

From Boots to Bytes:

By Molly Cuddy, ACP

Why More Veterans are Pursuing Information Technology

The information technology industry is expanding daily, with new technologies, such as AI, being developed. As the demand for technological advancements grows, veterans may find that their skills from service are well-suited to a career in IT.

According to the [U.S. Census Bureau](#), technology is not an industry veterans tend to gravitate towards. Instead, service members tend to focus their job search efforts on careers like administrative and support services, manufacturing, and retail trade sectors.

There are, however, plenty of reasons why a veteran would want to pursue a tech career. Veteran Curtis Prill and military spouse Astha Gurung share how their military connections have influenced their successful careers in IT.

/ Transitioning from Military to Information Technology

Curtis Prill, a U.S. Army veteran and current Mentor for American Corporate Partners (ACP), has accumulated over 20 years of experience in the technology industry since his separation from the military in 2000.

"In 1994, I was given a computer by another soldier and from the moment the case was opened, I could see the processes and functions in my head," says Prill. "Even though it was DOS 6 and Windows 3.1 (both in German), I was hooked... I loved learning the functionality of the hardware, was amazed at how beautiful 17-inch monitors were, and every advancement of technology made me hooked even more."

/ Why Pursue IT?

Prill is currently working with fellow U.S. Army Protege Chancy Burgess in their

ACP mentorship, and they are focusing on systems, applications and products (SAP), a specific niche within IT. Over the past seven months, they have been working to refine Burgess skills in the field. "The implications of SAP are far reaching," Burgess said. "It is an ever-growing industry that adds new areas to keep up with technological demands in today's fast growing technology sectors."

Prill understands the unique challenges that may come from a veteran pursuing this career, and he has plenty of advice for Burgess and other interested veterans.

"Figure out your passion and turn it into your niche – is it infrastructure or is it user functionality? Those are different mindsets, different focuses, and different skill sets," says Prill. "Forget about the blue polos and khakis that you see on TV, don't expect an invitation to DEFCON, but do expect the same late nights from the service and just have fun, always learn, find mentors and industry experts."

Prill believes veterans offer several strengths in the field, due to their experience with teamwork and tackling challenges. "What veterans bring to tech is that we won't give up when it comes to problem solving," he notes. "Unlike some,

who will stop when step three doesn't work, we understand the purpose of the mission, the reason we are there and we figure out solutions, we are used to getting the job done regardless of how long it takes."

/ Not Just a Career for Veterans

The IT industry doesn't stop at opportunities for veterans. Military spouses are

also joining the rapidly expanding field and have qualities that stand out to hiring companies. Astha Gurung, a U.S. Air Force Spouse, has recently broken into the tech field and is pursuing her dream. "It's a field where curiosity is encouraged, and I love that it doesn't feel redundant and there's always more to learn and grow," Gurung says.

"Military spouses are incredibly adaptable, because we're used to moving a lot and starting all over again in new places," Gurung adds. "Every PCS move feels like managing a new project, so we get really good at planning, problem-solving, staying organized, and being resourceful. These core skills are useful, not just in real life, but in any job."

/ Lean on Support Systems

Gurung recently decided to make the leap from a career in accounting to IT. She says that she couldn't have done it without the resources provided to veterans and their families. "There are also many amazing organizations for veterans and military spouses out there like ACP. They played a big role in helping me on my career journey, and I cannot recommend them enough."

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Veterans and military spouses can find their place in the IT industry with an [ACP Mentorship](#). ACP is a national non-profit organization that offers a year-long, one-on-one customized mentorship to post-9/11 veterans and active-duty military spouses at no cost. Mentors come from highly regarded companies such as CrowdStrike, IBM, Kyndral, and more. Interested parties can apply [here](#).