

Fostering understanding between Veterans and civilians for workplace success

>> Hello, everyone. Welcome to fostering understanding between Veterans and civilians for workplace success. My name is Jody Budo, I'm a licensed clinician and I work for Magellan health services. I've spent several years working with children, youth and families under the foster care and children services umbrella. I was a director for several years under residential treatment, and over the last, oh, six and a half years, I've been working with Veterans who are service members or Veterans transitioning out of the military and transitioning into civilian world. This topic is very near and dear to my heart. It has been really interesting and heartwarming to hear their stories, what their struggles are, what their successes have been, and definitely helping them get connected to civilian resources, and helping them succeed moving forward. A lot of the topics that I cover today are out of that experience. It is definitely not every Veteran or service members experiences everything I'll talk about today, but a general overview of some of the main experiences that Veterans face in the civilian world.

If we go to the objectives here, I want to talk about what I'm going to go over. I'm going to discuss about the basics of military demographics, who makes up our military today, and it's changed a little over the last several years, so we will touch on that. The common structure of the military, and discussing what does it mean to, what does sacrifice mean. We hear that a lot in military talk, is military sacrifice. What does that really mean? Number two, I want to identify unique needs of Veterans and their common challenges within the civilian workplace structure. I want to highlight valuable skills, things that they bring to the civilian workforce, things that if you are a employer that you can look for in your Veteran and encourage in your Veterans. Last I want to discuss key communication and work flow differences between the civilian world and the military world, because there is different things there, and the little strategy of what to do if you hit some of the differences when you are working with your Veteran or if you are a Veteran and you are going into the civilian workforce, what is the difference between those two worlds.

I want to do a quick poll question now. Melanie, would you pull my first poll question over? There it is. I want to get an idea of who here is in the presentation, so if you would, answer the poll, how are you connected to a service member or Veteran? I am a employer, current service member or Veteran, a coworker, a family member, or none of the above. We will give it a couple seconds here as people are filling this out. To let everyone know, if you click that radio button which is the round circle icon in front of your answer, that will broadcast the results to us. We aren't broadcasting to everyone. You won't be able to see that. But we will let you know the results. We are just giving you a few seconds to respond.

It looks like pretty much everyone is done responding. We have 9 percent are a employer. We have 31 percent who are current service members or Veterans. 28 percent are coworkers, and 23 percent are family members, 10 percent are none of the above.

All right. We definitely got a interesting mix here. I'll be interested to hear some of the questions afterwards.

Let's jump into the topic. The first thing I want to go over is some of the current military demographics, currently in the United States military, and in the American population, less than one percent of people who are in United States actually join the military. There is a very small number. All the numbers by the way I'm taking from the defense manpower datacenter or DMC -- DMDC, which is under the office of the Under-Secretary of defense for personnel and readiness. The most current numbers, and actually numbers have changed significantly over the last ten years, and that is going to be huge in how much stress service members and Veterans are under sometimes. I'll talk about that more too.

As of June, 2021, we have 1,206,986 service members who are active duty, and those are people who, the military is their full-time job. We have 777,500 reservists, who are people, and if you are in the military, you know these terms, but to go over it, reservist can be called up to active duty, but they hold a civilian job when they are not activated. They work a regular job if they are not doing their military active duty. About 36 percent of the military active duty right now is in army, 26 percent is in the navy, 12 percent is under the Marines, 23 percent is the Air Force, and Coast Guard, there we go, Coast Guard is 3 percent here. There are different ranks within the military structure. You have your officers who are your leadership in the military, about 18 percent of all military personnel are officers of some kind or another. That leaves 82 percent enlisted, those are the rest of the military here. Interesting note, 19 percent, a little over 19 percent of all officers are women, that is actually up from 16 percent about five years ago when I looked at these statistics previously.

>> Can you repeat those? There is quite a few people asking about them. If you can repeat them, that would be great.

>> JODY BUDO: From the beginning?

>> Yeah, I think they want to hear overall, and then someone asked about the Air Force, whether that include the space force, I don't know if you know that information.

