

MILITARY SERVICE EMPLOYMENT JOURNAL™

MSEJ

February 2017

DUTY CALLS-WE DELIVER

Created by CASY and MSCCN

Love is in the Air



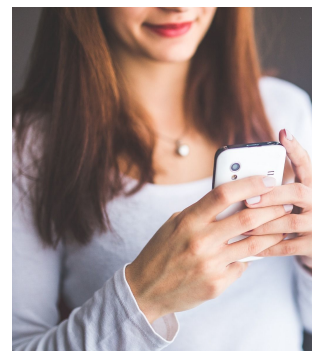
(Résumé)
Groundhog Day



Federal Hiring Fact Sheet



Online Dating & the
Job Market



7,150 APPLICANTS HIRED IN 2016!
463 TOTAL HIRES IN 2017 AND COUNTING!

In the Spotlight

RESOURCES YOU CAN USE.

Angela Caban founded the Homefront United Network in 2010 to help National Guard spouses, who, like herself, lived far from military installations with no resources or support from other military families. She also noticed a



separation between active duty and National Guard/Reserve communities. With the help of HUN team members, the HUN has been able to reach out to spouses and families who are in need of support, and most importantly, bridge the gap between active duty and guard/

reserve communities. HUN provides content and real-

life stories for all military spouses and families and is a place to gain resources, support others and celebrate the lives of military spouses, family and friends. The most recent launch to the site, the Guard Guide 101, provides up-to-date information for National Guard spouses. HUN recognizes that military spouses are all on different walks of life, but all have something to share. Visit them at homefrontunited.com/

With a mission to empower and educate milspouse entrepreneurs through live leadership events, online educational resources, and local chapter meet-ups, the MILSPO PROJECT provides the skills and tools the military spouse community needs to help them succeed in business and in life. If you are a milspo entrepreneur or thinking about becoming one, connect with your local chapter by visiting: <http://milspoproject.org>



The Center for America works "to educate, motivate and empower Americans to expand skills, entrepreneurship, prosperity and freedom." In partnership with CASY and MSCCN, the Center for America operates American Jobs for American Heroes, an ongoing campaign to help employers hire National Guard members, Veterans, and military spouses. To learn more about how to participate, visit www.centerforamerica.org/.

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MSEJ



Training



Employment Services



News and Events



About CASY & MSCCN

CASY & MSCCN are two nonprofit organizations serving the employment needs of military affiliates. CASY serves military members and Veterans; MSCCN focuses on military dependents and military caregivers. We are military serving military.

About the MSEJ

The Military Service Employment Journal is a resource guide for military-affiliated jobseekers. The MSEJ is produced for the exclusive use of CASY & MSCCN.

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THE CITADEL AND CASY & MSCCN: MILITARY SPOUSE EMPLOYMENT PARTNERS

If you find yourself in Charleston, South Carolina, chances are you'll see a member of The Citadel's undergraduate cadet corps around town. They are easy to recognize: they're the ones wearing The Citadel's distinctive uniform, a requirement as long as they're within a ten mile radius of campus. In Charleston and around the country, The Citadel is known for its high standards and its adherence to a classical military system, which privileges leadership and character development along with academic excellence.

THE CITADEL



(Photo by Wally Gobetz) Used in accordance with CC Attribution 2.0 Generic

While The Citadel is known for its competitive, co-educational undergraduate and graduate programs on campus in Charleston, the college is also working hard to grow its online degree offerings. These degree programs, which are entirely online, provide the same academic rigor, high standards, and expert faculty that students would receive on campus, with the added benefit of being more convenient, flexible, and feasible for working adult students and those currently serving in the U.S. military. In an effort to increase awareness of their academic degree programs and online offerings, The Citadel is once again proving its dedication to the U.S. military by partnering with CASY & MSCCN to create employment opportunities for military spouses.

In January 2017, The Citadel filled its second round of independent contractor positions by partnering with CASY & MSCCN. These positions are six month independent contractor agreements with The Citadel, which allow participants to work from home, supporting 15 different locations across the country, while functioning as a part of a larger team. To fulfill their contract, military spouses work five to ten hours per month to market and promote The Citadel's online degree programs in their local areas. Each contractor works with education officers on base, attends career fairs, and uses social media to promote The Citadel's online degree programs.

Although these roles are remote and do allow military spouses to work from home,



they also entail making presentations on The Citadel's behalf. As a part of their agreements, military spouses make presentations at events on military bases, schools, and at businesses. Contractors are also expected to update educational materials within the education center, and to visit community colleges along with public sectors to spread the word about The Citadel's online and on-campus opportunities.

