based on facts, just simply an opinion based on my own mindset when making my career decisions and plans.

I think that this very much depends on personal circumstances, with financial constraints and transferable skills dictating our expected civilian salary being at the heart of concerns, at least speaking for myself.

Very subjective question. Some technical experts will no doubt receive more money in the commercial sector, if they are employed in a technical role. On the flip side, some folk might have to take a temporary drop in pay until they have an understanding of the organisation and business. They then might receive a pay rise when they can demonstrate where they add value.

I work for a business which is very matrix in its organisation, it values the skills, qualities and experience a service leavers can bring. However, the whole rank thing doesn't stand for a lot and it annoys me when I see roles saying would suit ex Major when the role is clearly demanding P & L experience for example. I started my resettlement a third of the way through my career, I attended my Education for Promotion course and was asked "hands up who's planning to leave the Army?" no hands went up. Our ETS Major pointed out that we would be all leaving at some point, whether at 12, 15, 22 or beyond. From that point I wrote a plan of where I wanted to go and how I was going to get there. I got myself qualified on extramural courses, topped up my HNC and looked to attend courses that would fill my knowledges, skills and education gap. When I left the military it was during a recession, so a job that was interesting would be a bonus and commensurate to my previous pay would suffice. I was lucky and was promoted twice within that business, they also put me through a Masters program which was worth about 12k. Other factors like type of commute and opportunity to work from home are clear factors that should be also considered! (edited)

I think the location, commute and other factors sometimes come into play once you have that much needed civvy experience and have established yourself. My first job was 4 hours round trip on A roads from near Warminster

where my first home was to near Gloucester. 20 hours a week of commuting even for the 6 months until I sold up ash's relocated took it out of me. Now I'm more established I have the luxury of saying no more than an hour/ 30 miles , is there any WFH option, things I'd never dare consider 40 months ago.

(edited)

I don't envy you having had a commute like that! Admittedly i was fortunate to find a job with an easy commute.

Yes , for sure . I had no choice ! But it was all worth it and definitely paying off now

I never expected a pay drop and never planned for one. I set my expectations based on what I could see in Civvy street and what I felt I could bring to that company. With good planning built around what qualifications are relevant and creating a good CV with experience to back it up, etc there's no reason anyone should take a pay drop. The Army isn't well known for paying big bucks so no reason to not aim higher.

Personally I feel many veterans set their targets too low and don't fully understand all the extra benefits they can bring to Civvy Street.

I left the RAF in Oct '15 with no medical pension & no seniority in rank, after 16 years service. I was under no illusions that life as a civvy would be an easier or cheaper way of life. When considering living costs it's easy to think you deserve a higher salary but military-acquired soft skills only take you so far. I had no specialist skills (logistics) so the reality is, interviewers do not understand unless they themselves have served.

I spent over £10,000 on courses to become a PM after I left & with no discernible experience as a PM (akin to civilian PMs), I had to get creative with my CV AND take a salary cut. I dropped a couple of grand which is no big deal,

but my rent went up 300%, my commuting costs were almost as high as my rent, but somehow got by (cut childcare costs by relocating close to my parents) because of my mindset & work ethic. After 8 months I got promoted & was on more salary than I was when in the RAF, & after a very strange 19 months where I was recovering from a serious RTA, I'm now close enough to work that I could cycle if I had a bicycle & earning more than I've ever earned in my life... basically, speculate to accumulate. Short term loss for the spring board to catapult to long term gain.

There's quite a difference between the older SNCOs and WOs and junior ranks now, with many juniors holding more civilian qualifications! I think a lot depends on the individual about what position they get when they leave. There are quite a few people who hold the rank they do because they can run fast and shout loudly on green PT when the CO is around. Surprisingly enough, nobody outside the Army cares about your BFT time and running fast doesn't automatically equate to being a good leader. If you are going into a completely new sector I think you should expect a bit of a salary drop because of your lack of experience in that role but you will soon catch up.

Despite what some self-titled life and motivational coaches on LinkedIn may say, if leaving as a SNCO/WO, you should expect and therefore assume a wage cut, and be prepared to drop a level or two to gain entry to an organisation. However, you may be either extremely lucky or able to spin an amazing dit at interview and actually be better off.

Although I have seen some jobs on here advertised that state "would suit a former warrant officer/officer", etc, rank and qualifications seem to be meaningless in the civilian employment market, whereas commercial experience is everything.

I left the Army as Sgt RE and felt that I should be in a managerial role once I left the forces. The reality to this although I potentially had the skill set to be in such a position was the civilian experience was not there and there is a lot of weight behind such experience.

Some times it works in your favour to swallow a little bit of pride build up that civilian experience to add to the vast amount of military experience and doors will start to open. It's all about being patient.

In the short term a wage decrease is in most cases a dead cert. With regards to rank determining wage, It depends on the experience you had whilst in that rank. I am sure most will agree just because you held a rank doesn't mean someone necessarily did anything productive with it. The JRs I have worked with in my career on leaving tend to outshine based on their drive and skillsets!

Great thread. I found that many companies offered below market value for your skills when leaving citing a lack of commercial awareness, especially in the consultancy arena. Found this very frustrating, but also a little short sighted as ultimately as soon as you had gained that commercial exposure you would be likely to move. Luckily I found a few employers who were willing to accept the lack of awareness and understand that it was not a show stopper and could be rapidly gained.

Pay cuts or increases are all ultimately relative though, as many others have said it's the whole package that needs to be considered. Great thread.

I completed three years as a veteran last month and can confirm that not a shred of my rank (in service) counted on departure. I spent 32 years in uniform but I also made sure that my CV matched (or performed better) that of my colleagues outside and on the way out, I built up a significant portfolio of private clients who I still work with.

Now fully embedded in the NHS, I also sit on two national boards, spend time consulting privately and critically, I have my family back.

I strongly believe we are masters of our own destiny and our rank or position in the armed forces an indication of hard work. Three years in and my remuneration is more than double that of when I served and no one asks what rank I was... all they know, is that I served and for those around me, that is the value.

This is an interesting debate which is , in every case, informed by individual experiences, and therefore different. It is really difficult to be absolute in any statement made in contribution to this debate 'rank has no bearing' etc, stated forcefully and insightfully, but equally completely wrong! Rank attained in Service is an indicator to responsibility held and training acquired. It does have a bearing and in my experience, the civilian sector lack understanding of military systems but have respect for them. As for salary, as I negotiated during my transition, I did so knowing my worth and the value I would bring to any organisation. I held my nerve and secured a package which is comparably to the one I had in Service. I think I'm worth it, I've now got to prove myself to a new group of colleagues; nothing wrong with that.

A couple of final points, first, I got the contact for this job based on the impression I'd made in this organisation when working here over a decade ago. You never know when the impression you make will come back, to be an advantage, or otherwise. Finally, my own Armed Forces journey started as an Inf Pte 37 years ago and ended last month.

Much 'though it hurts me, I must agree with Phil. Rank is an indicator of experience, particularly in the management of complexity, and this is probably reflected in relative CVs. In general, I believe civilian organisations will pay as little as they can get away with so you must determine your own value and, as

Phil says, hold your nerve. Of course you may walk away from a few applications disappointed, but you can learn your value from that too.

Unfortunately some (not all) employ the last minute dot com attitude. As **states prior planning prevents p**s poor performance possibly. After my 42 years service my plans panned out perfectly. Adopt a system from day one and ensure your transition from service to civilian is as smooth as possible. Your qualifications are unique and you are unique. At the resettlement two year point take advantage of everything offered. An older wiser service veteran.

Military service, rank and honours will not permit you to jump the queue and that's a reality when first leaving service. Be under no illusion that there are people working in global business who are highly skilled, fit and motivated leaders. People will respect that you have served in the military, but it does not follow that they will automatically consider you on a level peg with say a graduate who has worked in a company for a number of years. This isn't to say that you shouldn't be proud of what you have achieved, but it is imperative that you take a full inventory check on just how many of your vocational skills are transferable at the time of leaving, and how much you would pay yourself if the shoe were on the other foot. For most, you will leave with a strong foundation that allows you to push on and accelerate your career, but on the whole you are moving into a work environment that measures value by a diverse set of metrics. Learning what these are and adapting the qualities you inherited from military service takes time. If you truly believe that your rank warrants an immediate like for like private sector salary, then you are downplaying the unique experience you have had in the military.

I took a pay cut, entering a sector where I have no experience. It was my choice. For a starting 'no experience' salary, the money is great. I am surviving on a pay cut, and yes I have had to manage my finances to be able to do so, but that's part of life. Yes there are larger corporate options where I could earn

more, but would I have the same exposure to different areas of business that I have now, would I receive the recognition for my hard work as much as I do now, and would I enjoy working in other places as much as I do where I am? I doubt it. I'm earning, I'm learning and I'm happy 😊

Yes it's possible to walk out of the army into a similar wage, even for WO1s, but on the whole. I would say that most should expect to take a pay cut at least to begin with, until they have industry experience.

