

Functional Skills: Knowing Your Strengths

Functional skills are competencies that are transferable to many different work settings. Developing a list of the functional skills you have and most enjoy using can help you focus on positions that would fit your talents and provide more satisfaction.

Part I: Underline all of the skills, listed below, that you have. Then circle the top 10 underlined skills you would most enjoy using.

Communication: *Exchange, convey, and express knowledge and ideas.*

- write
- edit
- summarize
- verbal communication
- listen
- facilitate discussion
- consult
- teach
- train
- sell
- promote
- use languages
- interview
- ask questions
- make presentations
- negotiate
- think on one's feet
- conversational ability
- entertain, perform
- host
- deal with public
- public speaking
- teamwork

Information Management: *Arrange and retrieve data, knowledge, and ideas.*

- math skills
- organize information
- manage information
- keep records
- attend to details
- logical ability
- develop systems
- categorize
- summarize
- streamline systems
- monitor

Design & Planning: *Imagine the future and develop a process for creating it.*

- anticipate problems
- plan
- conceptualize
- design
- display
- layout/format
- design programs
- anticipate consequences
- brainstorm new ideas
- think visually
- improvise
- compose
- adapt
- create images

Human Service: *Attend to physical, mental or social needs of people.*

- interpersonal skills
- group process
- sensitivity to needs
- empathize
- counsel
- advocate
- use intuition
- coach
- provide care

Research & Investigation: *Search for specific knowledge.*

- analyze ideas
- analyze data
- research
- investigate
- read for information
- gather data
- interview for information
- evaluate
- critical thinking
- synthesize information
- observe
- outline
- formulate hypotheses
- develop theory
- calculate/compare

Organization Management: *Direct and guide a group in completing tasks and attaining goals.*

- solve problems
- time management
- make decisions
- lead
- meet deadlines
- supervise
- motivate
- recruit
- resolve conflicts
- mediate
- initiate projects
- organize
- coordinate
- handle logistics
- put theory into practice
- delegate
- give directions
- assume responsibility
- determine policy
- interpret policy
- apply policy
- set priorities
- strategize

Physical: *Use hands or tools to build, repair, and invent.*

- build
- construct
- invent
- operate equipment
- repair
- restore
- use physical coordination

Part II: Write your top 10 skills in the space below with a brief example of how you have used this skill in a previous job, internship, extracurricular activity, or class.

This handout was taken from the Career Development Center at Stanford University and is available on the [Wall Street Journal website](http://s.wsj.net/public/resources/documents/JOBHUNT_skills_ws.pdf) at http://s.wsj.net/public/resources/documents/JOBHUNT_skills_ws.pdf

Resume Format Recommendations

1. Chronological Resume

Experiences are listed in reverse chronological order with the most recent experience first and your least recent experience last.

Recommended when the following is true:

- Your titles and company names alone are field-related and descriptive.
- Your most recent experience is relevant to what you are pursuing and your most impressive experience.
- You have advanced consistently from your least recent position to your most recent position.
- The length of time you spent at each organization is fairly long and respectable.

Potential downside - Functional skills are not highlighted and could get overlooked in the recruiter's brief review.

Not recommended when the following is true:

- You have gaps in your work history (sporadic, spotty).
- You have changed employers too often.
- Your position titles and employers are not relevant.
- Your most impressive, relevant experience was one of your least recent.

2. Functional Resume

Highlight and emphasize the functional skills you developed across various experiences by listing and describing them first. Experiences are simply listed alone without descriptions of what was done.

Recommended when the following is true:

- The skills that you developed are more relevant or impressive than your titles and organization names.
- You have time gaps in your resume when you did not work, so you want to downplay the chronology.
- You are changing careers and need to highlight transferable skills related to your new career field.

Potential downside - Recruiters have difficulty determining where the functional skills were developed.

Not recommended when the following is true:

- Your skill areas are not relevant to your perfect job target.
- You want to demonstrate advancement within one field.

- Your titles and organization names are impressive or relevant.
- Other styles will work as well or better (no need to put the recruiters through the difficulty of reviewing this style if other styles that are easier to review work just as well).

3. Combination Resume

Combine the functional and the chronological formats by placing functional skill subheadings over those experiences that primarily use that particular functional skill.