When The Citadel created these independent contractor roles, they were immediately drawn to the idea of considering military spouses in the hiring process. Lauren Smith, the Director for Enrollment Management at The Citadel explained that "The Citadel is excited to hire spouses for these roles because they bring a wealth of expertise and knowledge of the needs of their local communities." Moreover, she cited The Citadel's awareness of the unique skillsets that military spouses are able to offer, saying "They are creative and understand protocol, and have creative ways to think about promoting our degree programs beyond Charleston, SC."

Since these roles are on an independent contractor basis, they allow military spouses the freedom and flexibility to take on other projects, marketing or otherwise. For many spouses, they may provide the first step to developing their resume in a new direction as they hone their marketing and presentation skills. While The Citadel hopes to grow the program and to continue to renew their contracts with the military spouses that they have hired, they also understand the demands of military life and PCSing. If a military spouse must move, or receives full-time employment, they do not have to renew their contract after their six months are complete.



CASY & MSCCN are proud to partner with The Citadel on this military spouse hiring initiative. The Citadel chose to work with CASY & MSCCN, citing that "they are the best resource to connect military spouses with the positions that [they] were looking to hire for." When asked about how CASY & MSCCN are ideally suited to work with The Citadel on this particular hiring venture, Lauren Smith stated that

(Continued on following page)



CASY & MSCCN "have wonderful resources and tools to promote job postings to reach talented military spouses... CASY & MSCCN can pre-screen the candidates so that we have a better idea of each candidate and his or her skillset above and beyond what we can read on their resumes before we speak to them."

By working in tandem, The Citadel and CASY & MSCCN can ensure that military spouses have the best resumes and pre-interview preparation possible, and that both parties stay up to date on the applicant's standing. Last year, CASY & MSCCN helped The Citadel fill eight of the ten positions available; this year, The Citadel hopes to fill fifteen positions, with an eye toward growing the program further in the future. CASY & MSCCN are proud to help make a difference for military spouses and The Citadel's education offering, and hope to continue this partnership in the coming year.



HOT JOBS

for military spouses, caregivers, & dependents



HOT JOBS are updated weekly.



**VISIT
MILITARY
RECONNECT**



To learn how to save for and fund your next great adventure

CASY & MSCCN in Your Community

CASY & MSCCN CEO and Founder Rear Adm. Dan Kloeppel, USN (Ret.) was on hand at the Phi Delta Theta President's Leadership Conference in St. Louis to present Rear Admiral Matthew Moffit with the Fraternity's highest military award – the J. K. Davis Award recognizing a brother for his "Outstanding Service in the defense of liberty as a member of the U.S. Armed Forces." The award was created in 2001 and named for Brother John K. Davis



(New Mexico '51), the Assistant Commandant of the United States Marine Corps from 1983-86.

RADM Kloeppel is a former president of the Illinois Alpha Chapter of Phi Delta Theta at Northwestern University and became a member of the Phi Delta Theta Educational Foundation Board of Trustees in 2007.



Swipe Left, Swipe Right: Online Dating and the Job Market

By: Amy Rossi

Online dating, much like online job-hunting, seems like it should be simpler than it actually is. Rather than getting dressed up, going out, and gearing up for potentially awkward small talk, finding a match online provides a level of distance from the whole dating process. You can create your profile in your pajamas while eating takeout on the couch. You can select a picture that shows you at your best, and you only have so many characters to describe yourself—which limits the amount of baggage you can cover.

When you upload your profile, no matter which site you use, you know that the odds might not be in your favor but good things could still happen. After all, your friend met her husband on a dating site, and she never would've guessed that her love story would start with a profile picture.

Once the flurry of profile-posting activity is over, the waiting begins, and you find that you no longer have a script for what you're supposed to do. Should you browse profiles and send a few messages yourself? If, after a week, you haven't received the kinds of responses you're looking for, should you tweak your profile to attract a different crowd? If you do receive a message from someone, how should you go about making a date? Suddenly, online dating doesn't seem quite so simple. Instead of berating yourself for that stupid thing you said over dinner, you're waging a siege against a battery of "what-ifs."



