



ALLONE SUPERVISOR

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5 WAYS TO SUPPORT VETERANS IN THE WORKPLACE

Veterans can face many issues reintegrating into civilian life and returning to the workforce, and often need specialized support and understanding as they transition to a new reality. Veteran employees may have trouble adjusting to greater autonomy outside the rigid structure of the military, feel isolated from coworkers, or struggle to re-establish relationships with family and friends.

Here are five ways to be supportive of veterans in the workplace:

1. Be respectful

Creating an environment that is appreciative and welcoming fosters productivity and success. Be mindful of cultural sensitivities, invisible injuries and disabilities. Veterans may be dealing with culture shock and general transitional challenges, and some veterans will prefer not to disclose their service history.

2. Get educated

Education is often key in communicating effectively with others. A little investigation into military-related current events or common veteran employee concerns will go a long way in demonstrating a genuine effort to understand, support, and show appreciation for veteran employees.

3. Communicate clearly

Veterans can be very direct and to the point. Emails, phone calls, and face-to-face communications should be clear, concise, and straightforward, so both parties know exactly what is being asked or required. Avoid ambiguous directives or feedback, and if creativity is desired, state it explicitly.

4. Reach out

Building connections with others is an important step in veterans' return to civilian life. Veterans often have difficulty relating to others because of the extreme nature of their experiences, which can lead to isolation and dissatisfaction at work. Everyone who interacts with veterans plays a role in their reintegration, so don't hesitate to initiate a conversation.

5. Turn to Your Assistance Program for Help

Military service impacts many people, not just the person who served. Veterans' families, friends, and coworkers may need support as well. Your Assistance Program provides clinical services and work/life resources to help meet any and all veteran needs, from emotional support and communication strategies to legal and financial services.