>> JODY BUDO: I'm not a hundred percent sure, if it does include the space force. But the data that I took was from June, 2021, so those numbers all being counted in there. That would be my best guess. But if you go on the defense manpower datacenter website, or DMDC, you can look up a ton of these demographics, anything you could ever want to know about military personnel, they have it in a Excel form of some kind or another. To go over those again, 36 percent was army, 26 percent navy, 12 percent Marines, 23 percent Air Force and 3 percent Coast Guard. Officers being 18 percent of that active duty number, and enlisted being 82 percent, so obviously a much bigger chunk of enlisted service members. Women officers have increased over the last ten years, when I looked at this number before, five years ago, that number was 16 percent. More women are becoming officers, or have at least over the last several years.

The ages in the military, didn't break it completely down but in general, most of them are 25 years of age and younger, actually 51, a little over 51 percent are 25 years of age and younger. We have a lot of younger people, young families with young children, 26 to 30 that percentage is a little over 21 percent, so the majority of your military is between the ages of 18 and 30, with 20 percent being above 30. So you are dealt a lot of families, a lot of people who are in those years where they have a lot of younger children or children in general and that impacts things here, people are deployed or have their transitioning and that kind of thing. 31 percent of active duty members identify themselves as a racial minority. I didn't break it completely down to those statistics, but you can go on the website and they do break it down a little more. I wanted to give you a general picture of the demographics here. A significant change I've seen, ten years ago when I looked at these statistics, June, 2010, there were roughly 251,000 more active duty service members and Veterans than there are today. That definitely impacts how many deployments people are called on, how quick those deployments come for families, and the adjustments that service members and Veterans go through as they are activated and deployed and when they come back and try to reintegrate back into civilian life. When we talk about military sacrifice, what does that mean? That is a term that we hear a lot, thank you for your service, thank you for your sacrifice. But what does that actually mean to service members and Veterans? It means different things. For families, a lot of the Veterans, service members and even reservists they are moving or PCSing, permanent change of station, they move from one base to the next, it can happen every three to four years. If you are in the military 20 years you are moving four to six times to a different city, a different state, different support systems, maybe even different jobs. There is a lot of change and a lot of flow within that. Obviously, when service members are deployed, they miss big milestones in their families. They miss children being born, miss birthdays, there is a lot of things they

are not there for because they are serving our country. Families have to continually adjust to this coming and going. I had a Veteran who was transitioning out, he had been in 20, 20 plus years, 23 years. He said when he added that all the times he had been deployed, he had been gone nine years out of that last 20 from his family due to the ongoing deployment cycle. With the numbers, I highlighted that there is 251,000 less service members serving now than ten years ago. The deployments are coming faster than they did in the beginning of the century. You are seeing people come and go a lot more than even five, ten years ago, with being deployed and coming back and having to retransition and reintegrate. That can be a huge adjustment.

Another thing that families live with is a service member is injured, whether it be physically injured or, there are a lot of injuries that are invisible to other people, emotional injuries, moral injuries which I'll talk about that in a minute, but families are dealing with, if their service member or Veteran has been injured in some way, so that does impact the family. For service members, the sacrifice, the mission comes first, in the military, it's not your health, it's not your family, it is not anything else. It is the mission that comes before anything else. A lot of, everything else gets put on the back burner. Their mental health, physical health, family health, all that comes behind what the military requires and demands from them. We talked about the multiple deployments. For big chunks of time, service members and Veterans are away from their support systems. They are overseas, although obviously with Internet and communication, it's easier to stay connected to family members, but that presents a challenge sometimes itself because now they know what is going on back home and sometimes they can't do anything about it. So it's a challenge, it is good and bad, I guess. Sometimes a service member or Veteran has lost people, lost their battle buddies, people who they have served with, they have lost in combat or someone died by suicide. Almost every service member or Veteran I've talked to has been into this category in one way or another of losing people they know.

Some of them have been a witness to extremely violent and traumatic events, things that they don't talk about. It's not something that they are trained to do or that they are encouraged to do, a lot of times it's, whatever I've seen, deep down in a part of the brain and lock it up until it bubbles up down the road in some way. If you are a employer, or family member, know that these are some of the things that military service members and Veterans deal with and a lot of times, they don't talk about. It stays in there but obviously it affects them in one way or another.