If you aren't looking for love but are looking for a job, chances are these steps and lingering questions sound familiar. When you upload your résumé to LinkedIn®, you know you may not find yourself fielding job offers left and right, but part of you hopes that you will. When you give your application and résumé a final once-over before sending them to HR, you wonder how long it will take before you hear anything... and after a few days, you wonder how long you should wait before contacting HR, just to make sure they don't need anything.



On a good day, applying for jobs online feels like a boon. You can work on multiple applications on your own time (on your couch, with takeout, in your pajamas). But no matter how many applications you fill out, you still end up in the



same place as our impatient online dater: You just want to have an in-person conversation with someone that goes somewhere (in this case, an interview that ends in a full-time job with benefits and a good paycheck, thank you very much).

1. Navigating this process will depend on your resiliency. When you first start getting replies, it will be tempting to think that your work is done. Once you're no longer excited about logging in to see if you have any interest, keep at it and remember that finding the right job is a process. You will be more successful if you are strategic rather than applying sporadically.

2. Get comfortable with fluid situations. At some point, you're going to have connections in the works and applications in for multiple positions. You will feel the urge to commit to one job or one networking opportunity, thinking that if you give it all of your time and focus, it will pan out. This is not necessarily true. Keep track of your connections and applications, but don't put all of your eggs in one basket unless you've got an offer and have signed the paperwork.

3. Know that it's not always up to you. As with dating profiles, there's someone on the other end reading submissions. Sometimes you're applying for a job that has inter-office competition, and the company decides to hire from within. Sometimes, you aren't going to be the person they are looking for, and that's okay. Because at some point, you are going to find your "yes." Until that point, sharpen your skills, and take steps toward pursuing your goals each day.



4. Bad behaviors aren't limited to online dating. Sadly, fake profiles and fake jobs do exist—if it seems too good to be true, it probably is. Before you send any personal information to a website, email, or job post, do your research. Additionally, "ghosting" (disappearing without an explanation after expressing interest) and "mooning" (you keep reaching out but you hear nothing back) are frustrating but existing practices in the online job market. Remember tip number 4 and keep moving forward.

Looking for a job and looking for a relationship are processes that engage our emotional interests. We want things to work out, we want to be able to hope, but we also don't want to end up hurt or feeling stupid. No matter your situation, the solution is the same: Start small, one application at a time. Do your research, and know that your break is coming—you just have to keep reaching for it.

VETERAN

Success

Congratulations,
Greg!

After working with CASY for 9 months, Greg was hired by Premier Research as a Project Coordinator.

Hiring Challenge: My greatest challenge was being able to translate the skills that I gained in the military on a resume and in a job interview so that the hiring manager could relate to them and see that I'm a valuable asset to their workforce. I also found that networking can be overwhelming when you're transitioning from the military, especially when you relocate yourself and your family to a new community where you don't know anyone. **You have to learn how to put yourself out there and how to be outgoing to gain contacts and learn the job market in your area.**

Assistance Received: I received help overcoming every one of the challenges that I listed above. My CASY employment specialist was the coach, teacher, and mentor I needed to set me up for success as I completed my transition from the military. ***I appreciated that CASY provided me with professional expertise and guidance on how to develop and write my resume based on the job description, while helping with the job search in my area.***

Results: I was hired by Premier Research to be a Project Coordinator in the RTP in North Carolina.

Value of the Experience: I would like to personally thank my Employment Specialist, Starlett Henderson, who went the extra mile for me. She was able to open my mind and help me explore other job opportunities based off of what was best for my situation. ***She helped to provide the tools necessary for me to be successful. For me, the biggest thing is that she was there to help get me through the tough times, and helped me to maintain the positive mindset that I needed in order to keep pushing.***

Where Do We Go from Here?

Federal Employment in 2017

Federal employment is an attractive opportunity for Veterans and military spouses, but the federal hiring process can also be fraught with frustration. Still, for many job seekers, the potential goods of Federal employment outweigh the headache of navigating the process.

As of January 2017, the federal hiring process got a little more complicated due to a Federal Hiring Freeze memorandum. ***If you were planning to apply for a federal job, already have an application in the works, or have been hired for (but haven't started) a federal job, you may be wondering how this freeze impacts your chances at federal employment.***

The reality is there's a lot of information out there; it's coming at us rapidly, and it can be difficult to distinguish the known from the unknown. This is a fluid situation, and we've run into exemptions and clarifications up to our publication deadline. However, we can state the following with a reasonable amount of certainty.



