

15 THINGS VETERANS WANT YOU TO KNOW

SERVING THOSE WHO SERVE: UNDERSTANDING MILITARY AND VETERAN CULTURE TO
BETTER SERVE OUR MILITARY-CONNECTED STUDENTS

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MILITARY CULTURAL COMPETENCE



Military people have certain beliefs, rituals and traditions, and hold fast to certain ideals that shape who they are.



To bridge the gap between military and non-military, military cultural competence is important.



PsychArmor asked American Veterans: "What do you want civilians to know?"



Their top answers were used to develop a course titled: 15 Things a Veteran Wants You to Know.

QUESTIONS



**Questions build credibility
and are a great
way to open or build on
a conversation with a
veteran.**

**Begin your conversation with:
Did you serve in the military?**

1: WE ARE NOT ALL SOLDIERS

Soldiers are only in the Army.

Each of the five branches are very different, with a different mission and a different subculture.

Ask:

“Which branch?”



2: THE RESERVES ARE PART OF THE MILITARY



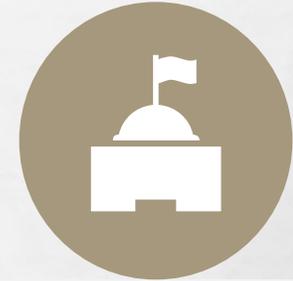
To serve you can be active duty or a member of the reserves (every branch has a reserve unit).



Members of the reserves commit to training one weekend every month, totaling two weeks per year.



When not in uniform, reservists go back to their civilian jobs in their communities.



Reserve units will augment a mission or in case of the National Guard, to help in domestic, national or local emergencies when additional support is needed.

3: NOT EVERYONE IN THE MILITARY IS INFANTRY



Ask:

The range of what people do in the military is **vast**, and there are **hundreds of jobs** within the military.

“What did you do during your service?”

“What was your job?”

By asking these questions, you demonstrate that you understand everyone’s job is part of the mission.