You have to be prepared to take a pay cut. When I left the Military after 24 yrs service. I got very little response from employers and recruiters when applying for roles that matched or exceeded the salary I was earning whilst serving. Eventually a recruiter contacted me and gave me not only a wake up call but some invaluable advice. I took this recruiters advice and took a short term contract earning half the salary I was getting whilst serving, this same recruiter then contacted me 9 months later to discuss a role within their organisation. And after the Interview process was done I was successful and started to earn more than I did in the Military. The Civilian sector are not byase against ex serviceman. They know you have transferable skills. However if they are going to pay you pop star wages Proven experiance in that sector is required.

I knew officers in the Army, that I wouldn't let feed my fish if I went away for a night! Rank has no bearing on civvie street. The reason people fall on civvie street is, they think they are still going to be drinking port in the mess. They think their rank carries out here. It doesn't. I knew young privates and JNCO's who could do the job of those above them, hands tied. They just didn't shout their mouth off or were quietly reserved.

I think MOD rank has no bearing what so ever in Civi Street. I have found 9 times out of 10, employers are looking for Experience, Qualification and

Attitude. Not necessarily in that order all of the time but if you tick all 3 boxes, you cant go far wrong. One of my old CR's said "he displays leadership qualities far beyond his rank and experience. He would be well suited to a management role". Which lead me to believe, if that was their opinion why was nothing ever acted upon. Anyway, im a big advocate of your qualifications gets your foot in the door of an interview, your attitude and personality will get you the rest of the way.

I also believe you should be willing to take a pay drop. I left the military as a class 1 CS Eng to take a job as a trainee offshore. Within 2 years I had moved from trainee to a senior engineer. It's worth taking a pay drop for the short term to realise the benefits later on. Also taking a pay cut but getting a job for a company you would like to work for is a way in the door and you can then progress from there. Don't expect to leave the forces and get the massive pay, you have to work for it.

Too many people leave the military thinking that the seniority they had in rank in the military will carry over into civvy street. In reality, most if not all will have a shock when they realise that most of the military experience is unique doesn't have a matching commercial equivalent. Commercial experience needs to be gained, and I think a lot of leavers quickly realise this.

Salary is dictated by too many factors to determine a linear response to this question. Regardless of military service - an individuals background, experience, qualifications and soft skills are the key components that contribute to employability and salary expectations. Those factors combined with the type of organisation the individual wishes to work are where the salary expectations should be managed. If a service leaver qualifies as a stock trader for an investment bank, then they can expect to triple their salary. If a different service leaver wishes to become a baker for a charity then they are likely to drop their salary. However, an important message to those wishing to

leave would be to seek what brings happiness and life satisfaction rather than measure your personal value through cash, otherwise things will always be difficult.

Rank shouldn't determine the salary upon leaving the forces, competence should. Armed Forces personnel should be prepared to take a cut, why shouldn't they? You're leaving one career for another, if you're very lucky there will be a lot of similarities but doubtful. We all know the 'old boys club' exists but its nepotism pure and simple. If anyone thinks life owes them a favour just because they 'served their country', I've got news for you, life as a civvy tends to be much harder. The drop in salary will be a good introduction to that for starters.

I take into account some service leavers follow on their chosen career path and others flip completely and explore fresh opportunities. Trade skills set aside for a minute, I believe that the vast managerial experience service leavers have governs a forces price match or as close to it as possible. When I leave I don't expect to match my current salary but get as close to it as I can. What is more important to me is my family and the time I spend with them [hashtag#work/life balance](#). That is what excites me more than a big salary.

Very much depends on what you do in the forces and what you choose to do when you come out. I think that recruitment agencies under sell the skills picked up in the forces and most recruitment companies that say they are a forced recruiter are only interested in putting you in at entry level to industry. As an engineer and a manager I know I had the skills to enter above entry level and was able to convince my first employer of that. CTP need to teach people leaving the forces how to sell their skills and training. Ultimately when leaving you should work out what you need to live and anything more is a bonus, your skills you have picked up will help you stand out and rise through a company.

I can only speak from my own experience, and I was prepared to take a pay cut. However I've found the elusive 'military work ethic' to be a genuine thing in the real world and has secured me various repeat work , of which I now charge a higher rate due to my increased experience.

Rank may determine wage if the industry is relevant, for example an ex-QM going into logistics. However if the industry has no bearing or common features with the military then it is irrelevant. I'm a tree surgeon, my wage is dictated by the competition, whether I left as a Pte or a Capt would have no bearing.

I can only talk from my experience, in a vocational industry. It's probably very different in big corporations and in the City.

I left believing I was worth more in the commercial world, but absolutely prepared to take a drop in pay. In fact, I accepted an offer from one of the Big 4 on about £10k less than my base salary as a Major, at level within the firm below that which my experience and qualifications would suggest was 'appropriate'. Nevertheless, it was a firm I had actually aspired to join on leaving, a good role that offered a great opportunity and there was a realistic chance of promotion within a year and put me back up towards a salary close to that which I had in the Army.

The following day I was offered a role more appropriate to my experience and qualifications, in a much smaller firm but on a slightly bigger salary than I had previously. So there's no hard and fast rule on this one and it's very subjective as Billy says.

So, Yes; be prepared to take a drop. I'd even say spend some time analysing your finances and lifestyle and work out what your bottom line really is. But don't expect to negotiate a salary based on your rank: you're leaving regardless and a new employer isn't having to lure you away with more money.

Be prepared, don't be fooled into thinking previous rank means anything in any potential new employment. It will be your positive application and good work ethic that will separate you from most but first you have to get a foot in the door. The first year is always tough, especially if going into a completely different field so, save as much money as you can to cover at least one years worth of living expenses. Except a wage cut is a possibility but remember, if you have planned your departure from the services and planned for this then it will not be a shock to your finances.

I would say don't get blinkered by what you are/were whilst in the Forces. It could well hold you back in the long run. For me, it was far more important to identify the industry that was best suited to me and to go for it from there. The training, discipline and organisation skills etc I learnt whilst still serving have stood me in good stead and am now back to the level I was before I left.

The role you actually desire might not be well paid, if you are after the rockstar wages then go for it but you may well be unhappy on a day to day basis just living for the time off. There is no black and white answer. As a rule you won't be worse off but you may be asked to do more.

Definitely yes. I am a WO2 in the military due to leave shortly and I have already stated to prospective employers I will work (and earn) my way by up just like you would do in any employment, including the military. I think anyone who expects to receive the equivalent salary is in for a shock in the majority of cases.

Does rank determine wage? Eeek that is one of those CTP sounding things like "you'll never earn as much as you did in the army in civvy street at your rank".

Seriously I'd say it all depends on your skills and experience you have when leaving, regardless of rank. I'm not going to speak for other arms , corps or cap badges as I'm sure a Facebook style row would start.

I'm ex sigs, had lots of qualifications and transferable skills. I was steering my courses for civvy street for 10 years or more and left as a 22 year served Cpl , you're only one bad injury away from MD as I used to tell my mates.

My first role was a pay increase but many will need to step back a little to move forward. I had done quals to formalize my trade skills though. Many ex supervisors keep a similar wage (YofS/FofS into PM) , but many boots and haircut style RD types "may" struggle if they've been out of trade a while or not prepared right.

Everyone's circumstances are different, some will need full retrades regardless of rank, and with that comes the cut while you get experience.

To be honest I wanted to be a diving instructor in Asia, but my mother talked me out of it. I swapped tropical water and crap money for spreadsheets and an SUV.

I was given the advice a long time ago that for every day your in the the services prepare yourself for leaving. Transfer your KSE into accredited qualifications as these are often the first filter. CTP is a one fits all but it doesn't. As for pay, find a job you'll enjoy doing first.

I wasn't prepared to take a wage cut, I took contract roles in the short term to find the right permanent job. Be ambitious, Aim high!

Rank certainly has nothing to do with wage, I guarantee there's people that left as junior ranks that earn more than a higher ranked counterpart. It's your skills and personality among other things that determine the wage. Know your Worth!!

So far in the last year of being a civi I have learned that military service counts for very little. Left as a SSGT and have plenty of management and supervision experience. However, companies are interested only in industry experience and

if you don't have that then there not going to make money or grow. Even HGV driver jobs are hard to get. If you are thinking that you can fall back on your C +E license, think again. Lots of companies require 2 years recorded experience. ie; digital card log. For plant, or crane drivers you can pay up-to £5000 for your qualifications however you are on a red card. Again companies like you to have blue card with 3 years experience. Vicious circle of not having experience or being able to gain it. Those companies who do take on individuals will pay you rock bottom. £8 for a class 1 driver and maybe at best £10-£11 for a plant operator. Tough pill to swallow after a successful career in the army. To earn the same as I was on in the army I have to work 14-16 hours per day 6 days a week. This includes receiving my pension.

Rank has nothing to do with determining your wage. If you live within your means anything is achievable. The commercial world has no outstanding and pays little value if you where a private or a WO2. If you suitable for the role you will be successful it all depends on the individual nothing comes easy work for it.

