



McKinsey Partners with American Corporate Partners to Support Military Hiring Initiative, Help Veterans Transition to the Corporate Sector

In 2019, after McKinsey was looking for a chance to expand its veteran community outreach and increase its hiring of former service members, the management consulting firm partnered with American Corporate Partners (ACP). ACP is the only nationwide veteran mentorship program that offers free, year-long, customized one-on-one career counseling and networking opportunities with seasoned corporate professionals to transitioning service members and active duty military spouses. Mentors from McKinsey work with ACP to provide guidance to veterans who are looking to enter the world of consulting or the general private sector. They further help the Veterans@McKinsey group meet their goal of creating a vibrant community filled with leaders that have a shared experience of military service.

McKinsey's volunteer mentors work with veterans on a variety of topics, including converting their experience into language that corporations can understand to helping veterans search for and gain meaningful employment. They each donate about one hour per month to meet one-on-one with their veteran Protégé.

An added benefit is how the mentorship program allows McKinsey executives to see what kind of talent is out there to supplement their recruiting efforts with former service members.

McKinsey Mentor Josh Sternberg, a partner in McKinsey's Boston office, isn't a former service member, but decided to send a mentor application after talking with colleagues who are veterans about the challenges of reintegrating. "They had no frame of reference and it felt like another world to them. I thought the least I could do was help them get across that bridge."

Josh is on his second mentorship, and both of his Protégés were able to secure private sector jobs after their military commitment was up. Josh has been working with his current Protégé, Ben Morgan, for about six months.

"Ben wanted to start with general job search exercises, like updating his resume and interview prep. We took a look at what his responsibilities were in the military and translated them to terms corporations can understand. He really wanted to learn about corporate culture, too, and asked about things we wouldn't even think about, like where to buy a nice suit and some good

luggage. Ben was interested in getting all of the information so he could feel confident walking into interviews,” said Josh.

Ben served six years as an Infantry Officer in the Army, and was trying to figure out what he wanted to do in the consulting or contracting space when he applied for an ACP mentorship.

“I wanted someone who could give me insight on the industry and help me prepare for this transition. Josh was incredibly helpful. I got into an MBA program and also got a job. Josh served as my sounding board when I was heading into interviews and we also practiced a lot doing mock interviews so I could get used to talking about my Army experience in “normal” terms and reframing things; I leaned on Josh a lot and he was always there for me,” said Ben.

Josh and Ben were a great match in the ACP program, and they continue to stay in touch while Ben is enrolled in an MBA program and easing into his new job with the FBI.

“I went through a transition, too,” stated Josh. “I’m not a veteran so I wondered how useful I would be to service members. I would tell my coworkers that they shouldn’t assume that what they know isn’t useful. You don’t need to be an expert in military service; being a helpful, friendly colleague might be just what the veteran they are paired with is looking for. It feels really fulfilling that I was able to help Ben get to his next step, and to see a tangible return on investment. It’s not all that much work and is highly impactful, plus it was fun to learn about what our military does on a day-to-day basis; I learned a lot, too!”

Ben would tell anyone who is transitioning from the military to sign up for an ACP mentorship.

“The value is in being matched with someone in your desired field and having a one-on-one, customized relationship with them,” added Ben. “ACP found a great match for me. I think I have referred at least a dozen people to the program already; it made my transition so much easier.”

For more information on ACP’s mentorship program and the application process, visit <https://www.acp-usa.org/>.