



Veterans

For All Employees

For Veterans Day, we are giving you a valuable tool to share with all your employees as you continue their education in cultural competence. We are supplying a historic Timeline of military battles, legislation and events impacting veterans and their achievements in the United States; Facts & Figures demonstrating veteran demographics; and our cultural-competence series “Things NOT to Say,” focusing on coworkers who are veterans. This information should be distributed to your entire workforce and also should be used by your veterans employee resource group both internally and externally as a year-round educational tool. It also can be particularly valuable to your disability, women’s and LGBT employee resource groups.

1 HISTORIC TIMELINE

We recommend you start your employees' cultural-competence lesson on veterans by using this Timeline, which documents significant military operations, legislation and other historic events impacting veterans in the United States.

?? Discussion Questions for Employees

» **Why—or why not—have veterans been valued in this country?**

Ask employees what contributions veterans have made to their country and why after certain military operations there was more or less support for them. How does treatment and reputation of veterans impact their role in the workplace?

» **Why have some barriers, such as women in combat and Don't Ask, Don't Tell, been so hard to end?**

How do the military, political and social climates in this country impact issues of civil rights in the armed services? How does this affect veterans and their spouses in the private sector?



2 FACTS & FIGURES

After discussion of the Timeline, the next step is to review available data and understand demographics of veterans (important for diversity recruiters) as well as benefits they bring the workplace, such as education, leadership training and ability to act in crisis.

The data we have chosen to present here represent information of relevance to corporate America, such as racial/ethnic, gender, age, education and business ownership (vital for supplier diversity). We also feature the [Top 10 Companies for Veterans](#) and the best practices they employ, such as an employee resource group for veterans, having recruitment efforts aimed at veterans, hiring practices aimed at spouses of veterans, and increased philanthropic endeavors and supplier diversity for veterans.

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Discussion Questions for Employees

» Does your company have an employee resource group for veterans?

If not, how would this group benefit your company in increased hiring, engagement and promotion rates? If so, does the group communicate regularly with other employee resource groups, such as groups for people with disabilities? Is the group tasked with improving recruitment, retention and leadership development, as well as community outreach?

» Does your company have a supplier-diversity program aimed at veterans and/or veterans with disabilities?

Veteran-owned businesses are a valuable part of your procurement chain and can bring important skills and criteria to your organization. Similarly, vendors owned by people with disabilities and especially veterans with disabilities are increasingly included (and targeted) as vital pieces of the procurement budget.

» Does your company publicly support veterans?

Strong support from CEOs, such as [Johnson & Johnson's Alex Gorsky](#) and [Prudential Financial's John Strangfeld](#), cements a company's reputation as a supporter for veterans. This helps with recruitment, engagement, leadership development and procurement.



3 THINGS NOT TO SAY TO VETERANS

Our popular “Things NOT to Say” series includes these interviews with three veterans about offensive phrases they’ve heard in the workplace and how best to respond to them to further cultural-competence education.

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Discussion Questions for Employees

» **What other phrases have you heard addressed to veterans and spouses of veterans?**

Discuss how these phrases and stereotypes impact office morale and productivity. Many people are the children of veterans and also may be offended by these statements.

» **What role do you think the company should play when offensive comments occur?**

Have the employees talk about under what circumstances they would report offensive comments and what they believe the company should do. Get advice from DiversityInc CEO Luke Visconti at www.DiversityInc.com/atwg-offensive-language

» **After today’s lesson, what would you do if you overheard a colleague make one of these comments?**

Continue the discussion with each employee having a plan of action on how to address offensive language.



NEXT MONTH

Supplier Diversity for all employees and Global Diversity for D&I staff, HR staff, communications staff, employee-resource-group leaders and diversity-council members.

Timeline



1775–1783 Revolutionary War

1812–1815 War of 1812

1846–1848 Mexican-American War

1861–1865 Civil War

1868 Major General John Logan, leader of the Grand Army of the Republic, issues a proclamation calling for a Decoration Day to decorate the graves of fallen Civil War veterans with flowers. It is first observed on May 30 of this year. Many Southern states did not observe the holiday until after World War I. It is unclear when the holiday officially becomes known as Memorial Day

1877 Henry Flipper becomes first Black person to graduate from U.S. Military Academy

1898–1902 Spanish-American War

1917 Loretta Walsh becomes first woman to enlist in the military, in the U.S. Naval Reserve

1917–1918 World War I

1919 President Woodrow Wilson declares Nov. 11 Armistice Day to remember “the heroism of those who died in the country’s service”