How does this translate into civilian world here? If you come from that military background, if you have been in the military and have experienced that type of work culture, and then all of a sudden, you are transitioning out, maybe you are reservist coming back from active duty and trying to reintegrate back into your civilian job, why is this challenging? There are definitely different, common differences between the two worlds that make it a challenge for military Veterans and service members. The first one that I hear were the hours, in the military, hours, you work until the job is done. It's not a 9 to 5 thing. If it requires you to work 12 hours on, 6 hours off, 12 hours on, that is what you work. You stay there until the job is done, in civilian culture you work 9 to 5 or 8 to 4, you have a set schedule for most jobs. A lot of us, 5:00 rolls around and we are heading home to the kids or whatever. But military, remember mission first. You stay until the job is done.

There is definitely a difference communication styles. In the military the communication style is very direct. I don't want any confusion in what orders they may have to give or what orders, if you are enlisted, what orders you have to follow, so the communication is very direct, very clear. There is not a lot of room for pushback or, well, can I do it this way? No. You get an order, you do the record. Civilian work culture, there is room for what I call feelings. (chuckles).

Service member I was working with was in a leadership position in the military, and he transitioned out into a civilian job as a supervisor. He found out real quick that he had to take into account his employees' feelings. He couldn't just bark an order at them and expect them to not have feelings about it. He definitely had to readjust his way of communication with his employees, because of that

difference. Military doesn't mean that they don't have feelings, just it's kind of, they are stuffed down a little bit. (chuckles).

Importance of orders, in the military, an order is given, you have to do it. It's an order from your superior, there are consequences if you don't follow that order. In civilian world, if my supervisor gave me an order or a task to do, I might be able to say, hey, I have this, this and this to do, can I get that to you by next week? Most of the time, that is kind of pushback would be okay. There is a difference there in how orders are perceived or how directions are perceived by the two different worlds.

A lot of Veterans, they will put in, in the military, they will put in 120 percent. They are hard working, stay there until the job is done. In the civilian world, there is about 80 percent. That is pretty acceptable. There is room for asking your coworker how the weekend went or what did you barbecue or did you watch that football game. There is a lot more of that ability to do that in the civilian workforce. We will talk about the frustration in a minute of why that, how that comes out for service members and Veterans when they are adapting.

Mental health is a big one, and healthcare in general. In the military, although they have made efforts to encourage service members to address their mental health issues as they come up, a lot of times if they do that it can affect their career in one way or another. It is not as anonymous in the military as it is in the civilian work culture. Your supervisor may never know that you see a therapist, whereas in the military they have been maybe the one who referred you to the therapist. There is a difference there. Unfortunately there is still a stigma under the military, not for everybody, but sometimes it still can impact somebody's career and advancement. A lot of times mental health still isn't getting talked about in the military culture. Healthcare appointments in general, your civilian work culture, you have to go to an appointment, you have PTO, you flex your time out, you work with your supervisor to go to your doctor's appointment. In the military work culture, because they work so many hours or the mission is first, they can usually just go, they can clear it with their supervisor, there is not PTO or anything like that that they have to take off for, with just a little bit difference in how that is done.

Workplace friendships are different. The military, you are battle buddies, they could save your life. They have your back. They are the people who you trust with everything. If you are deployed, you want somebody who you trust is going to be there for you. In the civilian culture, yeah, we have friends. Whether we would die for that friend or not, that is a question everybody can answer but it's different. The comradery from the military culture is, they are built as a team, built to trust each other with their lives. There is a little bit of difference there.

When service members start transitioning to civilian world, or a reservist who is going back to civilian world from being on active duty, they experience -- go back. There we go. They experience, because of the differences between the two worlds, they experience a few frustrations that, this is not everybody, but there are common themes of things that they feel frustrated with, when dealing with civilians. First one, being small talk. They don't, again, military service members and Veterans are very direct. They don't do well with small talk. They don't understand small talk. They want to get what is communicated out and be very direct in that. When they enter the civilian world and there is more of that feelings talk, there is more passive communication, they don't always understand what to do with that, or how to connect with that. They sometimes see their civilian counterparts as efficient -- inefficient or lazy. If you are putting in 120 percent effort and you are used to doing that, and you go into a civilian workforce where people put in about 80 percent effort, that's well, 40 percent effort difference. At times, Veterans and service members see their coworkers as lazy. The coworkers at 5:00, they are ready to go home. They are like I can get this, and this done if I stay another hour. And the counterparts look at them funny. Veterans definitely get frustrated with what they consider trivial issues. I was working with a Veteran who had just started a job. This is preCOVID, and he went into the kitchen of the place he was working, and the coworkers were arguing about the type of coffee cup that the place had provided for them. He couldn't believe that they were complaining about the type of coffee cup that

the place provided for them. He goes, didn't they know I got shot at in my last job? Dealing with what they consider trivial issues, have experiences that obviously change how they see the world, the world view, so some of those things that civilians may find irritating or complained about, they see as very trivial and get frustrated with that.