What We Know

As of the publication of the February *MSEJ*, we know that:

1. On January 23, 2017, President Trump signed a memorandum regarding the Hiring Freeze.
2. Under that memorandum and as a part of the freeze:
 - No existing civilian federal vacancies can be filled unless they fall under an exemption clause.
 - No new federal positions may be created "regardless of the sources of their operational and programmatic funding" (though there are some exceptions).
 - Federal agencies and departments can't fill open positions or create new ones, except where they deem it a matter of national security or public safety. Agencies have some latitude in how they enact this requirement and what they prioritize.
3. This freeze does not impact military personnel or Federal uniformed personnel.
4. This freeze does impact contractors, as well as full-time staff. According to a 1 February follow-up memorandum, agencies are not allowed to use contractors as a

(Continued on following page)

way to get around the hiring freeze, though they are permitted to use contractors within their normal budgetary guidelines.

5. On January 25, 2017, Mark Sandy, acting director of the OMB issued the following initial guidance for those who have received a job offer: If you accepted a position, and have a start date prior to 22 February, you should show up on your start date. If you have accepted a position, but haven't received a start date / your start date is after 22 February, your agency head will determine whether to revoke the appointment or not (if you haven't received any details, get in touch with your HR contact).

6. The hiring freeze will expire once the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) implements their attrition plan. The OMB is responsible for developing a plan alongside the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) to shrink the federal government through attrition, meaning that when vacancies occur as a result of someone leaving a position, that position is not filled.

What positions are exempt from the hiring freeze?

Under the memorandum, the head of an executive department or agency may create exemptions for positions they identify as necessary to "national security or public safety responsibilities." The Director of Personnel Management may also grant exemptions.

Additionally, some "positions requiring Presidential appointment or Senate confirmation, the appointment of officials to non-career positions in the Senior Executive Service or to Schedule C positions in the Excepted Service, or the

appointment of any other officials who serve at the pleasure of the appointing authority" are not impacted by the hiring freeze.



A brief list of positions that are exempt from the freeze as of 15 February 2017 includes:

- Positions that directly provide inpatient care as well as acute, emergency outpatient care in DOD Medical Treatment Facilities

- Positions that meet national security or public safety responsibilities (e.g. cybersecurity, positions that impact military exercises and missions, first responders, nuclear security and bio security)

- Appointment of seasonal and short-term employees to meet traditional seasonal workloads (as long as the agency gets the OMB's written permission in advance)

- Hiring by the US Postal Service

- Federal civilian personnel hires made by the Office of the Director of National Intelligence (ODNI) and the CIA

- Appointments made under the Pathways Internship and Presidential Management Fellows (PMF) Programs (though hires



should understand their positions are provisional and may not lead to long-term jobs).

For a full list of exemptions, as well as information about how departments will determine if someone should still be hired with a start date after 22 February, please see the original memorandum, the 1 February follow-up memorandum, and this list of FAQs.

What We Will Know

In the coming weeks, individual agencies and departments will put

out information on their specific priorities and constraints under the hiring freeze. For instance, the Acting Secretary for the Department of Veterans Affairs put out a memo regarding exemptions at the VA: f. If you are interested in working for specific agencies or departments, keep an eye out for forthcoming information.

What should I do now?

1. Don't panic. As our Director of Training Amy Rossi explains, "I've been around for a long time, and there's always change with a new administration, as well as ebbs and flows in the federal hiring outlook."

2. Have a game plan for here and now, and for later down the line. If you are in a hurry to find employment, federal employment has never been the way to go. (For one, the National Defense Authorization Act of 2017 repealed the certain basis for appointment of a retired member of the armed forces to DoD position within 180 days of retirement, meaning that if you are a Veteran, you have to wait to be hired by the Department of Defense.) Research jobs in your area, work on building a targeted résumé, and reach out to us at CASY & MSCCN if you feel like you don't know where to make your next move.

3. Keep applying. If the position is posted and you are interested, you should apply. At some point, some hiring will resume (and some positions may not stop hiring at all if they are under exemptions).

4. Stay informed. If you are interested in a Federal position, make sure that you stay abreast of developments so that you can jump on your potential dream job as soon as it becomes available.

Say Yes to Possibility

By: Jamie Boyle

If you are like me, you have no idea how to squeeze another activity into your day. You feel frazzled and overwhelmed at times. You look at new opportunities and believe they cost too much—too much of your energy, your time, and yourself.