1921 Congress establishes the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery

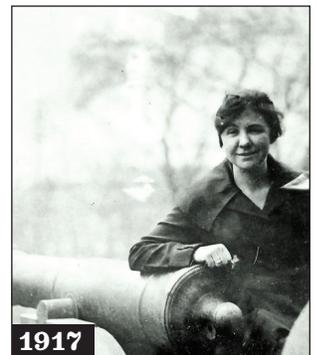
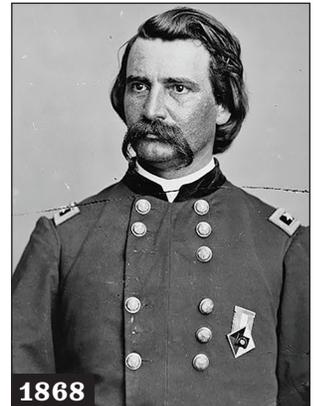
1938 Congress makes Nov. 11, Armistice Day, a federal holiday

1940 Benjamin O. Davis Sr. is promoted to brigadier general, becoming first Black general in U.S. military history

1941–1945 World War II

1950–1953 Korean War

1954 President Dwight Eisenhower signs legislation changing name of Armistice Day to Veterans Day



Timeline (cont.)

1964-1975	Vietnam War
1966	Congress and President Lyndon Johnson declare Waterloo, N.Y., as the birthplace of Memorial Day. On May 5, 1866, the community had held a ceremony to honor local Civil War veterans
1968	Congress passes a law that moves Veterans Day to the fourth Monday of October, effective in 1971. It also makes Memorial Day the last Monday in May
1970	Anna Mae Hays, Chief of the Army Nurse Corps, is promoted to brigadier general, becoming first female general in U.S. military history
1975	Congress passes legislation to move Veterans Day back to Nov. 11, after 46 states continued to observe the holiday in November
1976	U.S. service academies admit first female cadets
1978	Veterans Day observance returns to Nov. 11
1979	Hazel Johnson is promoted to brigadier general and Chief of Army Nurse Corps, becoming first Black female general in U.S. military history
1990-1991	Gulf War I (Operation Desert Shield, Operation Desert Storm)
1994	Military adopts Don't Ask, Don't Tell policy regarding service by gays and lesbians
1994	Department of Defense prohibits women from serving in combat
2000	President Bill Clinton signs National Moment of Remembrance Act, which encourages Americans to pause at 3 p.m. local time on Memorial Day for a minute of silence
2001-present	Gulf War II (Operation Enduring Freedom, Operation Iraqi Freedom)
2010	Department of the Navy reverses policy and allows women to serve on submarines
2011	Don't Ask, Don't Tell policy officially ends on Sept. 20
2013	Department of Defense ends ban on women serving in combat



Sources: timetoast.com, U.S. Army Center of Military History, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