We talked a little about inefficiency in general and how that can be frustrating. Many of them have to start over. In the military structure, there is clear expectations of what you need to do to get to the next rank. You have to do trainings, you have to do leadership projects, whatever the case may be. A lot of them work their way up. When they get out into the civilian world, some of them have to start completely over. Some may not even have a degree and they are trying to find jobs where they drove a truck, for example, in the military for 15 years but when they try to drive a truck in the civilian world, they have to go back and get a whole different license, even though they have been doing it for the last 15 years. That is getting a little better with some of the more recent legislation that they are looking at and passing, to try to cross over some of these skills and training courses, so that they are not completely starting over. But there is definitely room for improvement there.

We talked about appointments, and one thing I want to mention is about job loss. A lot of service members as they transition out, especially if they have been in five plus years, it's a difficult transition sometimes into the civilian side of things. The going statistics are 44 percent of Veterans who take that first job after getting out, actually leave it within the first year. That number jumped to 60 to 80 percent by the second year, when it takes on average three jobs before one sticks. There is definitely an adjustment period, as people are figuring out the differences between the two worlds and you are trying to find their place in that new, I guess in the civilian side of things.

I want to talk a little about a scenario of what this may look like, this is a fictional person but what this could look like. I will read it real quick. Sergeant T has been in the military for 20 years and has just turned in the paperwork to retire, he was part of an infantry unit deployed three times to Iraq and Afghanistan over his 20 years. His first job was to find IUDs and to dismantle them. During the second deployment he was driving a vehicle when a young Iraqi teenager stepped in front of the them and his commander told him to not stop. After returning, one of the soldiers from his unit committed suicide. Sergeant T did recruitment, his last 7 years, he never talked to anyone about his deployment but regularly showed signs of anxiety, depression and irritability. He rarely sleeps more than three to four hours a night, and he forgets things even if they were just told to them.

I want to do another poll here. Melanie, if you would pull up that second poll. What are some of the common struggles that sergeant T may have in a civilian environment? I'll give it a couple seconds as people are getting their answer.

>> MELANIE ORDONEZ: Click on the answer, click the radio button next to your response.

Jody, it looks like most people, jumping around, between 80, 85 and 80 percent of people are saying all of the above. That is definitely the majority answer right now.

>> JODY BUDO: Absolutely. People are right. It is all of the above. Even issues with authority figures, believe it or not, even though that was a small percentage, sometimes when service members and Veterans get out, they do have issues with authority figures, because of their military experience, or things that they were commanded to do or ordered to do that might have gone against their own beliefs or values. I want to talk about that. I mentioned earlier, there is a -- I'm going to talk about these, I want to give an example of that. In the sergeant T example his commander directed him to basically run over the teenager. I know that is shocking but that is some of the things that people have had to deal with in being deployed. When people are ordered or experience something in the military that goes against their moral beliefs, we call it moral injury which is a term that is gaining more awareness in the mental health field, and even in the service member Veteran field, that it's when somebody is asked to do something that goes against their moral belief. I had a service member, he said after 9/11, I joined the military to protect my children and my wife from the international stuff, and when he was deployed,

he was asked to go into a houses in Afghanistan and he saw the terror and sadness in the faces of women and children in the houses he was going into, and it went against why I joined the military in the first place. Those are examples of what I mean by moral injury. It is a term that is just now being understood in mental health and how can we help service members and Veterans deal with that injury to their moral belief. There were definitely other mental health issues that, health issues in general, that service members and Veterans deal with, like PTSD obviously is what people think of, anxiety and depression are huge. Sleeping issues, traumatic brain injuries, military sexual trauma, believe it or not, whether that be within the military ranks, there is definitely a structure in there, where there is a lot of disempowerment, and it's not talked about a lot. Many bullying within military structures and ranks can be huge and affect people's mental health. I had a Veteran, he had been deployed several times, none of that bothered him. What bothered him the most is when he came back to a unit after 15 years, a new unit and was bullied by officers in that unit, and that the people who are supposed to have his back who are supposed to, he was supposed to trust his life with, he couldn't trust. They bullied him. He ended up going to mental health inpatient, because of it. It is a huge issue within the military, that is just now being looked at. These are all things that when somebody starts in the civilian world, you might not be able to see. It is not always obvious because it is locked inside people sometimes. They don't talk about it. But definitely, things that people could be dealing with.

