



THE MISSION FORWARD PROJECT

A Nonprofit Organization

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**From Service to
Success: How
Veterans Can Solve
America's Workforce
Crisis!**

Introduction:

Leveraging Military Talent to Address Workforce Challenges

In today's workforce landscape, the skills gap and labor shortages represent critical challenges for businesses across industries. Employers are struggling to find qualified talent to meet the demands of a rapidly evolving market, particularly in fields requiring advanced technological skills, leadership, and adaptability. Simultaneously, approximately 200,000 highly trained military personnel transition to civilian life annually, often facing difficulty securing meaningful careers due to challenges in skill translation, cultural adaptation, and networking.

This intersection of workforce challenges and veteran potential presents an extraordinary opportunity. By recruiting retiring military personnel and equipping them with advanced training in personnel development and AI problem-solving tools, businesses can address critical skills shortages, foster innovation, and create a loyal, high-performing workforce.

The Case for Recruiting Veterans

Veterans bring unparalleled strengths to the workforce:

- **Discipline, Leadership, and Problem-Solving:** Military training fosters decision-making under pressure, adaptability, and team management.
- **Technical Proficiency:** Veterans often possess specialized technical skills in logistics, engineering, and IT that align with high-demand roles.
- **Diversity and Team Collaboration:** Veterans' multicultural experiences enhance workplace inclusivity and collaboration.

However, transitioning military personnel face barriers, such as the inability to translate their military experience into civilian job roles and limited access to professional networks. Providing veterans with targeted training in advanced personal development bridges these gaps, equipping them to excel as managers, leaders, and mentors in civilian organizations. Coupled with AI problem-solving training, veterans can become critical drivers of innovation in technology-driven industries.

Our Mission:

The **Mission Forward Project** teaches and empowers compassionate leaders by integrating timeless personal development principles with modern transformational tools. Our mission is to help individuals master their mindset, enter advanced personal development, learn to move from judgment to curiosity, and ultimately lead with empathy, purpose, and action—unlocking human potential to create a more connected and thriving world. We simply call this *Compassionate Leadership*.

There is hard evidence that supports the critical importance of **compassionate leadership** and why an organization like **The Mission Forward Project** is essential:

1. **Improved Employee Engagement**

Studies show that compassionate leadership drives employee engagement. According to a *Harvard Business Review* study, when leaders demonstrate empathy, 76% of employees report being more engaged at work. Engaged employees are more productive, innovative, and loyal, leading to tangible organizational success.

2. **Higher Retention Rates**

Lack of compassion and understanding from leadership is a key driver of turnover. Research by *Gallup* indicates that 70% of an employee's motivation is influenced by their manager. Compassionate leaders who build trust and move from judgment to curiosity foster psychological safety, reducing turnover and its associated costs—estimated at up to **200% of an employee's salary** to replace them.

3. **Increased Innovation and Problem-Solving**

Leaders who approach challenges with curiosity rather than judgment cultivate teams that feel safe to share ideas. According to *Google's Project Aristotle*, psychological safety—built through compassionate and understanding leadership—is the number one factor for high-performing teams. When leaders “go first” in creating curiosity-driven environments, creativity and innovation thrive.

4. **Better Mental Health and Resilience**

The *World Health Organization* reports that depression and anxiety cost the global economy \$1 trillion annually in lost productivity. Compassionate leaders who lead with empathy and care reduce stress levels in teams, improve mental health, and build resilience—critical factors in sustaining performance and reducing burnout.

5. **Higher Organizational Performance**

Research from *Deloitte* shows that organizations with strong, people-focused leadership have **37% higher revenue per employee** and are **3 times more likely** to outperform competitors. Compassionate leaders inspire teams to collaborate, go above and beyond, and remain committed to the organization's purpose.

6. **Cultural Transformation**

A compassionate leader who “goes first” sets the tone for organizational culture. Moving from judgment to curiosity eliminates toxic environments, fosters inclusivity, and creates stronger teams. Leaders who apologize, step up, and listen build trust—a cornerstone for sustainable success.

In today's world, where disconnection, stress, and workplace dissatisfaction are at all-time highs, the purpose of **The Mission Forward Project** is to create and empower compassionate leaders—a need that has never been more vital. Compassionate leadership is not a soft skill; it is a critical business and social strategy that drives engagement, innovation, and performance while transforming organizations into places where people thrive, not just survive.