Be prepared to change when you leave .Rank is not understood outside the forces and In civilian life you generally have to earn the salary everyday. I remind people you are only going to be as good as your next job, past rank is not of great value . So be open to earning less to get an opportunity or a new experience especially in a field you think you will gain satisfaction from. You will soon find where your abilities take you.

Depends on what you want to do and whether you have value/experience in the role you wish to be employed in. In respect of rank that also has a bearing dependant on role you seek to be employed within. I was a WO1 when I left, I did not get the same salary, even though I went into a Security Managers job at one of the big Banks. I accepted and took the hit with the pension as bridging the gap. It was a number of years of tough work getting into the H&S

side of Construction, before the ball was in my court and I have the play on on the contract negotiations. Look at the side of business you wish to go into and look at the salaries in line with experience, never sell yourself short. Work hard, be the best and don't hang on with companies that don't give you the same respect/ qualities in return. Once you find your niche, you know and the sky is the limit.

My thoughts are you go in at the wage you feel comfy starting at show your worth and value then pitch for your worth or move on to another post at the wage you are seeking. In civ div it is all about likeability nothing to do with qualifications. They just get you in the door, that has been my experience since leaving 2yrs ago. My transferable skills, experience, knowledge and maturity are more valuable than my civilian qualifications several of which are at degree level. (edited)

I would have to say it depends on the skills you have and what an employer is looking for. Some employers are aware of the rank structure and what those ranks should give them in the roles they are recruiting for. One sticking point I had was some employers within the forces world expect your pension to make up your wage. Just something to be aware of.

In short, you're Current/Previous Rank is completely irrelevant to your potential wage in the Civilian sector. It is entirely dependent on the requirements of the role, your skill set and qualifications.

My advice would be to aspire to match or increase your military salary, don't sell yourself short, but be realistic and be prepared to accept a lower salary in the short term depending on the job you are applying for.

I think that is a question that will have a different answer for every individual leaving. I personally was happy to take a pay cut and take a lower position of responsibility than my previous military role as it gave me greater job

satisfaction and was a large part of the reason I left the forces in the first place. It can be difficult to reconcile your potential with what you enjoy though. For me management made me miserable and I've never been happier now that I'm a hands on engineer again.

I took a pay cut initially but from my experience I personally don't believe so, if you are able to demonstrate the value you will bring to any role and don't under-sell yourself then you should probably be looking at a pay rise as a civilian.

In my experience modern day junior soldiers leaving the military are normally a better fit for most roles compared to senior NCOs and Officers. Regardless, previous military rank should have no bearing on civilian employment.

I left the Army in 2013 as a Lance Corporal having served 12 years in the Corps of Army Music.

The best thing I did was take a job in Ex Military Recruitment. I took a £10k pay cut (negated by my half pension payout) and only did it for a year. Not because I didn't enjoy it, but it just wasn't for me long term.

However it did give me invaluable skills in CV writing and interviewing, and especially in understanding what I could do with the transferable skills that the Army gave me - none of these were trade based, as all I was "qualified" for was playing the French Horn. I moved into Private Household Management and it was the best move ever.

A career that utilises all of the skills every soldier has, adaptability, problem solving, man management, the willingness to shoulder responsibility, and just generally being able to fix any problem by thinking outside of the box (sometimes very far outside of it!!). The learning curve was steep and I had to

work very hard, but ultimately all the skills I needed, had become a part of the man that the Army made me - not through trade skills, but just through the attitude and work ethic drilled in by the Army.

My advice would be to think "what am I good at and who do I want to be".

Read, and work through, the book 'What Colour Is Your Parachute' - to figure out what you actually want to do, how much you need to earn, where you want to live, and what your transferable skills are. Also the service leaver should consider where they plan to be in 5 - 10 year's time in their chosen profession.

Once they have decided on a profession join groups in that field of expertise and start networking, networking & networking. Gain the qualifications recommended by your professional network and take advice on CV compilation. Take advice from numerous people to corroborate what you're being told. Don't take and pay for courses purely on the back of a single person's view. Aim high and believe in your own abilities - reach for the stars (if that's what you want); if you don't grab a star you'll hopefully get a lofty cloud.

Don't take a pay cut just because that's what some other people have done. But be conscious that to earn a high wage often involves working hard for that high wage.

The service leavers that seem to struggle, from what I have seen, are the ones that lack self confidence or think that the world owes them a living.

It completely depends on the person and their skills set, being ex forces I have seen both sides of the coin. Some get out and are regimented they need to be told to do everything regardless of rank in the forces others have removed the shackles of the forces and become free thinkers and see their way around problems and man Management issues, these are the people who are worth

there weight in gold to a business. I had to take a pay cut but I can honestly say I've never looked back in terms of earnings.

It purely depends on what you want to do next and what the average salary is where you want to settle. It is worth finding out otherwise you could price yourself out of the job or undervalue yourself. I would expect pay is higher in South East England due to the high cost of living.

As someone who left the Army recently, rank has no bearing in Civvy Street and you get the job due to the skills and experience you have acquired during your military career.

Rank is far more important to those in the Service than those outside. I have been in resettlement since August 2017 and attended 23 different networking events. At no stage has anyone asked me what my rank or regiment is/was. It's about the skills you have, not the rank. There may be a correlation between more service and vis-à-vis higher rank and the possession of more transferable skills but with higher rank often comes increased age which can be a limiting factor. For example, your baseline survival salary figure will rise as you get older and may preclude going in somewhere at a low level in order to work your way up.

Valid experience & qualification determine salary. Rank stops when you leave. Having military experience only helps you self motivate & overcome problems. You have zero civilian experience when you leave, but you are adaptable! I did 23 years RM, I was on £55k a year, my current salary is much lower but high for civilians! (edited)

Rank stops the moment you hand in your ID card. Those who leave any of the armed forces and expect to maintain their previous salary or rank status are in for a big surprise. It's a daunting prospect leaving but being prepared with suitable transferable skills and qualifications will ensure the transition is

smooth, expect to take a drop in salary initially but with the right skills your salary should start to rise as employees see how many transferable "military" attributes you have, such as the ability to work with initiative, unsupervised and with integrity. All of which are lacking in some of people I have met since leaving the Royal Marines.

Rank is not even a factor, qualifications may assist you, but it is down to experience and that comes with time. I would say that the main issue is that those without any Military background can't grasp the benefits that a Veteran will bring to their team, annoyingly as in the Civil Service they promote the Reserves and the transferable skills you can gain, but seem to blank out the Regular service. Pay cut? Yes, but remember you may have a pension to assist, but importantly you will have the drive and motivation to succeed, also you know that you don't need to deploy anymore.

I retired from the forces after 24 years as a SNCO. Had a good realistic look at the job market at the time and realised that once away from the Forces rank stands for nothing, you earn what should on your own merits. Expect a drop in pay in the short term, show your new employer how good your skill set is, and the good working practices with a can do attitude can do and you will get to the right pay scale for your job. But never forget once in CivDiv you can always look for something else with a higher income, on the flip side you can also be sacked if you don't make the grade.

I have recently left, just this month in fact and looked for the right role for me to get a work/life balance that was missing in the forces. If you have the right mix for an employer then they should pay your worth. I left as a WO and am now a General Manager, something I probably could not have done without the skills learnt as a SNCO coupled with an MBA. So what I'm trying to say is your rank should in most cases transfer across to management level experience but it's not an exact science.

Of course you should be prepared to take a wage cut in the short term, in the military, for the most part, if you take into accounts all the benefits we receive we get paid an extortionate amount for at times doing very little. I'm not saying that's all the time before anyone jumps on me, so you must be prepared to take a wage cut depending on the job role you are going into. This is the problem with a lot of service leavers, they expect to walk into a high paying job just because they were in the military, not gonna happen.

Rank is another one, doesn't really mean that much, just because you were high ranking doesn't mean you'll have the same skill set or indeed people skills as someone of a junior rank. By all means use your military experience but the best thing you can do, is adapt to being a civilian, acting like a Sgt Maj in civvies street probably won't work.

Expect your resume writing and interview skills to determine your wage.

Rank... Doesn't mean anything, that's the thing veteran job seekers struggle with the most. All three job offers I've had since leaving have been triple my military salary after tax.

Firstly, you need to have a realistic view of your market worth as this is key. Secondly, don't consider it a pay drop, but rather an investment in you. Prove your worth, then once established you'll reap the rewards. The biggest mistake I see from those as they transition is salary expectations as they are often misaligned to reality.

I think rank is not relevant. It's you skill set and attitude that will prevail. My advice would be to aim higher and don't underestimate yourself. My experience is that people, esp SNCOs don't appreciate how capable they are vs their civilian counterparts. If they adjust the way they do things to take into account they are now in the civilian world they will shine!