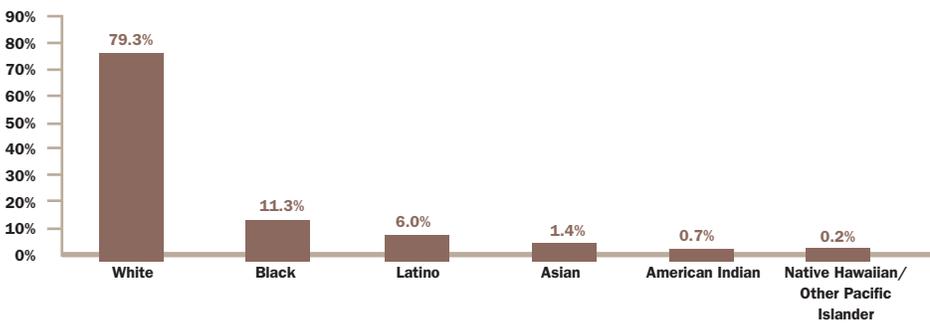
Facts & Figures

DEMOGRAPHICS

Population



Race/Ethnicity



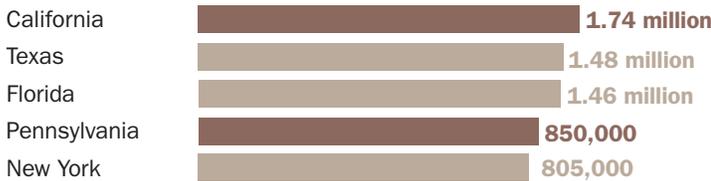
Age



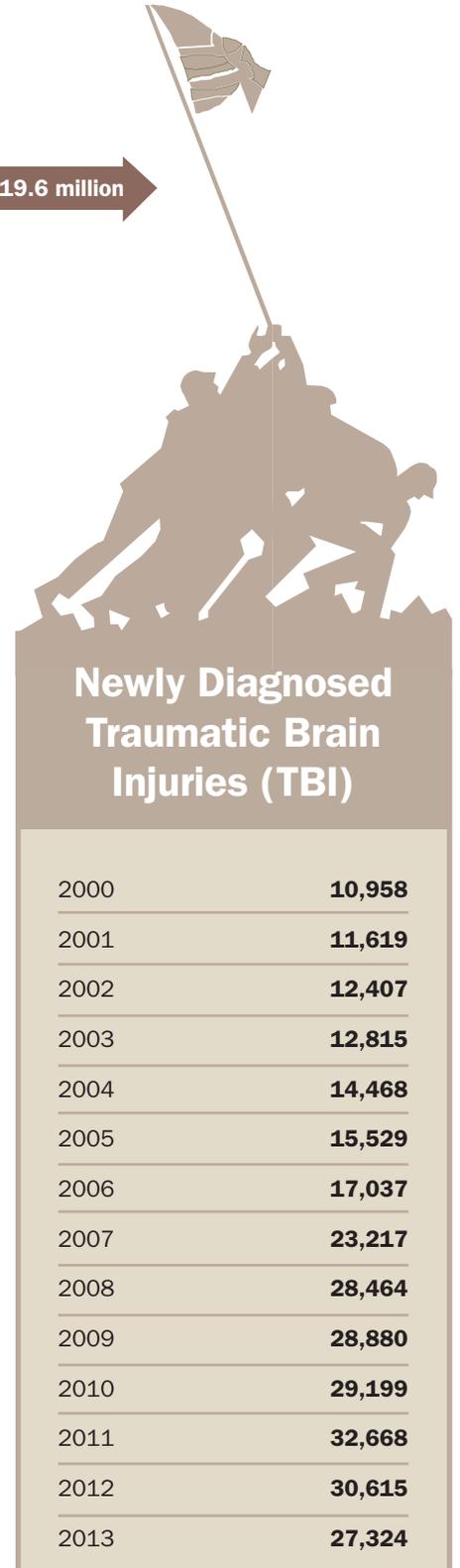
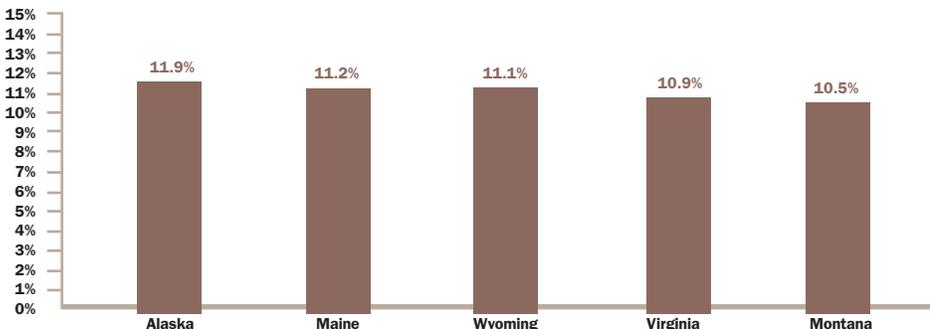
With Disabilities



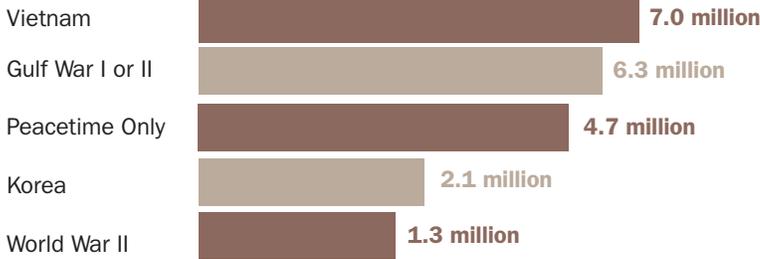
States With Largest Population of Veterans



States With Largest Percentage of Population of Veterans



WHEN THEY SERVED



Multiple Wars

1,006,501	Both Gulf Wars
294,251	Vietnam and Gulf War I
175,676	Korea and Vietnam
92,670	World War II and Korea
58,445	Vietnam and both Gulf Wars
39,890	World War II, Korea and Vietnam

