

MENTORSHIP TAKE THE DIVE

Picture this: It's a warm summer day, the sun is beating down, and the only thing you can think about is trying to cool down. You make your way to the neighborhood pool and suddenly hear the neighborhood kids all chatting about the high-dive board. You look up, and up, and up. "That's a long way down," you mutter to yourself. But it's decided: you are jumping off that diving board into the deep end. You start climbing up the ladder, and the higher you get, the more tense you become. There's no backing down now. You get to the top and look around; everyone below you is cheering, and you start inching yourself to the edge of the board. You look down, and suddenly, the pool seems miles away. Your stomach is in knots. Right before you back out, you feel a hand in your hand. "I've done this before – you can, too," the person next to you says. You have never met this person, but their words put you at ease. "You can do this!" they exclaim. Before you can think, you're splashing in the deep, but you're not alone.

For many transitioning service members, the thought of jumping into the civilian workforce evokes the same fear and uncertainty as diving into the deep end of the pool. However, much like a reassuring hand from someone who's been there before, having a Mentor who knows the ins and outs of the civilian job market can provide the crucial support that eases

current Purchasing Agent for a residential home construction company, recalls that as he was in the process of transitioning, at first he had not considered the value of mentorship. He continues that, once it was brought up to him through his Skillbridge internship, finding a Mentor made complete sense. Sheridan remembers wondering, "How do I prepare for a successful transition into the corporate world?" When he began his ACP mentorship, he realized that having a dedicated Mentor was an obvious asset.

When asked what he would tell others in his same position, he states that mentorship is truly "a no-brainer." Something Sheridan had not realized he would gain from his mentorship was learning about and implementing Personal Branding. Tailoring his résumé, developing personal goals, and being thoroughly prepared for the interview process allowed him to stand out and best represent himself to potential employers.

A YEAR OF GROWTH AND SUPPORT |

For Jeff Reeves, U.S. Army National Guard Veteran and Senior Vice President of Enterprise Workforce Management at a large investment banking firm, the year-long mentorship allowed him a path to success. Reeves knew from the beginning that he wanted to lean on someone who had advanced in the civilian sector.

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that transition. At American Corporate Partners (ACP), I asked three of our Veteran Protégés to share their experience diving headfirst into the civilian world with the support of their Mentor. Their stories shine a light on the importance of mentorship and asking for help.

DISCOVERING THE IMPORTANCE OF MENTORSHIP |

lan Sheridan, U.S. Army Veteran and

He explains how the year-long mentorship commitment permitted him and his Mentor to focus on something different every time they met.

"It allowed me to grow incrementally over the year," Reeves says, adding, "The advice over the year really set me up through the variety of topics we were able to discuss." In addition, Reeves speaks about how his mentorship evolved into a friendship that he

and his Mentor plan on continuing: "I feel like I am talking to a friend, someone who cares and is invested in me and wants to see me maximize my potential outside of the military."

FINDING CONFIDENCE IN WHAT YOU BRING TO THE TABLE |

U.S. Navy Veteran Nick Smetana is now the Senior Director of Strategic Growth for a defense technology company. When reflecting on his mentorship, he spotlights how it "gave [him] confidence that [he] was bringing something to the table." He mentions that through his mentorship, he was able to utilize skills to build his confidence and understand his value, which in turn ensured that he made holistic decisions when deciding between different offers and negotiating salaries. Even in his new role, the confidence he gained keeps him grounded. "Sometimes I get Imposter Syndrome," Smetana admits, "but I reflect on my mentorship, and I think that 'I can do this; I have the experience, and I know what I can contribute.'"

THE BOTTOM LINE |

Three veterans, now thriving in corporate roles, shared powerful testimonials on the necessity of mentorship. When asked what advice they'd give someone considering an ACP mentorship, their responses were clear: take the leap. Sheridan emphasized the value of informed decision-making, while Reeves credited his mentor for his career success, highlighting insights he wouldn't have considered otherwise. Smetana summed it up succinctly: "That hour a month is worth its weight in gold."

The bottom line? Take the dive – your Mentor is waiting to cheer you on.

Ready to experience this impact firsthand? Join ACP's thriving community of 36,000+ Veteran and Military Spouse Alumni and [apply](#) for your free year-long one-on-one mentorship today.