Recommended when the following is true:

- The skill headings that match your experiences are skills that are consistent with the job you are pursuing.
- You have held an adequate number of positions needed to fit under your various functional skill headings.
- You want to move relevant skills/experiences acquired early in your career towards the top of your resume.

Potential downside - Difficult to have multiple experiences per each functional heading.

Not recommended when the following is true:

- The skill headings are not relevant or impressive in relation to your perfect job.
- You do not have enough experiences to fill the functional skills headings.
- You have impressive, relevant multiple skills within one or each experience.

4. Combination-Internal Resume

Highlight multiple, relevant functional skills within one or more of your most relevant experiences that are listed in chronological order.

Recommended when the following is true:

- You have individual experiences that utilized multiple skill sets that relate to the jobs you are pursuing.
- The skill sets within your experiences are significant and relevant to your job target.

Potential downside - Functional skill subheadings are only developed within one experience.

Not recommended when the following is true:

- You have many shorter, less substantial experiences.
- The functional skill headings are not relevant to your perfect job target.

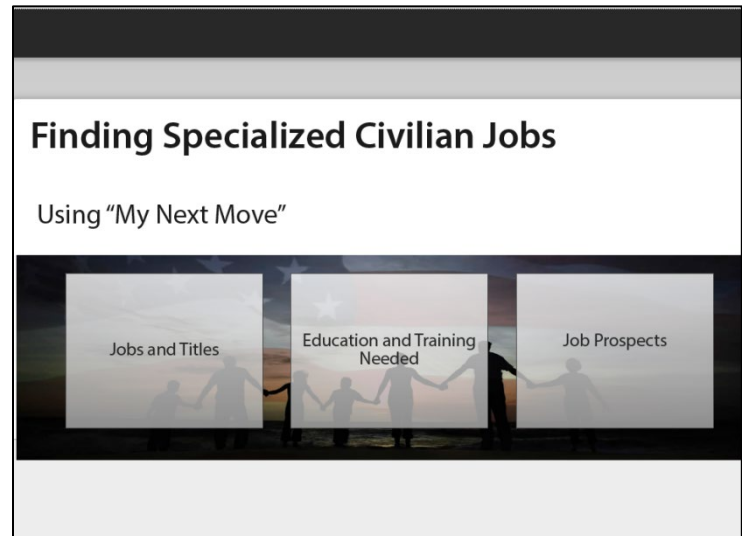
This handout was taken from the Insider's Guide to Finding the Perfect Job, Peterson's, 2000

Finding Specialized Civilian Jobs Using “My Next Move”

Link for “[My Next Move](http://lion.militaryfamilies.psu.edu/sites/yrrp/mynextmove)” demonstration –
<http://lion.militaryfamilies.psu.edu/sites/yrrp/mynextmove>

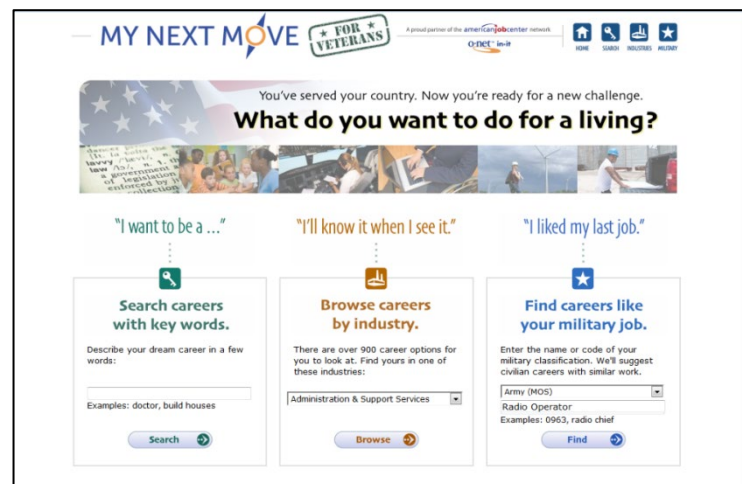
Use the website “My Next Move for Veterans” to find civilian jobs and job titles that are similar to your military career.

This website provides a list of civilian jobs similar to what you did in the military; describes trainings, certifications, or degrees that are needed for each job; and lists the projected salaries and job openings for each career for your geographic area.



