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Careers

YOUR WORK, YOUR FUTURE

CIVILIAN JOBS
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Win in the Interview

Impress employers by discussing traits honed in the Guard

Job interviews are high-stakes events, and you want to be as attractive to employers as possible. If you've cited your Guard service on your resume—and you should because that shows you possess skills that other candidates don't—then an interviewer may want to talk about your service. Although employers aren't allowed to ask certain questions (such as about any military discharge or a combat injury), embrace the interview as a chance to discuss the qualities you bring because of the Guard. Here are a few mentioned by Colleen Deere, vice president at American Corporate Partners (ACP-USA.org), a nonprofit that mentors Soldiers and spouses on how to market military traits.



▶ You are upfront

Trust is essential, and your interviewer wants to know you're trustworthy. Bringing up your Guard service shows the interviewer that you are honest and direct—and will be on other matters, too. And those traits will make an employer more likely to be supportive. If you get the job, your boss will already be prepared to talk about drill or a deployment.



▶ You plan ahead

Your interviewer is already used to the concept of maternity leave. Military leave is not so different—both require planning. Fortunately, Guard Soldiers and spouses excel at this. You'll prepare for your absence in the same manner that a pregnant employee would—probably better.

Take the initiative. Discuss how your meticulous planning will translate to company success. Provide specific examples of how you returned from past missions and hit the ground running.



▶ You adapt to the mission

Guard experience has taught you perseverance and problem-solving. These soft skills enable you to handle the unexpected and still meet deadlines. Offer examples of how your ability to adapt has paid off; for spouses, emphasize your ability to perform multiple roles while your Soldier is away. Explain how you can overcome obstacles to achieve company goals.



▶ Teamwork is your hallmark

Every boss wants a team player. You're a shoo-in. Guard Soldiers work in team situations—often in life-or-death scenarios. It is a culture in which you establish camaraderie, look past personality differences, develop experience working with people from all different ethnicities and backgrounds, and accomplish missions as a unit. Guard spouses are the ultimate teammates, with vast experience in collaboration and sacrifice.