But there's a growing body of literature that suggests that "busy" is a disease, that we are poor managers of our time, and that we can do better. One advocate who believes that you have more time than you might think is Laura Vanderkam (lauravanderkam.com/), author of *168 Hours: You Have More Time Than You Think*, and the more recent *I Know How She Does It: How Successful Women Make*

the Most of Their Time. Vanderkam, who is the author of several time management and productivity books, looks for practical, research-based ways to help individuals combine work, family, and time for themselves on a daily basis.



When it comes to putting the notion of "saying yes to more" into practice, even entertaining the idea can feel like too much. The questions I have had to

ask myself are, "Am I really too busy, or do I just believe that I am?" and "How does my busy-ness impact my ability to seek out new opportunities?"

Reflecting on those questions, I've determined that while I'm busy (as most of us are), my busy-ness holds me back. My most productive times in my youth were when I was the busiest—school all day, rehearsals all night, and performances every weekend. I had to make use of all of my available time, and I did. Those were the times where I got the most done and was the most successful.



So, instead of saying “No because I’m busy,” I’m focused on saying “Yes to possibility” both professionally and personally.

Yes, I have time to support that project.

Yes, I have time to talk to my friend.

Yes, I have time to read an extra chapter to my child.

Yes, I have time to edit that document for you.

Yes, I have time to exercise.

Yes, I have time to plan healthy meals.

Yes, I have time to attend that networking event.



These “Yeses” mean that I have to say “No” too.



No, I don’t have time to waste on Facebook.
No, I don’t have time to spend on projects that are not professionally fulfilling.

No, I do not have time to drive two hours round trip to attend hot yoga.

No, I don’t have time to use on activities that will not result in my goals.

No, I don’t have time to focus on my being busy.

And these “Yeses” have to be realistic.

Yes, I have 10 hours this week to support that project.

Yes, I have time to talk to my friend on Friday evening.

Yes, I have time to read an extra chapter to my child after we’ve done her homework.

Yes, I have time to edit that document for you if you get it to me today.

Yes, I have time to exercise for 30 minutes.

Yes, I have time to plan four healthy meals, but we’ll order pizza on Saturday.

Yes, I have time to attend that networking event to talk to the five companies in which I am interested.

Instead of wallowing in busy-ness, let’s try focusing on the possibility that comes with saying “yes” in a realistic manner. Let’s see what happens when we stop being busy and start being open to change.

In Search of the “Right” Job

By: Misty Ferguson

When I started working at CASY & MSCCN three years ago, I began by working as a volunteer with the opportunity to become a paid Employment Specialist (ES) in the future. While I was volunteering, I was offered a full-time position as a Human Resources Specialist at the Civilian Personnel Advisory Center (CPAC) on post. In a single day, I went from having no job to two offers that I needed to consider. CPAC was offering me a full-time position that came with a paycheck and benefits, but I hesitated.

Even if I was eventually hired as a paid ES at CASY & MSCCN, I knew I would make a lot less money than I would at the HR Specialist job. Furthermore, I knew that it would take longer for me to transition from volunteer to paid employee than if I took the CPAC position. On a different day, in a different situation, that CPAC job would have been ideal. Had my family been depending on the income and benefits that job provided, my decision making process would have been very different.



I don't know where you are in the job search process, or what kind of decisions you have ahead of you this year. But, if I can offer some advice, when it comes to looking for a new position, you should weigh all of the factors you can—monetary and otherwise—before you select the “right” job.

When it came to my final decision three years ago, I knew that one of my main factors would be flexibility. While I do work full-time, I also like to volunteer and need to have time for my family. In a given week, you can find me on the board of the Spouses Club, at a luncheon or a fundraising meeting, running the kids to soccer, updating the wear blue: run to remember website, or running a wear blue Circle of Remembrance. When I worked in the government sector, I found that I could not fully participate in many of the activities I wanted to be a part of because I was new, and didn't have an abundance of vacation days at my disposal. Without any flexibility in my schedule, I lost out on family time and activities I enjoy.



As it came time for us to PCS and I said goodbye to my government position, I had a choice to make when it came to my next job. Was I willing to sacrifice my interests for the paycheck that I would get at the CPAC HR Specialist job?

Was the work I would do there fulfilling enough to make up for the areas of my life I would be saying "no" to?

Misty made the career choice that allowed her to have time to work while volunteering.

When it came time to consider the monetary gains from that job, I learned that even a good paycheck can only go so far. Once I factored in childcare costs, commuting costs (both time and money), and the loss of flexibility I would sustain, I determined that I'd actually be losing out with that HR Specialist job, even though my hourly rate there would be higher than what I would make working for a nonprofit like CASY & MSCCN.