Not all Veterans or service members come out of the military and deal with mental health issues. But some do. It's definitely not a catch all. But something to be aware of, that they might have had some intense experiences that contribute to how they behave or how they adjust even to civilian world.

There are some good websites that are out there. I should have put the link on here, but you can Google these. Each one of them, there is one that talks, a lot of questions I would get is what can my employer ask me about my mental health? Can an employer ask me about my mental health status. There is a few jobs out there where, yes, they can, if you are going into the police, you want to be a police officer, Department of Homeland Security, they may do mental health screenings, if you are a flight, a pilot, if you are flying, they can ask about what medications you take, your mental health status. These two websites can give you a guideline of what can you ask, what can you not ask, what an employer can ask, what they can't ask. When you are in that first job interview, on both sides, what are appropriate questions to ask or what can you, what do you not have to answer if you have a service member or Veteran on the other side, or what do you have to reveal. One thing that is important for a lot of service members and Veterans to know, you don't have to reveal every mental health thing that you have been through, and employers can't ask about it unless they are under those few jobs where they do have to screen for it.

>> MELANIE ORDONEZ: Jody, I want to let people know, if you go back to that slide, if you hover over the link at the very top, it says click here, which is Veterans, if you click on that, it will open up the site right now. Also the same on the one below, if you click on that, understanding, it's a live link. If people want to click on those, bookmark them or feel them open for now, feel free to do that. We can talk after the presentation.

>> JODY BUDO: Perfect. Thank you. If you want to check out and read in depth, depending on which side of it you are on here, employer or a Veteran, service member. When we talk about what can Veterans or service members bring to a team, imagine hiring somebody who will work until the job is done, who work at 120 percent, who are trained to be mentors and leaders, and who are trained to be efficient and always on time.

(chuckles) those are definitely skills you want in any employee, right? If you are an employer. Team players, leaders, mentors, they are highly skilled in what they do. They rely on their team members for expertise they may have. They are dedicated, hard working. Again, anything you would actually or definitely want, if you are an employer, these are what Veterans can bring to your team. Great logistics,

protocols, policies and procedures, if you want those updated in your agency, assign a Veteran to do it. They might be very good with getting all that down for you.

They are definitely, there are some unique needs, if you are an employer, that something to keep in the back of your mind when working with the military or prior military, because of what they have been through or even the military structure in general, dealing with other people may be very hard for them. They may have a lot of anxiety, which generally comes out of their ability which you know on the job can get people in travel, if they don't understand maybe where it's coming from. If you are able to, allow them to have short breaks away from others, if they say they need it. Mall, conference room, crowded places, even elevators believe it or not can be hard for a Veteran to sit in. They may need to pace a little bit, or just understand that it might be hard for them to be in those kind of big group settings, many of them don't like people, they don't like restaurants. They don't like going to the store for shopping, grocery shopping. Any loud noises sometimes can be hard, fireworks, even somebody dropping something beside them, that kind of thing, may trigger them in one way or another. Another big thing especially if you hire somebody fresh out of the military, they are going to have a ton of appointments. Some of the time, they are not always in control when those appointments are. They will have appointments at the V.A. for disability claims possibly, even getting set up for care, it tends to be appointment heavy in the beginning, when they first transition out. They don't always understand that they can't just leave work to go to these appointments. Working with them, helping them understand the difference between that or how they can get to those appointments and how you can help them doing that is important.

Good strategies, summing it up, what are some good strategies in working with Veterans, because they are used to that direct communication style, be very direct. Let them know (indecipherable) if you are an employer, good for any employees out there but definitely specifically for Veterans and service members, but be direct, let them know what is expected of them. They want to meet whatever expectation that you have. Let them know that there are EAP resources and that they are anonymous, and stress anonymous, because in the military, behavioral health isn't as anonymous as it is in the civilian world. If they know that I can access these resources and completely confidential, they will be more likely to use them.