I'm in total agreement that rank means absolutely zero in civvy street.....ive found that after 5 years out of the service that every single role that I have had have come from the word of mouth....unfortunately the experience that I gained over the 23 years in the forces is transferable but the skills and knowledge for the actual job i.e (fibre optics) need to be gained over time and that has been the hardest bridge to cross.....but luckily for me I've managed to gain a role with a company who understand the military and how we work....mind you the environment that I work in is as close as I could wish to the military life style....

Your first civilian job will not be your last civilian job - use it to be the spring board to further opportunities

Too many ex-service leavers think their Rank adds credibility in Civvy Street..some 18yr old spotty little oink will probably end up telling an ex-RSM to get the brews on seeing as he's the new boy😂😂😂😂

Unfortunately this is part of the dream you get sold at some point in leaving the army and the sooner people realise the reality of this the better

Jac, although I'm still in I clearly have considered the opportunities outside, including what I would settle for; more, less or approximately the same. It would all depend on the position and how I would transfer my skills from the Army into that new career. As an EOD/CIED specialist I could potentially earn far more than I do now but I would probably have to operate somewhere like Somalia. If I wanted stability back home then I would possibly accept a pay cut but then maybe I could shape my CV along management lines and up my remuneration.

To answer your question, yes, one should be prepared to take a pay cut and rely on the pension and gratuity as a buffer while one builds up that corporate experience. The service leaver should never, however, sell themselves short

and should take advice on how to structure a relevant CV, a unique one for each position applied for. Rank does not have total relevance; the most successful service leaver I have come across was a SNCO. Every individual is different.

Rank dictates value in the forces. In Civilian streets, skillsets dictate the pay packet an individual commands. So, every service leaver will do themselves a favour to assess their skillsets and conduct research how much those are worth in the respective sector you want to venture into. This will stop the more junior soldiers selling themselves short and manage the expectations of those that are higher ranked. If in doubt, speak to other ex forces bods on social media

Initial salary after leaving is based on how you are able to get the interview panel to understand your transferable skills and knowledge in terms they understand.

Responsibilities of rank rather than the rank itself would give you added value but in any case if you understand your real worth in terms of what you can give to the company rather than just an expectation of what you deserve then you will be in a better position to negotiate a wage. It is all about the negotiation and selling yourself.

Experienced Senior Project Manager delivering change to exciting and dynamic organisations.

Some great comments on here. I would say however that if you don't expect to take a pay cut you are crazy as continually waiting for the right paying job may never come. Companies all agree that Ex Forces personnel bring a lot to the organisation as we are all brought up with discipline and a morale compass to mention a few attributes. Now some may not be as strong as others however we all have it. But employing them on a salary that they left with they

are taking a big risk, and not many do as you don't have any commercial experience... fact. Yes we all may have dealt with some commercial aspects, contracts and the like but not like our compatriots in civi street. We do however have the ability to adapt and learn ... quickly. That is what will make you stand out amongst others and once the organisation confirms their gamble has paid off you will rise in position and salary. Like all employees work hard, keep your morals and the faith in your ability and you will get the rewards. We just work that little bit harder as we all have that little competitive edge in the back of our minds which a lot not all of our civilian counterparts don't have.

Your rank is irrelevant to a certain extent, leave it behind, you are treading a new path, it is a insert converted to civilian speak in your CV. Your wage will be what you make it, if you prepare before you leave you will be earning as much if not more with the addition no one is shooting at you. Remember the forces is not the best paid job in the world, so a perceived pay drop in relation to what your are doing is not necessary a pay cut.

I took a 2k drop in salary joining my first role, but am glad I did as I subsequently put the work in to progress (with salary hikes) in a relatively short period of time. It pays to be pragmatic and look to the slightly longer term, but knowing what your lower limits are; if you take a drop and a while into the role you realise that there's no future or potential to advance you always have the option to look elsewhere.

Get what you can and pay the morgage, feed your kids and work your way up. You have to be very lucky to earn an equivalent wage in civvie street immediately after leaving the forces. Companies find it very difficult to trust inexperienced service leavers with their assets and contracts.

I also totally agree with the CTP comments, more time on work placements would have been more beneficial.

In my humble opinion your skill set and experience should determine your wage - not rank.

A question I faced when leaving the Army. Obviously you become used to a standard of living which you do not want to change.

It very much depends on what direction you take after leaving the forces. Often it can mean starting a few rungs back down the ladder so will mean a drop in salary. I certainly did but am now back on comparable salary level.

Jac, it is about resettling into the job opportunities around where you settle ... I chose to take a 50% pay cut in order to learn from the bottom upwards and was advised that we tend move up the chain as we find our levels ...

Rank progression may have given the service leaver opportunities to become accredited (qualified) but quals and lack of commercial experience do not translate into parallel pay grades in civilian employment. Forces leavers should not only prepare for a reduction in pay (remuneration packages can include additional benefits not just cash at bank) but also be prepared to start in a lower position or with limited leadership/management responsibilities.

From personal experience I searched for any role that matched my skill set, experience and qualifications with room for further progression and consequently this became a 20k less role with no employee responsibility.

Working hard to impress, taking on jobs and projects outside my role and gaining new civilian qualifications helped me prove my worth to the company and resulted in promotion to management and again to Head of department (Director) within 4 years, my current pay is considerably higher than my exit rank of WO1.

Although this is not everyone's route or desire for the work life balance, if you want an equally successful but very different second career then be prepared to make short term sacrifice for long term gains.

You should consider the wider package rather than just basic pay. Use <https://www.army.mod.uk/personnel-and-welfare/army-benefits-calculator/> to establish what Defence pays for you and use this figure in any future negotiations.

You should be 'prepared' to take a pay cut but that does not mean you can't aim for a pay rise. It really depends on the industry you are transitioning into and how many of your current skills are valued by that industry. You can use www.glassdoor.co.uk to get a feel for what different industries pay and at what ranks / levels. You can use resources like LinkedIn to map/translate your skills across to that industry by networking with people who are already there (ideally tapping into the ex mil community).

If you are not planning on taking a pay cut when resettling, you are setting yourself up to fail (unless you get lucky as I did thankfully). Your military experience will count for nothing when you get out but it is up to YOU to demonstrate to your employer how the core values you have spent so many years living by set you apart from your civvy counterparts. It should not be too difficult for any half decent ex serviceman/woman to stand out in a civvy environment. Unless you were a complete moon child when you served, of course!!

As someone who most definitely did not take a pay cut after my 5 year stint in the signals, you just need to know how to convert the skills you have been gifted in the role you had, find a company willing to invest in you for those skills and sell yourself to your prospective employer.

Never sell yourself short if you're leaving the army, they like to say it is hard to transition, that you won't find anything better but that's all scare tactics!

Just be yourself, be confident in yourself and you will go far!

I don't understand all this people coming out are told they can walk right into high paying jobs. I had a guy told me if he got his NEBOSH he could make around £50k a year in construction. However he had never been in construction also a young graduate civil engineer starts on site at around £16k a year that's if they can get a company to take them on .I got my graduate to do a plant course before leaving uni And straight away he was making £16 per hour as plant operator and had job with civils company so chance to move into his field.Before you leave the army talk to real people in real jobs and they will tell you the truth don't listen to the propaganda given to you by the army.

I chose to leave the RAF early and accepted a salary slightly lower than my previous one. Within 6 months I had moved on and exceeded my military salary. Albeit I was willing to relocate to get a better job. It really is up to the individual as to what they and their family want in leaving the military and as previously stated there are a number of considerations to be taken into account.

I left to improve my quality of life and work life balance. That said I also planned my exit by gaining recognised qualifications when serving.

With my pension I was better off financially and after a few years exceeded my earning potential from the military.

I guess with any new area you have to be open to what you perceive is your worth in that field. If the industry sector is notoriously well paid and you have skills that are well suited to that sector then I wouldn't suggest a pay cut is justified - especially when considering cost of living is set to rise out of the Army.

If you want to work in a completely new area, which requires a whole new set of skills you potentially don't possess then I would suggest taking a pay cut in the short term is expected. I guess this is based on individual goals upon leaving the service and the above issues would not only affect service leavers but would apply to civilians looking to retrade too.

The Army doesn't recruit JNCO's or SNCO's it recruits private soldiers and trains them. We can't always expect to join a civilian company at a JNCO or SNCO level. 100% we can transfer our skills and mindset but it takes time to adjust to the civilian way of life. For anyone leaving the forces. Good luck! It takes time to adjust but you'll get there!

I hired a lot of retired military in the US in the defence contracting world and had to explain often that I was offering a salary for a specific job. The compensation was matched to the job requirements. Didn't matter what the prior rank was. If the job called for a bachelor's degree and five years experience, that is what the compensation was designed for. If one had a master's degree and ten years experience, it was rare that I could exceed the original salary because the contract was bid and won in a competitive price environment. It is a different world outside the military, nothing personal, just getting the job done at the negotiated cost for the customer.

