



CHECKLIST

Checklist for Internal and External Leadership Messaging

Senior leaders act as advocates for veterans by prioritizing and sharing their organization's business case and its veteran initiatives. They link the "value of veterans" to organizational success and *value creation* for customers. Effective senior leader communications share the business case for hiring and retaining veterans, leverage the value of veteran talent, and demonstrate how infrastructure must support the integration of veterans. These focused communications will help the workforce, industry, and community understand and embrace the role of veterans in the workplace.

In order to effectively integrate veterans throughout the organization, leaders' internal messaging must convey how hiring and retaining veterans support the organization's values and messages. These messages must be delivered in a manner that resonates with all levels of the organization. External messages about veteran initiatives provide the opportunity for an organization's leaders to share its business case and associated best practices. Working together to explore synergies and conveying positive results may persuade other organizations to engage veterans in the workplace.

[\[link to Leading Practice Examples: Leadership Messaging, file name LP-Examples Leadership Messaging.docx\]](#)

Veterans Are Entrepreneurial

Academic research focused on the attributes and characteristics of successful innovators and entrepreneurs highlights that high-performing entrepreneurs have in common strong self-efficacy, a high need for achievement, are comfortable with autonomy and uncertainty, and make effective decisions in the face of dynamic environments.

Internal Communications, consider:

What programs does your organization have that require entrepreneurial skills? How could veterans' skills support this?

Does your organization have a goal to find new customers for its products or services? How could veteran entrepreneurial skills add momentum to this initiative?



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External Communications, consider:

How have veteran's entrepreneurial skills helped move projects forward? Is this what you expected to happen or did this surprise you? Share your thoughts about how other companies could benefit from this veteran skill.

Review examples of how veterans' small business ventures have succeeded as demonstrations of their entrepreneurial skills. [\[link to Leading Practice Examples: Supplier Diversity, file name LP-Examples Supplier.docx\]](#)

Veterans Assume High Levels of Trust

The ability to trust coworkers and superiors has been consistently highlighted in organizational behavior literature as a significant predictor of high-performing teams, organizational cohesion and morale, effective governance systems, and enhanced organizational performance. Research indicates military service experience engenders a strong propensity towards trust in coworkers and organizational leadership.

Internal Communications, consider:

How does your organization use high-performing teams to complete projects? Have veterans enhanced teamwork and the team's ability to accomplish goals?

How do you as a leader demonstrate and foster trust in your organization? Are trust and loyalty seen as values of your organization? How have those values helped your organization's success?

Is trust seen as a value supported by your customers?

External Communications, consider:

How do you as a leader demonstrate and foster trust in your organization? Are trust and loyalty seen as values of your organization? How have those values helped your organization implement initiatives and/or reach its goals?

How has Veteran involvement enhanced your organization's achievement?



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Veterans Are Adept at Skills Transfer Across Contexts/Tasks

Service members' and veterans' ability to transfer knowledge/skills between disparate tasks and situations represents a valuable organizational resource.

Internal Communications, consider:

Does your organization have a variety of disparate programs or projects? How have Veterans' abilities to take skills and knowledge from one situation and apply them in another benefitted the organization? How might they? Is this a capability your business could benefit from?

Does your organization have short time windows to implement new projects? How might Veterans' abilities to take skills and knowledge from one situation and apply them in another enhance the 'speed to market'? How might/does this benefit your customer?

External Communications, consider:

'Speed to market' is seen as one component of national competitiveness. How could Veterans' abilities to take skills and knowledge from one situation and apply them in another support an organization's ability to launch new products and/or services? How has your organization benefitted from this veteran ability?

Veterans Have [and Leverage] Advanced Technical Training

Military experience, on average, exposes individuals to highly advanced technology and technology training at a rate that is accelerated relative to non-military, age-group peers and they effectively leverage this knowledge across disparate work-related tasks.

Internal Communications, consider:

How is new technology driving change in your organization? How might Veterans with training and experience in that technology enhance the implementation and use of the technology to your organization's benefit? How have they used skills to benefit the organization's workforce?



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How have Veterans used their technology skills to help train or mentor others? Where might the organization benefit from veteran expertise?

What are your customers' expectations of your organization's adoption of new technology? How might you demonstrate benefits to your customers by hiring and developing Veterans?

External Communications, consider:

How have Veterans helped implement or leverage new technologies in your organization?

How has their willingness to work with new technologies benefitted the workforce? Have veterans taught skills to other employees? Have they mentored others? Has the fact they are able to use new technologies helped others in your organization adopt the technology as well?

What positive results has your organization seen as a result of implementing new technologies? How have you positively impacted your customers? How have veterans been a part of that implementation?