4. WE HAVE LEADERS AT EVERY LEVEL OF THE CHAIN OF COMMAND



**Responsibility and leadership
is taught and embraced.**

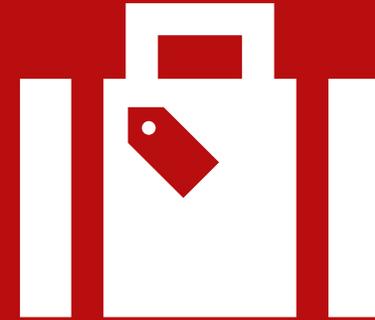


**Responsible for others and
accountable to others.**

5: WE ARE ALWAYS ON DUTY

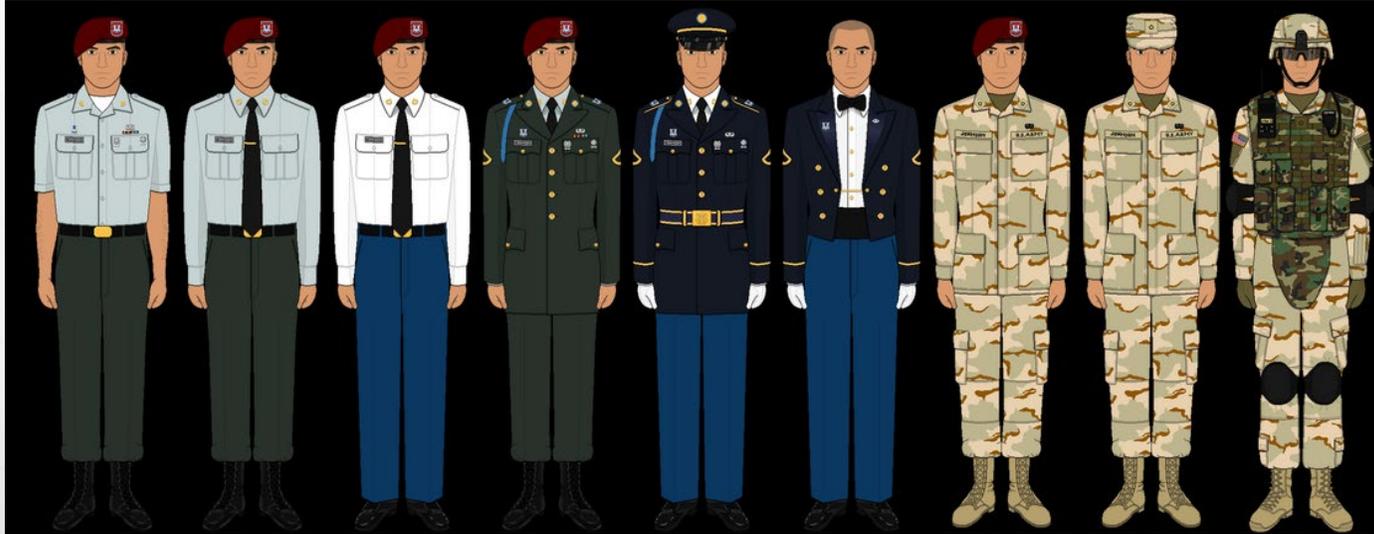


**We can be called back
in a moment of notice.**



**Even when we're on
vacation, we're not
really on vacation.**

6. WE TAKE PRIDE IN OUR APPEARANCE & IN OUR CONDUCT



We are held to a standard to ensure that we can fulfill our job.

Not as ridged, but proud. We believe in standards.

7: WE DID NOT ALL KILL SOMEONE & THOSE WHO HAVE DO NOT WANT TO TALK ABOUT IT



This is a question that gets asked far too often.

Please don't ask. Ever.

8: WE DO NOT ALL HAVE PTSD



PTSD

Post Traumatic Stress Disorder

Most veterans, including combat veterans, do not go on to develop PTSD.

Some people may have symptoms but experience a natural recovery.

9: THOSE OF US WHO DO HAVE AN INVISIBLE WOUND ARE NOT DANGEROUS WE ARE NOT VIOLENT

Invisible wounds of war include:



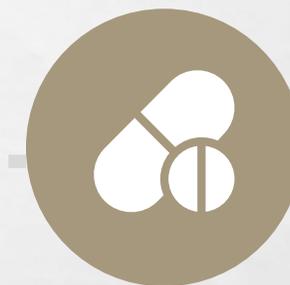
PTSD



**Traumatic
Brain Injury**



Depression



**Substance
Abuse Disorder**

Though not always obvious, these are real injuries and deserve the same respect and treatment as physical injuries.

10: IT IS REALLY HARD FOR US TO ASK FOR HELP



The military culture is based in service, sacrifice, and helping or even rescuing others.

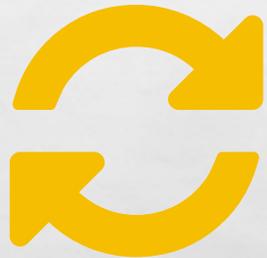
It is others based. There is an expectation of mission accomplishment.

11: OUR MILITARY SERVICE CHANGES US



It's unreasonable to think that we can go through our experiences and not change.

12: WE DIFFER IN HOW MUCH WE IDENTIFY WITH THE MILITARY AFTER WE LEAVE ACTIVE DUTY



It's unreasonable to think that we can go through our experiences and not change.

Ask: How does it factor into how you define yourself now?

13: OUR FAMILIES SERVE WITH US

Families are subject to separation from loved ones and moving every few years.

Military families exemplify flexibility, bravery, resilience.



14: WE WOULD DIE FOR EACH OTHER & WE WOULD DIE FOR OUR COUNTRY

We would and we do.

**It's about the people to the left
and our right.**

**And we wouldn't change it for
the world.**



15: WE'VE ALL MADE THIS SACRIFICE FOR ONE REASON

To serve something more important than ourselves

This defines our culture.

**We live by a code:
Honor, commitment, and duty.**

**We all chose to serve something
larger than ourselves.**



KEY TAKE AWAYS



**Asking the right questions
builds credibility.**



**It opens the door for
a better understanding.**

The military is a complicated culture, but you don't need to know a lot of details to bridge the gap between yourself and the veterans in your life.

Learning Objectives Include:

1. Military and Veteran Culture 101.
2. Academic Accommodations in Higher Ed
3. Understanding characteristics of Student Veterans and some of the common challenges students may face.
4. 15 things a Veteran Would want you to know.
5. Developing Military Awareness on Campus