Let them know the expectations for promotions or advancement within your agency, because the military is structured in how you make the next rank, they are used to that kind of style. If you let them know, this is how you advance in this company, they are going to try to meet that expectation. Remember what does sacrifice mean. We talked about that in the beginning, what does it mean when we talk about military sacrifice, and what that means to a Veteran, it could mean I lost my battle buddy over seas. Focus on what they can bring to your company, being hard working, efficient, good with logistics, hard time, hard workers, there are definitely a lot of courses out there where you can learn a little more about military culture. We have done a little bit of a snapshot of it here today, but there are definitely courses out there where you can learn more about military structure and culture. Definitely encourage feedback. In the military they are trained to follow orders, they are not trained to say what if we do it this way, or you want to get that feedback. You may have to pull that out of them. Definitely be as flexible as you can with appointments, that can be helpful in working with Veterans and helping them be successful in your agency.

I want to include a few list of don't in here. Believe this or not, these are actually taken from my conversations with Veterans over the years. Don't assume that every Veteran loves the military. There are many who do, many who love their entire military career, would never change anything different about it. There are several on the other side where it was one of the worst experiences they have ever had in their life, whether it be losing people, injuries to own physical or mental health, struggles that they have with suicide thoughts. There are reasons why not all service members or Veterans love their part in the military.

Don't ask personal details of combat or war. I had a Veteran, he started working at a new job and his coworkers asked him if he had killed anybody. For him it was a very personal experience, he actually had to take a life. It was a very personal experience that retraumatized him basically. We talked about that. You can't ask if they have a mental health diagnosis. We can't assume that they do. We hear military, we think PTSD sometimes, that is not always the case. There are many jobs in the military where they never see combat or don't have any experience that would affect mental health.

Don't ask the characterization of their discharge, there are different discharges in the military structure from honorable to general to dishonorable. That is a personal thing.

I had a couple Veterans say that their coworkers would personally try to make them jump, so they would make loud noises near them or drop books, something that would make them jump. They did it on purpose. Just know that loud noises may trigger some things for service members and Veterans.

Reservists are kind of unique in some ways, as far as what they may need or what to ask or not to ask. I included that here. Don't ask them if they will be deployed. They might not know, more than likely they will be because of the numbers of the military are shrinking. They may be called up. A lot of them over the last two years were called up for COVID, they were called up for different political issues depending on the state. They weren't deployed overseas but domestically more. Reservists go to drill once a month, once a week end month. And for two weeks in the summer, this can vary a little bit, and if you are an employer, you have to allow them to do that, by law. If they are deployed, if you are an employer, your agency must have their job or equivalent job available upon their return for them to return to. Even if it's they have been deployed 18 months, it's unique for reservists.

I hope this gives you a little bit of an overview, I know I didn't touch on everything, in the short hour we have together here. But I wanted to give an overview of what to expect, what common experiences there may be for service members and Veterans, if you are a family member, if you work with them, if you are one, why there might be frustrations that you may have with civilians when you first are adjusting. I hope this gives you insight into that.

>> MELANIE ORDONEZ: Thank you so much, Jody. I want to remind everyone, we have a few minutes for questions. I want to remind you of EAP. I want to give a shout out to my state Missouri National Guard. I helped with vaccine clinics in our area this year, I have a nursing background so I was able to do that. I was impressed with the way that they organized those vaccine clinics and carried them out. It was a wonderful experience. It shows you different varieties that people have and the skills that they get in this position. I call out to them, thank you so much.

I want to let you know that maybe your questions weren't answered today, probably there are some that aren't going to get answered because we have lots of different people here today, we have a big group. If you don't get something answered and you still want to talk to someone, please use your EAP toll-free number on call and talk to somebody. I don't have your specific toll-free number because we have companies on this line today from all over the United States. I do not have your specific information about your dial in number or your website. Please reach out to your management or to your HR and ask them for the toll-free number and the website. You can get much more information on this topic, other health and wellness topics that can help you in the day-to-day juggles and struggles that we have in life. With that being said, Jody, we have a few minutes for questions. I wanted to see if you have time to look at those.

>> JODY BUDO: Are the questions up?