Personally I believe you should be prepared for a pay drop. It's better to be ready for it and not have a drop than end up with a pay drop and be completely unprepared

It is also depending on the location for example a WO1 resettling somewhere away from a prime military area like a Portsmouth/Tidworth will be more attractive as you are unique to a new employer as they don't have a chance to employ an ex SNCO. But of course if you are in those prime areas and stay there once leaving you are then just another (no disrespect) ex SNCO etc...

those companies will play you all of against one another with the knowledge of your pension etc. Me personally I moved to a different area and my salary on leaving the military was 15k higher and no one asked about my pension they were and still interested in my skills that in a new industry could benefit them. So in answer there are lots of different factors and now I'm a regular person who also interviews, resources I look for different skills regardless of prior salary or military experience. I provide training, funded quals, CQC audits, interim management & consultancy so you are an outstanding care provider No you should aim for higher wages. Rank however is irrelevant, it depends on your experience and how you will use that in a civilian role. Your pay in civilian employment is dependent upon your value as return in investment. The only time you should consider is if your military pension and personal circumstances are such that you are actively seeking to take on less responsibly in life and want more of a "semi retired role".

It's about what you can bring to the party that really makes a business work how you can expand or produce better results! Not how many Mess Xmas balls can be planned, or charity fetes using the whole Regt on a Saturday, or even being the football stalwart! I happily went on to better wages and now make a lot more. But let's not talk shop! 😊

I've recently left, this month, and have taken a pay cut for my new role in civilian street. This is due to undergoing the training package provided by my new employer. This wage drop is only short term though, as once training is completed, I get a pay rise that takes me above what I was earning whilst serving. There are opportunities out there, but sometimes wage cuts are a necessity to get to your long term goal.

Jac, I couldn't afford to take a pay cut, even in the short term, but I believe if you can afford it in the short term and it will help you get to the place you want to be then it's worth it. I would say it's down to your own circumstances!

I agree with the majority, do not expect to carry your rank/military salary into civilian industries. Despite this, be wary of employers that may exploit service leavers receiving immediate pensions, hoping to pay them less. You have earned your service pension, its an additional income you deserve and should not be regarded by employers as a supplement to your annual salary.

I would say it all depends on the experience and qualifications they gained during service, some forces trades do not have a civilian equivalent and therefore the only transferable skills would be leadership and management.

Most armed forces jobs are aligned to the civilian equivalent pay wise if there is one, often service leavers feel the pinch due to the change in living cost such as rent etc...

It varies. An infantry soldier may struggle to convert his skills to a civi job role. A RAF or Navy engineer would not. Similarly a RE or REME tradesman could expect an equivalent or better salary. Also depends what area you settle in, salaries vary considerably up and down the country

Find a job that matches you values and do it well. Salary will be part of the recompense but making a difference has a value all on its own.

The real question is. Are you willing to work on any wage to make sure the bills are paid and that your family is fed "that's if you have a family"

You need to be realistic when starting in civvy street. Don't fall into the trap of thinking your worth more than you are

Yes you have to be realistic i took a cut of over half my military salary

Sometimes you have to step back to move forward.

I suppose it depends on the role and employer!

Sunday Resettlement Question 4

Are you doing something that a few years ago would have never crossed your mind?

For me it would be:

Leading Seaman (Above Water Weapons) to working with teams and individuals within the software industry and beyond become more autonomous and productive. A far cry from GPMGs and anti piracy but one I don't regret.

Answers

Left as Royal Signals Sgt (operator) 24 years. Went through FDM Advanced programme but unfortunately not placed. Open to any opportunities out there. I have had a very varied career in the forces and civilian sector, lots to offer.

I left as a full screw Comms operator and started working for a digital radio company as a field engineer. After a couple of cycles through administration started for a company that provided control room solutions for the police. I was advised to apply for a role that came up within the force and so started doing more general security related work until such a time as I was lucky enough to land where I am now. I sometime look back and wonder how I ended up where I am now but glad that I did.

Ex Infantry WO1, retired, had visions of IT & Telecoms Project Management, retrained, got the qualifications, ended up in retail, rose to be a Store Manager, had an offer from a competitor, jumped ship, grass wasn't greener!! Moved around a few supermarket chains, doing various roles, then decided I needed to do what makes me happy!!! Now doing my own thing, something I'm passionate about, my own boss, and living life again!!! My advice, do what's right for you, it's not about money, it's about living life, after a career in the

military, no one really gives a fat rats arse what you've done, where you've been or what you were, you have to strike, seize and grasp opportunities as they arise but most of all, live, laugh and love.

Studied for a couple of A levels in my last 2 years. I was used to continuously taking exams to progress and being at sea on a submarine with not a lot to do between watch keeping helped.

I applied for numerous jobs as a trainee accountant and was fortunate to be offered a job with a decent firm. My service experience helped me get the role. Qualified 4 years later and the rest is history.

Royal Signals Comms sys Op. Now Technical Project Manager responsible for delivering a range of WAN and LAN projects.

Signals Sgt, now project manager delivering organisational change across an international financial services organisation.

Military accounts and logistics operative/supervisor/manager whilst serving.

Warehouse team leader now. Creative writing with a view to getting published eventually in my spare time.

PWRR RSM and Command Sergeant Major. 26 yrs service. Loved it all. But..... like many others after that sort of service length, came to realise that my family - wife 'n 3 - were far more important to me than the turnings of the green machine. Consequently, with a comission on the table, i opted to retire.

Went into teaching - FE - loved it - felt like i was making a difference for good but the pay was atrocious.

I've been Head of Facilities for nearly 4 years. Can't say it's been 'exciting' per sae, or even a 'greater good' but, it pays well. This is 2018, where the brain overrides the heart - cost of living etc.

Chief Petty Officer Naval Nurse specialising in emergency care. Now an Infusion Devices Nurse with patient safety considerations, medication error investigation, teaching, expert advice, procurement and many other aspects to the job.

Royal Engineers LCpl, just over a year i have been out. Now an Assistant Site Manager involved in the new build residential construction industry !

Left as Royal Signals Sgt (operator) 24 years. Went through FDM Advanced programme but unfortunately not placed. Open to any opportunities out there. I have had a very varied career in the forces and civilian sector, lots to offer.

I went into the recruitment sector, it's going to be hard work but with having no commercial experience in anything else and there being so many vacancies for training with no experience and the potential to earn more the more you learn.

Sunday Resettlement Question #5

Is your fitness still a priority?

Have you found it difficult to keep your fitness up since leaving, and is it still as important to you?

Getting to the gym whilst in the forces was pretty easy. It was part of the job. I found it hard to establish a new routine once I'd left and wondered if anyone else felt the same. Would be great if you could share any tips you have for others to implement also.

Answers

One of the first things I did when I left was join a local gym Jac. I think fitness and competition are ingrained in service people. Having said that it wasn't always easy in the forces to keep fit. I was a submariner and as you know there are no gyms on a submarine. We did however manage to get a concept 2 rower and an exercise bike on board which were both well used (with lots of competition). It's probably easier now than it's ever been to to get to a gym, and indeed given the volume of home fitness kit and other resources (YouTube, DVD's etc) there's not much of an excuse not to keep fit. In some of my recent roles I've got off the train one or two stops early to take a 20-30 minute walk to the office.

I do what i can when I can and I am still finding it hard to work out a routine that fits my working hours. However I still train 4-5 times a week either early morning or Late evening. (edited)

I do what i can when I can and I am still finding it hard to work out a routine that fits my working hours. However I still train 4-5 times a week either early morning or Late evening.

Sunday Resettlement Question #6

Do you have a question that you want answering in regards to leaving the armed forces?

Answers

I would not change anything really, plan from the minute you do the clicks, know what you want to do, quals to get and ofcourse network events, you should be fine. I only got out 3 years ago and the biggest impact on me was language in the real world. Start thinking civvi but keep the military skills not language. Hope this helps.

I would not change anything really, plan from the minute you do the clicks, know what you want to do, quals to get and ofcourse network events, you should be fine. I only got out 3 years ago and the biggest impact on me was language in the real world. Start thinking civvi but keep the military skills not language. Hope this helps.

Sunday Resettlement Question #7

Which books helped you during resettlement and beyond?

Answers

The Chimp Paradox - cannot recommend it highly enough! It's written from a sports psychology point of view (foreword by Sir Chris Hoy in my version), but success is success whatever the avenue, and it's about shedding light on what's holding you back as anything else.

Talk Like TED by Carmine Gallo

Team of Teams by General Stanley McChrystal

Emotional Intelligence by Daniel Goleman

Talk like TED had helped refine my presentation style.

Team of Teams has helped me frame my experiences into interview responses.

Legacy, as I enjoy the study of Leadership. Again helping to focus on my experiences for interview responses.

"What colour is your parachute?" Helped me gain some perspective on how to approach the job market. I also found "The 7 habits of highly effective people" very useful.

Extreme Ownership by Jocko Willink and Leif Babbitt

They have a new book coming out on Sept 25. The Dichotomy of Leadership. I'm sure it will be just as good as the first one.