If I started working at CASY & MSCCN, I could work from home and still be able to volunteer with groups that are my passion, allowing me to fulfill an employment and a spiritual void at the same time. For me, this balance was worth more than the extra dollars I could find in that HR Specialist paycheck.

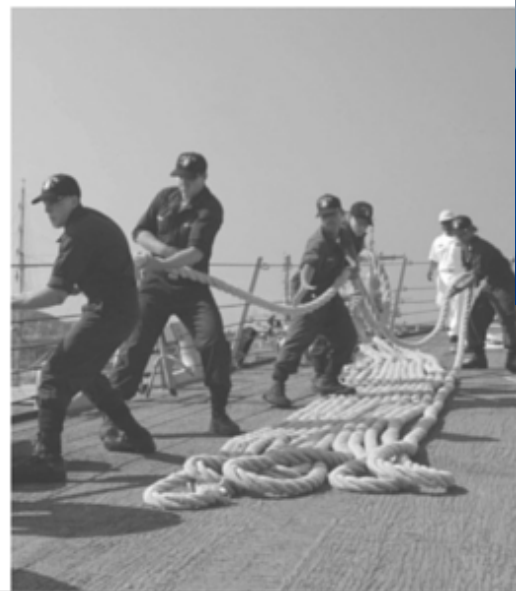
Finding a new job is difficult, whether you're looking for work due to a PCS, a transition out of the military, or because you are looking

to start a new career altogether. Only you can determine the needs that are most pressing for you and your family.



Misty and her family regularly make time for wear blue: run to remember.

No matter the decision you make, take the time to really figure out what matters to you most in terms of your daily life, your family needs, and your long-term goals. You'll never know what matters most to you if you don't ask yourself that question.



Veterans & Transitioning Military Members

Learn about CASY's Hot Jobs

HOT JOBS are updated weekly.

CASY MSCCN are highly-vetted, results driven non-profits that put donor dollars to work for the Military and Veteran Communities.

Learn about our fiscal responsibility at http://www.msccn.org/WhoWeAre/MSCCN_Leadership.html and <http://casy.us/WhoWeAre/Financials.html>



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Maximum Impact /Job Search/
Resume Assessments**

CASY & MSCCN offer live and self-paced training.

Congratulations, Amanda!

After volunteering with CASY & MSCCN for 6 months, Amanda is a Writers Guild graduate and an Employment Specialist with CASY & MSCCN.

I began volunteering with CASY & MSCCN in June of 2016. After a cross country move, a surprise baby, and making plans for an upcoming deployment, I finally felt ready to reenter the workforce. I thought the best way to do that would be through volunteering, and was excited to start working with CASY & MSCCN.

Before I began volunteering, I knew my biggest job market challenge would be the gaps in my employment history. Like many military spouses, my work history has included jobs, along with making space to raise children and get my family settled after PCSing. Although I wouldn't change the choices I've made, they resulted in several career gaps over a 10-15 year period; volunteering seemed like a good choice to fill my gaps and keep my skills sharp.

While volunteering, I saw a notice for the Writers Guild program in the *MSEJ*, and was drawn to it. I've been a novice writer for several years, and always wanted the opportunity to expand my skills and hone my abilities. The Writers Guild was a way for me to build creative skills that I had put aside. It is a wonderful program because it allows participants to get feedback on their work while learning more about the writing process, new writing genres, and techniques.

Being exposed to different styles of writing, publishing options, and readings provided the inspiration and accountability I needed. The best thing about this program is that it offers a creative writing course at no cost, and includes encouragement and guidance by an amazing mentor.

By January 2017, not only had I completed the Writers Guild, but I had also received a job offer from CASY & MSCCN as an Employment Specialist. My work with CASY & MSCCN is fulfilling, and it gives me a unique insight into the struggles that the military community faces when it comes to employment. As a military spouse, I have acquired knowledge and experience that I can use to help the candidates that I work with. My abilities in this area build a comfort and trust between me and my candidates, which allows me to better help them.

The Writers Guild taught me that writing is a process. It takes time, commitment, and a dedication to revisiting material—advice that feels remarkably similar to what it takes to be a military spouse with career goals that last beyond the next PCS.



Do You Come Here Often?