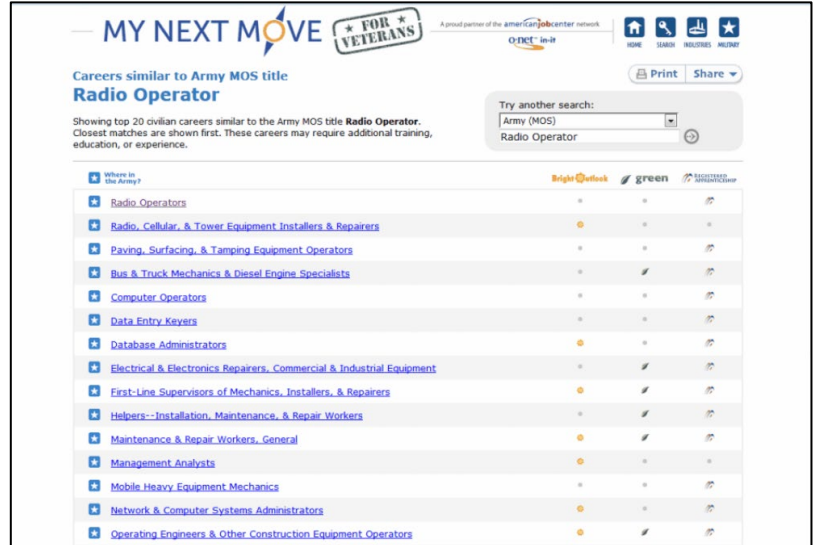
To start, open a web browser and navigate to the [My Next Move for Veterans](http://mynextmove.org/vets) page mynextmove.org/vets

Look at the third search bar. In the drop down menu, select your military branch. In the box below that, enter your job title and hit find.



A list of civilian jobs with similar requirements or skillsets to your job will be displayed on this screen.

At a glance, this screen displays some specific information about each career. A sun symbol next to a job posting predicts a large growth for this job in the near future. If there is a leaf, the job is eco-friendly. The third symbol signifies if the career has opportunities to gain an apprenticeship, which allows you to work in the field and make money as you gain specific job skills. Click on a job title for more information.



This will direct you to a specific career page. At the top of the page, you will find the job name and other civilian titles for the same job. Just below that is a list of similar positions you may have held during your service.

A brief job description and a bulleted list of job duties follow.



Halfway down the same page, these colorful boxes identify the knowledge, skills, and abilities you may need in this career.

KNOWLEDGE	SKILLS	ABILITIES
<p>Business</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> customer service administrative services <p>Safety and Government</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> public safety and security law and government <p>Engineering and Technology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> computers and electronics <p>Communications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> telecommunications 	<p>Basic Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> talking to others listening to others, not interrupting, and asking good questions <p>Problem Solving</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> noticing a problem and figuring out the best way to solve it 	<p>Verbal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> listen and understand what people say communicate by speaking <p>Attention</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> pay attention to something without being distracted do two or more things at the same time <p>Hearing and Speech</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> recognize spoken words speak clearly <p>Ideas and Logic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> notice when problems happen

At the bottom of the page, there is a box labeled “education,” which identifies how much schooling the job requires. Within that box, you will find links to trainings, certifications, and apprenticeships. Clicking on a link will open a box that will ask you to enter an area code. Entering this in the box will bring you to a page that lists locations near you that provide each educational opportunity.

The Job Outlook box provides a prediction for the likelihood of new job creation and an average salary for the position. The links in this box also allow you to enter an area code to get more specific job statistics for your area.

EDUCATION	JOB OUTLOOK	EXPLORE MORE
<p>high school diploma or some college usually needed</p> <p>Get started on your career:</p> <p>Find Training Find Certifications</p>	<p>Below Average New job opportunities are less likely in the future.</p> <p>SALARY: \$42,080 per year, on average</p> <p>Check out my state! Local salary info Find Jobs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Air Traffic Controllers Airfield Operations Specialists Computer Operators Police, Fire, & Ambulance Dispatchers Power Distributors & Dispatchers <p>You might like a career in one of these industries:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government Media & Communication Self-Employed

Lastly, links to other career pages that share characteristics with the page you are on will be listed. To look at another career you can explore these links, click the back navigation arrow to go back to the list of jobs that match your search, or create a new search by going back to the home page.