

Military 101 for ACP Mentors

Overview:

- The U.S. military has five branches, which include the **Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps** and **Coast Guard**. Service members may serve on active duty or in a reserve capacity.
- Active Duty service members are full-time members of the military. They may be stationed domestically or overseas.
- Part-time service options fall under two categories: the **Reserves** and the **National Guard**. These service members have civilian careers and train one weekend out of each month at a unit located near their residence.

Military Rankings: Enlisted vs. Officer:

Your veteran Protégé will be titled as either **enlisted, officer** or **warrant officer**.

- **Enlisted:** An enlisted service member, whose rank is prefaced with “E-,” is someone who volunteered for military service on a term of contract to a branch of their choosing. High-ranking enlisted service members have extensive experience both working with and managing lower ranking service members and leading day-to-day operations.
- **Non-Commissioned Officer (NCO):** A non-commissioned officer is an enlisted military leader that has not been given a commission. NCOs generally earn this title due to seniority. Enlisted service members of the Navy, Air Force and Coast Guard earn the title NCO at E-5; while the Army and Marine Corps enlisted members earn the title NCO at E-4.
- **Officer (Commissioned):** An officer, whose rank is prefaced with “O-,” is a military leader who has gone through the process of receiving a military commission. There are four paths to becoming an officer: Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC), Direct Commission, Officer Candidate School (OCS), or a Military Academy (i.e. West Point, Annapolis, etc.). Commissioned officers have extensive experience in leadership and logistics. They oversee the movement and welfare of entire units as well as large amounts of expensive equipment.
- **Warrant Officer:** A warrant officer, whose rank is prefaced with “W-,” is a military leader who is designated to be an officer by a warrant. Warrant officers can be thought of as technical experts and specialists. Some warrant officers have long histories of enlisted service while others may be direct entrants into the military.

Follow these links to a comprehensive list of [officer](#) and [enlisted](#) ranks in all five branches of the U.S. military.

Common Military Acronyms:

ACP Protégés, having served in the military for several years, are familiar with a “language” of military jargon and acronyms. These acronyms serve an important purpose within the armed forces but can be confusing to those unfamiliar with military culture and custom. Some common acronyms include:

CO: Commanding Officer
FOB: Forward Operating Base
IED: Improvised Explosive Device
NCO: Non-Commissioned Officer

OEF: Operation Enduring Freedom
OIF: Operation Iraqi Freedom
TS: Top Secret Clearance
XO: Executive Officer

To search for an acronym, please visit the Department of Defense Dictionary of Military Terms website, [here](#).

Common Veterans Programs:

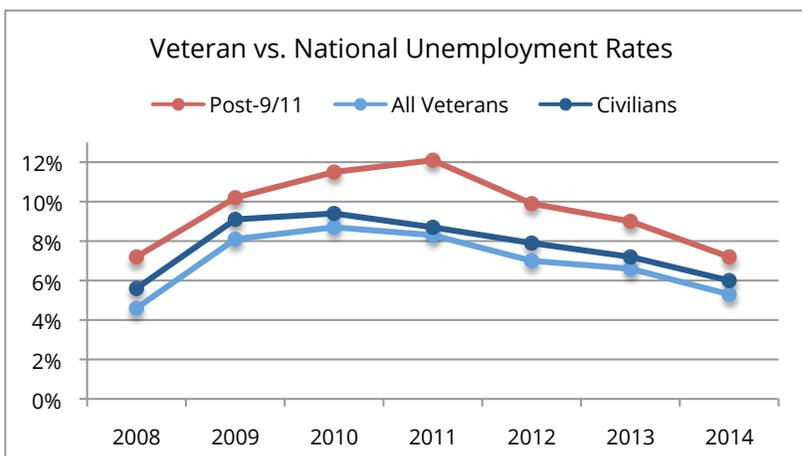
ACP Protégés may also be active in a number of other veterans programs and organizations. Some common programs include:

- **[Soldier for Life](#)**: A program that provides U.S. Army soldiers and their family members with transition and job assistance services. This includes pre-separation counseling and employment assistance.
- **[Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America \(IAVA\)](#)**: IAVA is the leading post-9/11 veteran empowerment organization with a diverse and rapidly growing membership. IAVA has been connecting, uniting and empowering hundreds of thousands of veterans for the last decade through programs in education, employment, health and community.
- **[Entrepreneurship Boot Camp for Veterans with Disabilities \(EBV\)](#)**: EBV was created by Syracuse University's Whitman School of Management. They provide entrepreneurship and small business management training to post-9/11 veterans with service-related disabilities.
- **[Military Officers Association of America \(MOAA\)](#)**: MOAA is the nation's largest and most influential association of military officers. They are a powerful force in representing the interests of military officers and their families at every stage of their careers.
- **[Student Veterans of America \(SVA\)](#)**: SVA is a coalition of student veterans groups on college campuses across the globe. These member chapters are the "boots on the ground" that help veterans reintegrate into campus life and succeed academically.
- **[United States Department of Veterans Affairs \(VA\)](#)**: The VA is a government-run veteran benefit system that is responsible for administering programs designed to assist veterans and their families.

Recommendations for Further Reading:

To learn more about U.S. military culture and the transition from military to civilian life, please consider the following reading material:

- [A Civilian's Guide to the U.S. Military](#) by Barbara Schading and Richard Schading
- [The Soldier's Guide: The Complete Guide to U.S. Army Traditions, Training, Duties, and Responsibilities](#) by the Department of the Army
- [The Military to Civilian Transition Guide - From Army Green to Corporate Gray, From Navy Blue to Corporate Gray](#) by Carl S. Savino and Ronald L. Krannich
- [Army Times](#), [Navy Times](#), [Air Force Times](#), [Marine Corps Times](#), [Stars & Stripes](#)



*Bureau of Labor Statistics, March 2015.