Interviews, First Dates, and Getting a Call Back

By: Jamie Boyle

Our team recently learned of an applicant's test to see if he was succeeding in an interview—he'd lean in, and count how many laughs he got. Like an amateur Jim Gaffigan, the applicant played to his crowd and took the laughs as a sign that everyone was comfortable and confident. This litmus test got us thinking

... Is there really a way to know mid-interview if it's going well, or if you need to head back to the drawing board tomorrow?

What I've determined is that interviewing is a lot like dating. Long silences, awkward laughs, and "Oh look at the time" glances tell you it's not going well. Smiles, leaning in, and "What is your availability next week?" inquiries tell you, you are doing great. To ensure your first interview is a good one, here are a few dating cues that can come in handy.

1. Don't talk about your ex. A date tells you, "She was the love of my life, and we're still best friends. I just don't know what went wrong." Or, "It was the worst relationship ever; it was all his fault, he was always a smug know it all." In so many words, they've told you everything you need to know. You clearly aren't the "love of [their] life," so you might as well move on. They aren't over their break-up (and may never be). Alternatively, they've given you clear

warning signs: should this relationship go wrong, you will feel their wrath. As with that first date, your employer doesn't want to listen to you badmouth your ex (job); it's unprofessional, awkward, and makes poor use of your time. Even if your last job was great, you're supposed to be in the market for a new job; you don't want your interview to sour because the employer thinks you aren't interested. Let your new employer know how the skills from your last job will translate to this new opportunity.



2. Are you interested in them, or do you just want to be in a relationship, er, job? Some

people are serial monogamists. They will date anyone so that they have a date for the holidays, and will hang on to a relationship to avoid being alone. We've all been in the place where we felt like we had to take any job that was available due to financial needs, or fears of what might happen if we had a gap in our resume.

Before you apply, however, ask yourself if you're really interested in this job, and if it's the right opportunity for you. If you aren't really interested and invested in the job, it will come through in your interview performance.



3. Don't air your dirty laundry. While you should be honest and candid with a person on a date, this isn't necessarily the time to share every intimate detail of your life or potential indiscretions. You want them to like you, not flee the scene at a cheetah's pace. The same holds true for an interview. Remember your purpose—you aren't there to make a best friend, or to engage in group therapy. Keep your questions, answers, and language professional; if you get the job, you will have plenty of time to get to know your colleagues.

4. Don't bring up their negatives either. Feel ambivalent about their taste in music? If they have other qualities you like, this interaction may not be the time to challenge them on the merits of boy bands. In an interview, think ISO is better than Six Sigma? Consider this: is it a job deal breaker? If not, move along.



5. Don't be desperate. Be interested. Could you imagine if someone said to you, "I just really need a boyfriend/girlfriend. That's why I'm here." I've actually sat in an interview (where I wasn't the interviewee) and heard the job equivalent. The candidate just wasn't that into us (which ultimately ensured that we weren't into them either). Your date (or interviewer) won't be interested in you if you aren't interested in them. So lose all shades of inattentive, bored, or uninspired, and summon up some enthusiasm.

6. Be confident, but not cocky. I don't know anyone who wants to date someone who is solely into themselves, and I don't know of many companies who want to add a narcissist to their team. Yes, you have to be confident, but you don't have to be an egomaniac. Nobody wants to work with an egomaniac.

A perfect interview, like a perfect first date, can feel like the stuff of magic. While it can feel tempting to wait for the magic to find you, why not take a chance and go out and make some job magic for yourself.



(Résumé) Groundhog Day

By: Emilie L. Duck

As you examine your résumé, do you ever find yourself looking up, half-expecting to see Bill Murray saluting you in solidarity? After all, Bill gets it—or at least his "Groundhog Day" character, Phil Connors, does.

In 1993, he relived Groundhog Day over and over again, stuck in Punxsutawney, Pennsylvania with no end in sight. Granted, Phil did find creative ways to divert his attention, ranging from bouts of hedonism to taking a joyride with Punxsutawney Phil.

Unlike Phil Connors, you do not have a time loop that will rescue you from unfortunate life choices. I can, however, recommend taking a lesson from Phil's misadventures.