The Chimp Paradox - cannot recommend it highly enough! It's written from a sports psychology point of view (foreword by Sir Chris Hoy in my version), but

success is succes whatever the avenue, and it's about shedding light on what's holding you back as anything else.

Total recall by Arnold

"Designing Your Life", "What Color Is Your Parachute", "The 2-Hour Job Search".

Closer magazine....it made me realise I COULD NOT be unemployed with too much time on my hands & I needed to be around intelligent conversation ASAP!!

Influence: The Psychology of Persuasion by Dr Robert B. Cialdini although I would prescribe this book for almost anything, not resettlement focussed.

Best piece of advice I have ever been given on helpful books - feel free to read widely but prioritise your time to focus on a few books that really make sense to you and become expert in these. Read, re-read, make notes, do the exercises, seek out online discussions....see more

Extreme Ownership Jocko Willink Leif Babin highly recommend!! The audio book was awesome first person account.

What colour is your parachutes.

Open options for Martin (Chaz) Chatterton's comment

The Happiness Advantage by Shawn Achor

Found this following a recommendation to watch the TED talk by one of the authors.

Sunday Resettlement Question #8

What was the biggest mistake you made in regards to your CV when leaving the armed forces?

How did you recognise it and improve?

For me, I didn't know how to translate military roles into something a recruiter could relate to. Speaking to a recruiter was the best way to understand what they look out for.

Answers

I let resettlement officers do it thinking they new however, I soon realised that they had never actually left the services themselves and had no idea of civvy street requirements.

I've written/ amended 2 CVs for friends who got jobs and had comments from the interviewers on their very good CV, ironically I've sent mine off many times and never even got a call back lol.

Very interesting Jac Hughes, my resettlement was so rubbish at HMS Nelson. To this day, I still don't have one! The lesson is don't rely on CTP to sort your CV for you!!!

Foolishly I believed CTP were the masters at deciphering military jargon into civilian speak. How wrong I was. Fortunately I had the extremely good fortune to have Sarah Davies-Fry to look over it and change absolutely everything about it. I then secured myself an interview of which I am still working for the same company. Ultimately Sarah gave me some great advice which was that in the main CTP turn out OK and good CVs, but you don't want one of them, you NEED & MUST have a great CV. Unfortunately the military have by and large been seen off by a distinctly average company so please please please after

you've had the CTP assist with your CV go immediately to another military friendly recruitment company for a far better service...see more

CV building is an art. But what I would throw in there is ALWAYS remember to Taylor a copy for the company you apply for and ensure you add a little something of what they look for. Best advice for CVs I find is focus on your achievements and how others benefitted. Most people focus mostly on qualifications, titles and roles and time spent. This is not value delivered. Its cost! Mine was too detailed. I was advised that the CV should be the 'film trailer' and make the reader want to 'see the film'. Mine gave the whole plot away and gave away 'whodunnit'!!

My biggest mistake was not tailoring my CV to specific jobs. Using the same CV for different Jobs really hindered my chances of getting interviews.

Likewise I struggled with putting my experience into civilian speak and also underselling myself. Used lots of friends and contacts to give advice and have made many changes to my general CV. Obviously I will try and tailor it for a job, now at H-7 months.

Under-stating my secondary roles in operation, admin and training was my biggest goof. I was too focused on my primary role as a pilot to care about the rest. I figured it out eventually, but I

My CV reading too much like a job spec, as opposed to containing quantified achievements. Also taking too much advice from CTP, even after 3 CTP career consultants 'red-penned' each others' CV reviews.

I let resettlement officers do it thinking they knew however, I soon realised that they had never actually left the services themselves and had no idea of civvy street requirements.

I've written/ amended 2 CVs for friends who got jobs and had comments from the interviewers on their very good CV, ironically I've sent mine off many times and never even got a call back lol.

When I stepped off my CV had every qualification I held on it and it was a functional CV. A recruiter to my face was amazed at the quals I held almost to the point of disbelief. I held no more than the average guy stepping off!

Advice a bit later in my career was everyone wants a reverse chronological CV and focus your quals on the role.

Base your CV on the job description or advert; but before writing it call the recruiter and talk about the role, he might well give away a key requirement that is not emphasised in the JD.

NB. My CV didn't get progressed on one occasion because the JD has asked for a Quality Engineer and my CV said I was a Quality Systems Manager....unfortunately the person sifting CVs didn't appear to understand the relationship between QSM and QE.

Also be aware that some outfits use software to sift CVs and they look for key words especially from the JD.

After sending in your CV find out whether it has been received. Whether you get the job or not you must try to get feedback on how you did. It will help you develop your CV for the future.

Always send a covering letter putting emphasis on your strengths in your CV.

As a reservist (15+yes) I've removed it entirely. It can do more harm than good. I have it referenced very lightly on LinkedIn purely as a value add (extra) to spark conversation. I don't mention it until the 2nd interview stage.

My CV was a generic one to start with and I had put far too much detail in it. With advice from the CTP in Rosyth who were great, many linked in contacts and feedback from recruiters etc, I refined it then started tailoring it for the roles I was going for. Over my final year I learned how to make it suit the roles I was going for along with my covering letters. I got plenty of offers towards the end and now very happy where I am. I would highly recommend not using a CV writer to start unless you absolutely have to, otherwise it's a skill you will not develop for yourself. Also on interview you will not understand your own content. Use the failures to help you develop and get better and stay positive. It's a process and will take most their full resettlement time to nail.

I always tell people that the first objective of any job application is to get you an interview, where you will have all of your attributes to help you. By and large recruiters should ask themselves two questions about each candidate - CAN they do the job and WILL they do the job whereas the CV just indicates through your qualifications and career history that you CAN do the job.

I advocate a covering message that shows you have the drive, the energy, the commitment to succeed and the determination to make an early and sustained contribution to the success of the organisation you hope to join. And just hope you come against a recruiter who sees the difference.

My content was good but the profile wasn't punchy enough. I wasn't getting interviews. I got some great advice and help rewriting the profile from an ex mil recruiter. After the rewrite I had 4 interviews from 5 applications for the same type of roles as i was applying for before and a job offer from the third interview.

Sunday Resettlement Question #9

What are your anchors?

It goes without saying that the armed forces provide structure. Ships have daily orders stating what's going on, where and what time. I'm sure there are similar things in the other services.

The lack of structure can take a while to get used to so it's handy to keep some structure in your life. I don't mean getting up at 4am, exercising, meditating and drinking a gluten free, vegan, organic, high protein smoothie. I mean just basic things that keep you grounded when you feel like your world is spinning out of control.

My anchors are:

Running 3 times a week minimum whilst listening to some sort of podcast.

Throwing a kettle-bell round in the morning.

Drinking water throughout the day (I'm not that great at this one)

Putting my phone on airplane mode by 9pm.

Some of these don't always happen, but they are things I know I can count on.

What are yours?

Answers

You might enjoy reading own the day by Aubrey Marcus.

Really like the idea of 9pm airplane mode.

Sunday Resettlement Question #10

What course did you get the most out of during your resettlement, and why?

Answers

In my experience, none of the courses that I did in resettlement provided the most value on leaving the military in 2016. It was a course that I did back in 2012 / 13 that provided the most value. The course was an active listening course ran at Amport House, hosted by the Military Chaplains (Tri-Service). The course was run over 2.5 days and put you through your paces, making use of actors and actresses in various scenarios. It taught me a lot about myself. About my unconscious biases and how to truly listen. Why has the course helped? By using the tools, I am able to get to a root cause of a problem by truly listening to what is being said, and what is not being said. It has helped me with my coaching in the work place. Helping those who need assistance to get more out of the sessions with me.

I can't really remember anything from the CTW which probably means it wasn't really that helpful or impactful towards my resettlement. As far as other courses go I wasted my time doing all my offshore sea survival and helicopter escape training without really knowing if it was going to improve my chances of going onto oil rigs, which it didn't. It would of been more helpful if someone said , okay here is what other service leavers did to get into that line of work and here is someone you could speak to in that industry who might offer you some guidance. I know they offer like group chats with industry reps once in awhile but I think service leavers would benefit from a more one to one interaction with people in the industry rather than the same generic briefs.

I think the course had the most benefit was the Prince2 course. Prior to that I wanted to become a Project Manager but wasn't quite sure where to start. The

info from the fellow guys on my course was invaluable in really learning what it meant to be one and increased my confidence to know I'd get a job.

My advice Jac Hughes is to sit down and really focus on what you want to do after leaving the forces. Like many others I am sure I never really focused and committed fully to the transition process. I also had a bad experience with the CTP AND CTW. I would use the time to connect and network with groups and individuals of your chosen career path and actively engage with them in finding out what courses THEY believe would benefit YOU and NOT the ones people are trying to sell you at CTP. Like I say in hindsight I wish I had done this research and networking but that's just life and the way it goes.