EDUCATION

25 and Older With at Least a High School Diploma



25 and Older With at Least a Bachelor's Degree



FINANCES

Median Income



BUSINESS

9% Percentage of U.S. Businesses Owned by Veterans

5.8 million People Employed by Veteran-Owned Businesses

Employment

7.7 million Veterans 18–64 in the Workforce

92.6% Percentage Employed

7.4% Percentage Unemployed

DiversityInc Top 10 Companies for Veterans

1. CSX
2. Rockwell Collins
3. Southern Company
4. Booz Allen Hamilton
5. Hilton Worldwide
6. Northrop Grumman
7. CVS Caremark
8. Wells Fargo
9. ADP
10. CenturyLink



Sources: Defense and Veterans Brain Injury Center, U.S. Census Bureau's 2013 American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau's 2007 Survey of Business Owners



Things NOT to Say to Veterans

Joining the Army after college was a no-brainer for Ryan Kules. The Arizona native always knew he wanted to serve his country, and in 2002, he got his chance. In February 2005, he was deployed to Iraq. Nine months later, Kules wound up in Walter Reed Army Medical Center.

"I was wounded by an improvised explosive device, which caused the loss of my left leg and right arm as well as the two service members who were in the vehicle with me. I don't remember being wounded; I remember the day before. But I woke up, two weeks later, in the hospital," says Kules.

Kules spent 18 months at Walter Reed Army Medical Center where he adjusted to his new condition and prepared himself for the flood of questions and comments that were sure to come.

Far too often, people assume a level of familiarity with former military that not only breeches proper office conduct but also invades one's "personal space," says Kules, who today is Alumni Director for the Wounded Warrior Project, an organization dedicated to helping severely injured veterans transition back into civilian life.

What are nine things you should never say to a veteran?

1 "Thank you for your service, but I don't think we should have been there in the first place."

Everyone has an opinion about the war but not everyone wants to hear it, says Kules, who explains that people often use him as a sounding board for their take on the war.

"People should recognize their opinion is a personal view and not necessarily an appropriate thing to share with someone who has obvious physical injuries from a conflict," says Kules. This is especially true in the workplace.

2 "Why did you join? The military is a job for men."

This is extremely antiquated thinking, says Barbara Dorazio, an 18-year Army veteran who is now an Administrative Assistant at CVS Health and a member of VALOR, its veterans resource group. "Women are capable of doing most if not all jobs in the military, just like in the civilian workplace," she says. "Everyone is entitled to their opinions, but it is best to keep them to yourself in the workplace."



Have you ever killed anyone?

3 “You’re too rigid to deal with sudden changes.”

Because service members are forced to adhere to a rigid schedule, many civilians assume they are unable to think outside the box or adapt quickly. That couldn’t be further from the truth. Many veterans are among the most adaptable employees around.

“Former military have a resourcefulness, an adaptability to change,” says David Casey, a former U.S. Marine who is now Vice President, Workforce Strategies and Chief Diversity Officer at CVS Health. And despite standard operating procedures set in the military, “things never go as planned, and you have to accomplish your mission in all kinds of environments. The ability to be able to adapt is very important, especially in today’s corporate environment,” Casey adds.

4 “You’re a mother/wife, how could you leave your family while you were deployed?”

Dorazio points out that fathers and husbands have just as difficult a time leaving their families. “Veterans want to focus on being home with their families, not relive the deployment,” she says.

5 “How did your husband/boyfriend feel about you being around all those men?”

“A veteran’s relationship with a significant other is no one’s business but their own,” Dorazio says. “This holds true for civilians as well.”

6 “Do you have post-traumatic stress disorder?”

“If you are talking to someone about their injuries, then the best way to ask this is to let the veteran volunteer this information him or herself,” advises Kules.

7 “What’s the worst thing that happened to you over there?”

To non-veterans, this seems like a harmless question, but it’s inappropriate, especially in the workplace. “This is like asking someone, ‘What’s the worst day of your life? Tell me in detail’—no one wants to do that,” says Kules.

8 “Have you ever killed anyone?”

This question is extremely personal and may force a veteran to relive an episode that he or she prefers not to relive. “The person asking this question doesn’t have any idea how the veteran may feel about the situation,” says Kules.

9 “Were you raped?”

This question may seem pertinent given the rise in reported military sexual assaults, but just as with a civilian, this is an extremely sensitive matter. “While there is a spotlight on rape in the military right now, as there should be, this question invades a veteran’s privacy and it may force them to relive painful memories,” Dorazio says.