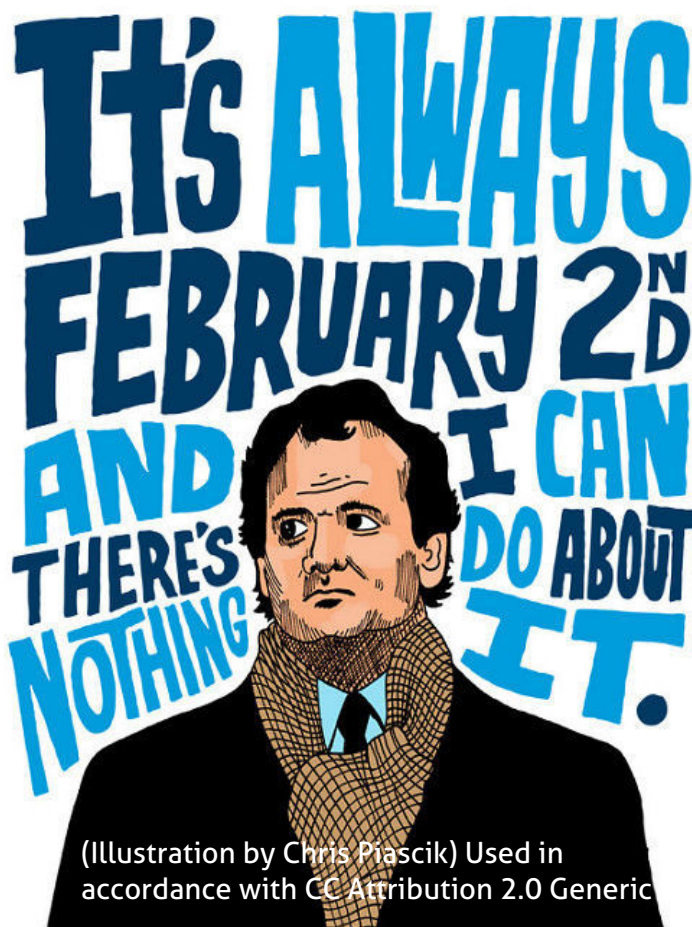
If you haven't seen *Groundhog Day*, you may be wondering how Phil ever makes it to February 3rd. He doesn't escape his fate by ignoring it, by dulling his senses, or by memorizing what takes place (though he does try all of the above). He only makes it past February 2nd by changing himself and his reactions to his life.

So, if you follow the metaphor... you, the résumé writer are Phil Connors, stuck in a job application time loop. You can hear the "thanks but no thanks" before you submit your application. You wonder if you're still going to be sitting in the same chair at your kitchen table a year from now, if all of these applications are futile, if your working days are numbered. You've moved beyond wondering if you're experiencing déjà vu. There's a frustration and exhaustion to your résumé writing that seems insurmountable.

You have two choices.

You can stay stuck in your résumé Groundhog Day, or you can learn to use your mistakes to your advantage.

Perhaps you already know the top mistakes in résumé writing. You've read articles encouraging you to use [keywords](#) and [action verbs](#), and you've [demystified job descriptions](#). You know [you should proofread](#), even though sometimes you don't. ***If you've internalized these errors and know the mistakes to avoid, why are you still sitting at***



(Illustration by Chris Piascik) Used in accordance with CC Attribution 2.0 Generic

this kitchen table? Here's a thought: Have you ever gone back through a failed résumé to analyze what went wrong?

True, going back through a résumé to look for mistakes isn't enjoyable, especially if you already know you didn't get the job. But the good news is that now, that résumé is no longer personal. Instead, it's an object on a table; dissecting its mistakes will get you the answers you need to get out of this loop.



So, take a seat (maybe try out a new one), and print a copy of your résumé along with the job listing. When you look at the job listing, underline the following in different colors:

1. The qualifications for the job (red)
2. The general responsibilities for the job (blue)
3. Words that indicate the type of person the company is looking for (green)
4. Words that the company uses to describe itself/its interests (black)

Then, go back to your résumé and try to find the same color components. Underline where you've described how your past work experience would fit the qualifications for this job. Underline the words that you used that mirror what the company is looking for, and what they stand for as a brand. When you compare the job description to your résumé, do you see certain colors reflected more than others? Do you see large portions of your résumé that aren't underlined at all?

The point of all of this underlining and re-examining is to help you see your résumé in a different way. Now, you aren't looking at a failed résumé. You are looking to see if that résumé was really designed to get you that job in the first place. If you aren't seeing a good balance in the colors you highlighted in both documents, you haven't targeted your résumé to the job you want.

A good résumé (like an exit from Groundhog Day) is all about building a relationship. For Phil, it was a relationship with the people of Punxsutawney, his producer, and himself.



For you, it's a relationship between the skills you have, what that company needs, and how to marry the two in one document. You have all the tools that you need to get out of the loop, it's just a matter of putting them to use.

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