In hindsight I probably didn't make the most of resettlement. The biggest benefit I got during the time I had was to do self-study for the CISSP exam. The courses were expensive, so I bought the book and read it, so the total cost excluding exam was probably about £50 rather than the 000's for courses. That one exam gave me the start in my second career. I have had good feedback re: Start for those who are going into Technology careers. It is worth noting that this is open to spouses as well and I think it is often overlooked that spouses may also be looking for a career change when leaving Forces life. From their site here is who it is open to: Service leavers, reservists, veterans, cadets, cadet force adult volunteers and spouses of all these group <https://aws-restart.com/index.html>

In general the UK currently has a massive shortage of skilled workers. This is potentially going to get worse in the short term before it gets better! That is good news if you are a motivated and well trained Service Leaver. Even so, make sure that you are attempting to get a job in an areas which is short of people and not one which has too many people. If there is more Supply than Demand, you are going to get lower wages and have to compete against other

experienced candidates for a job. Also visit sites like Glassdoor to read reviews on potential employers, do you really want to work for that company?

Military wife and recruiter here, so slightly biased! I would say find yourself a recruiter in the chosen field you want to go into. The right recruiter will know your market and be able to guide you. Their knowledge can be invaluable, in terms of knowing what hiring managers are looking for, knowing how to position you against competitors going forward for the same role, and which companies are likely to take on ex military. This one is going to be a bit out there as it was my IOSH, Managing Safely that gave me the most during my resettlement, not for what it taught me but for the fact that after a late location change by the provider it was ran a 5-10 minute walk from home. As such I got a week long taste of a normal commuter life, and a one where once I was finished for the day I didn't worry the course until I was back on site the following morning. As for CTW, I didn't have a bad experience of where I went as it appears others did. If anything I was at fault as I hadn't truly worked out what I wanted to do, expect get out of the Telecoms world as 20+ years was probably enough....

5 years on and the very briefest of forays into sales and I'm still in the Telecoms world as it turns out I actually enjoy it and all my previous experiences in that industry have probably helped more than CTW.

Oh and my current job is only a 5 minute walk from where I live on the same route as where I did the IOSH course so it wasn't a waste. 🙄

CTW was no use to me. Finance brief was of use though

I cannot comment on the efficacy of the current CTW, but here are my general views, which echo some of those below. At the start of the process really focus on what you think your future career should look like. From my own experience, saying I want to work in IT, is a bit like saying to a civilian I want

to join 'The Army'. We know that this is broken down in to Cap badge, Trades and Specialisms, Managerial versus Individual Contributors. For Recruiters in particular, they will break down an industry into verticals (Financial, Logistics, Oil and Gas etc.), then Roles, e.g. Security, Operations, Architecture, Cloud etc. Then Level (like Ranks), Senior Manager, Senior Architect. All this combined makes up what they are looking for. If you have no clue then they cannot place you!

To be fair, the CTW process worked well for me. It helped me to sort out a CV and tidy up my LinkedIn profile. I enjoyed my Change Management and Risk Analysis Course which I used my Learning Credits for.:

Lots and lots of Service leavers (I am thinking Army mainly) settle in areas which are not prime locations for employers. That is fine, but if you decide that you are going to settle in rural Wilshire or Dorset, just be aware you are limiting your options, or you are going to have travel a lot! So decide early on, because your dream job may not be available to you in the area you decide to settle.

Resettlement Question #11

What areas do you think the CTP can improve on based on your experience and why?

Answers

Letting Service Leavers use their Enhanced Learning Credits for courses that aren't level 3 and above. Because there are many opportunities out there that only require you to have a say level 1 or 2 qualification but because the standard learning credits aren't that much leavers can't afford the basic courses.

Letting Service Leavers use their Enhanced Learning Credits for courses that aren't level 3 and above. Because there are many opportunities out there that only require you to have a say level 1 or 2 qualification but because the standard learning credits aren't that much leavers can't afford the basic courses.

Create more opportunities for placements. They're a God send for those looking at breaking into a sector and who have the right qualifications but limited experience.

Ditch the zero to hero trade courses. They're ok for DIY but that's about it. Selling them as a route into industry is crazy and at worst, dangerous, as you could be theoretically qualified but lack the experience and make a potentially fatal mistake.

Look at distance learning and pushing resettlement from a far earlier period. 1 year from signing off is tight, 2 years is sufficient but for those being MDd as I was, with 6 months from Med Board decision to discharge date, its inadequate (even allowing for the fact that if it looks like you're being MDd you can start

accessing resettlement). I think CTP should look at taking up the mantle of driving CPD throughout the Forces, with a view of getting EVERYBODY to start looking/planning what you're going to do when you leave from the day you start training. During the ARC process I met everyone from young Private's to post command Lt Cols and none of us anticipated being crocked and facing a premature end to our careers. The better prepared you are from the beginning of your career the easier your transition will be...see more

From my experience there needs to be more freedom and choice of training providers to utilise when it comes to using your IRTC grant. As it stands at the minute you are very much pushed towards using the CTP providers which may not necessarily be the best option. (edited)

I totally agree, it's a shame it hasn't changed in the the six years since left the forces. It's something I feel that needs to be addressed.

Sunday Resettlement Question #12

What one word would describe your resettlement and why?

Mine would be growth due to the amount I learnt about myself during the process.

Answers

Realisation

It made me realise that not everything is gonna happen for me automatically out on civvy street, if I wanted a good life outside of the military I would have to work really hard. Because some aspects of Military life was Kushty as Dell would say it, for example always having a place to eat, sleep and never worrying about a pay cheque. Because thinking that if I don't have a good CV or if I don't do well in my job interview and if I don't get a job any job then I'll be homeless is a scary thought.

Inconsistent

The standard of some of the training courses that I undertook with the same learning provider were worlds apart. Some trainers would be watching the clock for an early knock off, others went beyond the scope of their slides to add much needed SME context instead of regurgitating a policy. In terms of recruiters/hiring managers, I was really put off LinkedIn for a while because of the sheer amount of dross flooding my inbox - it came across like they wanted me to apply to hit a target number of candidates rather than me being a good fit for the role. Alternatively, it was a breath of fresh air speaking to recruiters that wanted to learn more about my career, setting my expectations of realistic roles to target.

Opportunity

I wasn't aware how much was out there. Ask me again closer to the job dead line and this may change to fear!

Resettlement Content

Posts and thoughts from throughout 2018.

Don't take a lemon to a knife fight

Preparation, planning, habits and routines.

These words are plastered everywhere and have become an industry in their own right.

The problem is that when we implement plans and templates that are designed by others, we try and overhaul our own lives.

Sometimes it works, sometimes the extra planning in trying to conform to a plan can add to the pressure.

Try to be realistic, ask yourself, a year from now can I still see myself doing this?

I run to and from work most days, do I think that would work for everyone? Absolutely not. It works for me because it enables me to fit my training, podcast listening and headspace all into two periods of the day, I can then concentrate on work when i'm in work and home life when i'm at home.

It is not for me to convince others to follow my framework.

Getting up at 5.30 am, drinking a kale smoothie and doing hot yoga doesn't work for everyone and nor should it.

Whether it be productivity, fitness or anything in between being prepared is great.

But preparing in the right way for you is essential.

Batman V Bruce

Stay with me on this one.

Now for most of us we have a full time job or equivalent, as well as trying to build something in our free time.

In an ideal world and in an honest one we would like to be successful at both, but this can't always be the case.

Think about batman

He brings value, he helps people, he has followers. They don't always agree with him, but he does it for free and loves it.

Bruce Wayne however has a day job, it's about making money so he can fund his life. He's the boss and people will almost always do what he asks. I imagine he would probably rather be doing the free work.

He can't be equally successful at both at the same time, it would be unrealistic.

It's all about balance, if he started having some success from being Batman, Bruce would suffer and if he left his day job, Batman would suffer.

Most of what we do outside of work is from a place of passion and motivation.

However, trying to become batman/women without making sure Bruce has all his ducks in a row can be dangerous for both.

Penguins

It is true that penguins don't know any other life or environment apart than the one they are used to.

That does not stop us from being able to learn some valuable lessons from them.

In their colonies penguins huddle together for warmth and protection, I am sure you have seen this on documentaries. This is something that we admire but can quickly forget about once the programme is over.

Much like ourselves when penguins are on the move it's each to their own.

Often a penguin that is smaller, slower or can't keep up with the rest will be left out in the cold. If you become separated, there will be no one waiting for you, it can be a lonely place.

This reminded me of being a Scrum Master and the importance of balance between teamwork and individual responsibility.

Hiding behind your teammates only works for so long.

On the other hand, persistently acting as a lone wolf will only push you further into the cold. No one wants to be alone, no matter how strong your try and act.

Trying to show your value to a team whilst retaining your own identity and sense of independence can be hard but something I believe is needed.

Asking for help is not an easy task but it could be worse, you could be a penguin.

What is up to us?

Our emotions

Our judgments

Our creativity

You can't coach if all you do is listen.

The balance between directing and guiding is an ongoing battle.

Don't worry if you get it wrong sometimes, we all do

One of the biggest examples of a shift in mindset being the key to progression.