Veterans Exhibit Advanced Team-Building Skills

Several studies have shown military service members and veterans have a high level of efficacy for team-related activities:

- 1) organizing and defining team goals and mission,
- 2) defining team member roles and responsibilities, and
- 3) developing a plan for action.

Internal Communications, consider:

Does your organization value teamwork? How do you demonstrate the value teamwork brings to the success of the organization?

How does your organization use teamwork? How might/have veterans' team building skills helped the organization reach its goals?



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Does your organization have an affinity group for veterans? How does this group demonstrate teamwork? Has this group done projects to positively impact veterans and or all employees within your company?

How has teaming with the customer benefitted the organization? How have veterans helped those teams effectively support customer expectations and requirements? Consider how veteran cultural expertise has supported teaming efforts.

External Communications, consider:

Share how teamwork is important to your organization and how the strong teaming skills of veterans have benefitted your organization.

How has your organization collaborated with other companies? Have you had veterans involved in those collaborative efforts? How did the effort benefit from veteran involvement?

Does your organization have an affinity group for veterans? How does this group demonstrate teamwork? Has this group done projects to positively impact veterans or citizens in the communities touched by your organization?

Veterans Exhibit Strong Organizational Commitment:

Research has demonstrated that military veterans bring a strong sense of organizational commitment and loyalty to the civilian workplace. For the organization, this strong sense of organizational commitment can contribute to reduced attrition/turnover, and will also be reflected in the employee's work product.

Internal Communications, consider:

*What metrics does your organization have in place to measure the impact of veterans in your workplace? What results have you evaluated? Have you seen positive impacts on veteran attrition or turnover? **[link to Leading Practice: Tracking Veterans in the Workplace, file name LP-Tracking Veterans.docx]***

How does your organization retain and develop veterans? Do you see a correlation between these efforts and veteran commitment to your organization?



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External Communications, consider:

How do you measure the impact of veteran in your organization, what metrics are in place? What was the process your organization used to determine how to measure the impact of veterans in your workplace? [\[link to Leading Practice: Tracking Veterans in the Workplace, file name LP-Tracking Veterans.docx\]](#)

What results have you achieved? What are the lessons learned you can share with other organizations?

Veterans Have [and Leverage] Cross-Cultural Experiences:

Veterans must be skilled at operating across cultures and international boundaries. Multiple studies consistently highlight that those individuals with military backgrounds 1) have more international experience, 2) speak more languages (and more fluently), and 3) have a higher level of cultural sensitivity as compared to age-group peers that have not served in the military.

Internal Communications, consider:

How important is the global market or increasing your export business to your organization?

How might a veteran with global experience benefit import/export initiatives?

Does your organization have a large, multi-cultural workforce? How might your organization benefit from a veteran employee who has experience with working and completing projects with individuals from various cultures?

How might having a veteran employee with international experience benefit your customers?

Have you seen customer satisfaction and/or sales improve as a result of having a veteran employee who speaks the same language as your customer? What kinds of customer relationship impacts have you experienced having a veteran with strong cultural sensitivity in your workforce?



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External Communications, consider:

How important is the global market or increasing your export business to your organization? How might a veteran with global experience benefit import/export initiatives?

Does your organization have a large, multi-cultural workforce? How might your organization benefit from a veteran employee who has experience with working and completing projects with individuals from various cultures? Share lessons learned.

How have customer satisfaction and relationship management benefitted from having veteran employees who exhibit strong cultural sensitivity and language skills? Has this positively impacted your organization's competitiveness?

Veterans Have Experience/Skill in Diverse Work Settings:

The nation's all-volunteer military represents diversity in terms of educational background, ethnicity, culture, values, and the goals/aspirations of organizational members. As a consequence, multiple studies have found that those with military experience are (on average) highly accepting of individual differences in a work setting, and exhibit a high level of cultural sensitivity with regard to such differences in the context of workplace interpersonal relationships.

Internal Communications, consider:

How important is diversity in your workplace? Consider sharing demographics that demonstrate how diverse your organization is. How have your diversity programs positively impacted your company?

How do you demonstrate the importance of company values about diversity? How might employee satisfaction be enhanced by programs that support inclusion of veterans, including disabled veterans? How might this be a demonstration of how open your organization is to all diverse populations?

Share examples of how veteran's initiatives in your organization have benefitted the entire workforce.



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External Communications, consider:

What recruitment and retention targets are included in your organization's goals regarding diversity, including veterans and/or individuals with disabilities?

How does your company demonstrate it values diversity? Have you worked with others in the community or industry to promote diversity?

How have your diversity initiatives positively impacted your business' long and short term goals? Can you attribute some of this impact to veteran engagement?

Share examples of organizations who have implemented veteran-focused programs. How have programs positively impacted the company? [\[link to Leading Practice Section\]](#)



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