>> MELANIE ORDONEZ: To the right-hand side. Can you see them to the right? If not, I can read them to you too.

>> JODY BUDO: Let's do that.

>> MELANIE ORDONEZ: That is fine. For the first question I have here, is what is the most common struggle that Veterans have in the civilian world?

>> JODY BUDO: Most common struggle. I think it's that adjusting from one type of lifestyle to the next. First, one to three months, we definitely see a peak in, any major life transition, any major career transition, there is going to be anxiety, but that is definitely higher for service members and Veterans because they are used to knowing the answers. There is a protocol for the protocols. In the civilian world, there is not. It is all unknown to them. That can really increase anxiety until they get to a new normal kind of other side. And they adjusted and made that adjustment and went through that learning curve, to understand these are the differences, this is how I need to adjust my style. I think that is the biggest one.

>> MELANIE ORDONEZ: Great. I see a comment that I want to bring up. That was somebody made a comment related to many DACs also go (indecipherable) they mention that it's important to note that civilians also contribute to the military, that they may be going into combat zones for different things, think of porters and such, so it's really important to also understand that we are also alike, there is a lot more things that were alike than different. Today's presentation was more focused on what is the difference or what is going on so you can get a greater understanding. It is hard for civilians to understand what someone who has been in the military experience goes through. We appreciate you talking about that.

Your second question is how long does it take for Veterans to acclimate to the civilian world?

>> JODY BUDO: Research suggests 15 months, a year and a half before they kind of let go of the military identity and fully embrace civilian, the longer you are in the military, the longer that time is, where you feel like, okay, I've let that identity, that self identity go and now I'm on the other side of it. It is different for everybody. You have your reservists who, between those two worlds they float depending if they are or are not activated. They are constantly doing that adjustment. But in general if you are active duty transitioning out, they say, the research suggests 15 months.

>> MELANIE ORDONEZ: Great. I have here, what is something that you think a employer needs to know about Veterans joining their team? I guess specifically, asking (indecipherable).

>> JODY BUDO: Knowing, and one thing I want to highlight, in the presentation here, is that Veterans are hard working, they are efficient, they work until the job gets done, sometimes to their detriment. (chuckles).

Hiring them, you can put a lot of trust into your Veteran employee. Those are the big ones.

>> MELANIE ORDONEZ: Somebody asked what does PSC mean?

>> JODY BUDO: That is called a permanent change of station. That is when they are, leaving maybe one base to move to a different base, they call it PCSing between the two bases or installations.

>> MELANIE ORDONEZ: Gotcha. We have lots of comments today too. Someone said military also are on call 24/7, so they can be called to work at any time, so depending on your job, someone may be on call 24/7, you can call out.

>> JODY BUDO: Yeah, absolutely. Mission first. The mission is first, whether 3 in the morning or, you know.

(chuckles).

Or 3 in the afternoon or middle of the night, absolutely.

>> MELANIE ORDONEZ: Got one last question, somebody asking said they have someone on their team that is military, wanting to know what is the best way to handle the situation with the Veteran, related to triggers. One employee is triggered by Christmas music. He confided about that. How do you navigate that with other team members if someone is having difficulty with the situation?

>> JODY BUDO: That is a good one. That is a unique trigger. One of them, I don't know how comfortable the Veteran would be to talk to his team, other team members about just general experience of why that might be a issue for him. A lot of times Veterans don't ever want to talk about it. They can always work beforehand with their supervisor on not being around, if there is like a Christmas

party or something like that, not being there for whatever reason and having like a preplanned excuse as to why they can't be there. Maybe that is acceptable. The more that people can understand each other and talk about why they may feel the way they do, or why they experience things the way they do, the better it goes overall. If they are open to that kind of communication, that would be the first one, and if not, talking with the supervisor about maybe some preplanning that if these issues come up, these trigger issues come up, how are they going to maneuver through them without it being a issue for the entire team.

>> MELANIE ORDONEZ: Thanks so much, Jody. We have run out of time. I pulled up the closing poll question. Please answer, please rate your overall satisfaction, very satisfied, satisfied, dissatisfied. The certificate of completion is ready for download. Hover over it. Click that download icon that shows up. Save that to your computer. Thank you so much for this presentation today. I thank all of you for joining us, this does end our session today. Thank you for joining.