Rodger Bannister knew by only physically running, he would not achieve the goal of running the mile in under 4 minutes.

He needed a shift in mindset, to belief he could do it.

Once he crashed through that barrier, the rest of the world saw that it was possible, and the previous record that had stood for nine years was broken routinely.

In the 18 months after Bannister broke the 4 minute barrier it was broken another 40 times.

The realisation for so many others that it was possible opened the flood gates.

Powerful stuff!

Leaving the armed forces and jumping into the corporate world can be tough.

Below are a few simple tools and tips that I have come across and found useful. I realise these won't be for everyone so please feel free to add your own to the list. You may just help someone out.

1. Build yourself a framework for the day - From getting up to going to bed, loosely map out your day so you have continue to have structure.
2. Google's tomato timer - Based on the pomodoro technique where you do 25 minutes of work followed by a 5 minute break. Every four pomodoros take a longer 10 minute break.
3. Phone on airplane mode at 9pm - Time is currency, invest it in those around you.
4. Invest in a planner - The I get sh*t done planner by Dan Meredith is the one I recommend. A weekly brain dump onto paper can really make a difference.
5. Ditch the radio - Podcasts in the car are a great way to learn on the move.

Very simple but very effective in my day to day working life.

I was asked to comment on the below question on Friday and thought it was worth sharing.

The question was based around a book review that asked the question about actually implementing a system.

Q - How do you approach potentially abstract conversations about any given 'system'? Indeed, how do you seek to apply implementable context?

A - I'll put my 2p in early. Firstly I have learnt a lot from both books and conversations. My phone is also full of screenshots of ideas and posts from my peers who have been in the game for a lot longer than myself. In terms of having the conversation about the 'system' I would say this is a lot like reading. We can read, talk, listen to podcasts and watch hours worth of Youtube content. At some point the 'doing' has to start.

I try and explain it in terms of learning to do press ups. We can read about them, but until we actually start carrying them out we will not get stronger.

Help the other person start their journey and be there to help them reflect and move forward.

There will always be a place for quality content but encouraging people to do is sometimes lost I feel.

When working with teams and individuals it can be easier to be negative rather than positive at times.

I'm guilty of it.

I am sure many others are also.

We do it because being positive is not always easy and we take the less challenging option.

It draws us in.

The battle is to not to let it spread, take it all in and and turn it into something good.

Being negative is an option we chose to take, not the one we have to.

Are you in a deficit?

This week I have been using a well known app called My Fitness Pal.

I have never counted calories before due to having the metabolism of a racing snake. However, some of my family have taken to using it and I wanted to support, so we all had a sense of accountability.

It has been eye opening, it turns out I have been in a constant calorie deficit of around 1400 calories a day. Not through trying but due to exercise and simply not taking the time to understand what my body needs. This has been going on for a few months, I didn't realise until I had a valuable tool to highlight my shortcomings.

I haven't been holding up the mirror in this part of my life.

I started to reflect and realised that I have had more colds than ever this year, along with my energy levels peaking and plummeting more often than before.

My output has been greater than my input.

This made me think about the teams we serve.

Are the teams we work with in a constant deficit?

Is their output greater than the input and support they receive?

Are you yourself putting your own oxygen mask on first before you help others?

This has taught me two things.

Tools can be useful when used correctly.

A teams energy should never be sacrificed.

Routine

I have seen a few posts about establishing routine when leaving the armed forces. James Boardman and I talk about this on the podcasts quite often.

The truth is that it takes time to find what works for you and you WILL get there. I am only now finding what works for me after leaving the navy 2015. That is over 3 years of trying and failing to find a routine that works for me.

It's demoralising at times.

It's definitely frustrating.

But with patience you will find what works.

Over time I have built the framework that suits my needs. It probably wouldn't work for someone else, and that's ok.

The great thing about having a framework is that it's fluid, not rigid. You can experiment and change while keeping the foundations you have built in place.

There is no one size fits all.

Leaving the armed forces is hard enough without the extra pressure. Be kind to yourself.

You will get there.

Prioritise your resettlement

During resettlement it can be quite easy to spend a lot of time looking and thinking about the things you want to improve.

How often do you look at the things that could be put aside, at least for now?

The art of maximising the amount of work not done.

My approach was and is to concentrate on the things I know I am good at and want to build upon.

By doing this I find that I don't waste time on things that won't serve me.

They are either important enough for me to work on, or they are discarded. Not forever but until I am ready.

Somewhat binary, somewhat self centred, but you have to be selfish during your own resettlement period.

Write down your priorities.

Highlight the activities that support your priorities.

Double down on those activities.

This will leave you little time to dwell on things that don't matter at this point in time.

Resettlement Procrastination

It can and has happened to us all I imagine, especially when busy still carry out your duties.

The main thing is not to have a 12 month period of procrastination.

A few tweaks to your day could make all the difference.

A few options are:

Write everything you want to achieve in the coming week on Sunday evening, or Monday morning. You will be surprised what brain dumping your thoughts onto paper will do for you mentally. Nothing will replace pen and paper.

Spending 30 minutes to an hour in the morning on non work related items. Resettlement, admin or home life. Blocking out this time will decrease the worry during the working day.

Set times to be active on social media to prevent becoming a scrolling zombie. Imagine what could be achieved if the hours you spend on your phone were being ploughed into your resettlement.

Try turning your phone off at 8pm. The world won't end in the space of 10 hours.

Perspective and empathy

We all have a different perspective on work, life and everything in between.

My perspective will be different from yours and yours will be different from someone else, and that's ok.

Our experiences will have been different and those experiences will have had a hand in shaping our view on the world.

One thing I have learnt and continue to work on is that it's unfair to expect others to share my perspective.

It's unfair for me to judge other people's reactions to something I feel insignificant or unworthy of worry. I now try and ask myself why that individual is reacting in such a way.

Your perspective is vital but empathy for other people's is not too far behind.

This is especially true for those entering the corporate world for the first time. Just because it's not as important to you, doesn't mean someone else hasn't been up all night worry about whatever "it" is.

No one is spending their Sunday evening worrying about your resettlement.

We spend so much time worrying about what others think. The reality is that no one has time to worry about what you're doing.

My chihuahua doesn't worry too much about being able to fly.

That pig lying in mud I saw yesterday doesn't worry too much about his tan.

Can you imagine a horse spends too much time gossiping with his or her friends about how a unicorn is choosing to sport a sparkly horn?

So why do we pointlessly compare ourselves to others?

I am as guilty of this as the next person.

"At least I'm not..."

Settling for a lesser paid job like Ringo.

As outspoken about the lack of opportunities like George.

Lost like Susan.

Judgment fuels self righteousness.

It makes us feel better about our own shortcomings.

It gives us an excuse not to hold up the mirror.

As nice as it is in the short term, it's often our own standards we need to look at if we're using others to justify our current situation.

Two ways to up our standards are to: Stay in our own lane - Concentrate on what we are good at and focus on strengthening our current position. B) Focus on winning our own race - Whatever you deem as success is the most important thing, not what everyone decides it is.

Are you winning the resettlement race?

People are drawn to running because even though the races are made up of hundreds, sometimes thousands of people, it boils down to wanting to improve yourself.

You want to build upon your hard work.

Dipping under 45 minutes for a 10k.

Smashing through the 20 minute 5k barrier.

Conquering a marathon.

As with most things, you will have had a support system around you, but you are the one who has to run the race.

No one can run it for you.

The same could be said about your resettlement.

The support system is there to take advantage of, if you choose to use it.

IF you have chosen to leave the armed forces. (I am aware the choice can be taken out of some people's hands, this is not aimed at such a situation)

You have chosen to enter the race.

It's up to you to run the distance.

There will be plenty of people handing out water along the way, but it is down to you to finish in a better position than you started.

Just keep showing up

While listening to a podcast this morning I heard the below.

“Some days it just flows and I feel like I’m born to do this, other days it feels like I’m trudging through hell. Every day I make the choice to show up and see what I’ve got, and to try and be better. My advice: keep showing up.

Nothing complicated or inspiring just the reality of what needs to be done.

Don’t expect any support during resettlement.

As much as the above could be seen as a click bait title (Full respect if that’s your opinion) that is not the aim.

The CTP along with all the other great resources do a fantastic job in supporting those leaving the forces.

However, to solely rely on them would be a huge mistake.

If we become reliant on something or someone it provides the opportunity for blame if it doesn’t work out.

Taking accountability away from ourselves.

If you expect no support, you have to take ownership.

Use the the support and resources, but don't rely on them. 102

What are you going to do this week to maximise your resettlement?

Good Luck, Get Started

If you only take one thing away from the information from within this PDF, let it be that resettlement doesn't have to be a journey you take alone. There are plenty of people who want to help and have been in the same or similar positions that you may find yourself in.

Put into action what you need to.

Keep the conversation with those closest to you going.

Remember what you have already achieved.

I wish you all the best for 2019.

Jac