Our mission matters, because a better world starts with better leaders—those willing to go first!

The Ripple Affect:

Our mission to create and empower compassionate leaders will have a transformative impact on the citizens of the U.S. by addressing some of the most pressing social, economic, and cultural challenges we face today. Recruiting the men and women who protect our country makes the most sense. These men and women have the potential to drive unity in America. First, we need to arm them with the tools so they can work on themselves. Second, we take point and create pathways for them to choose. The outcome is beyond compelling:

1. Healing Division and Polarization

At a time when the U.S. feels deeply divided—politically, socially, and culturally—compassionate leadership provides a critical antidote. Leaders who move from judgment to curiosity set an example for others to listen, understand, and engage in meaningful dialogue. By fostering empathy, our mission helps bridge divides, rebuild trust, and unite communities across differences.

2. Strengthening Mental Health

Mental health is a national crisis, with the CDC reporting rising rates of anxiety, depression, and stress across all demographics. Compassionate leaders create environments of psychological safety in workplaces, schools, and communities—spaces where people feel seen, heard, and valued. This kind of leadership reduces isolation, boosts mental well-being, and builds resilience in individuals.

3. Transforming the Workplace

The U.S. workforce is struggling with burnout, disengagement, and the “Great Resignation.” Our mission to train compassionate leaders empowers organizations to prioritize people over profit, creating workplaces where employees are inspired, supported, and valued. This not only boosts productivity and economic growth but also improves quality of life for workers.

4. Building Stronger Communities

Compassionate leadership encourages civic engagement and collective action. When people are empowered to “go first”—to volunteer, to apologize, to help a neighbor—they spark a ripple effect of kindness and connection. This strengthens the social fabric of communities, creating safer, more inclusive spaces where everyone thrives.

5. Elevating Education and Youth

Schools are at the heart of building future generations. Empowering compassionate leadership in education equips teachers, administrators, and parents with the tools to nurture emotional intelligence, empathy, and connection in students. This creates healthier learning environments, reduces bullying, and helps young people develop the skills to lead with compassion as adults.

6. Enhancing Social Connections

Compassionate leaders challenge bias, judgment, and systemic inequities by fostering curiosity and understanding. By promoting inclusive leadership, our mission helps address inequality in workplaces, schools, and communities, ensuring all citizens are treated with dignity and respect.

7. Improving Public Health

Compassionate leadership has a direct impact on physical and mental health. Research shows that environments of trust, empathy, and emotional safety reduce stress, chronic disease, and healthcare costs. Empowering compassionate leaders across industries—healthcare, business, and education—will contribute to a healthier nation.

8. Reviving the American Dream

At its core, the American Dream is about opportunity and connection. Compassionate leadership reignites this vision by encouraging people to uplift one another—creating spaces where everyone, regardless of their background, has the chance to grow, succeed, and contribute meaningfully.

By creating and empowering compassionate leaders, **The Mission Forward Project** addresses the root of many of the U.S.'s challenges—division, disconnection, and inequity. Our mission creates a ripple effect that strengthens workplaces, schools, communities, and families, fostering a nation that values understanding, connection, and collective progress. This is how we build a healthier, more unified, and thriving society—one compassionate leader at a time.

How We Do It!

The **Mission Forward Project** draws on the timeless wisdom and transformational principles of personal development pioneers. These pioneers laid the foundation for human growth, self-mastery, and success—principles that are seamlessly applied to our mission of creating and empowering compassionate leaders.

How It's Applied in The Mission Forward Project

Mindset Reset | Advanced Personal Development | Compassionate Leadership

At **The Mission Forward Project**, we assimilate and modernize the best of this transformational work to empower compassionate leadership and help people evolve into their true self. These principles become the foundation of our programs, guiding individuals and organizations to:

- **Master the Power of Thought:** Leaders learn to shift their mindset from limitation to possibility, fostering clarity, focus, and optimism in themselves and their teams.
- **Take Bold, Inspired Action:** We teach leaders to “go first”—to take responsibility, set a vision, and act with purpose, courage, and intention.
- **Move from Judgment to Curiosity:** Leaders adopt positive mental attitudes, challenge assumptions, and approach others with empathy and understanding.

- **Cultivate Resilience and Grit:** By applying timeless limitless principles, we help leaders overcome challenges, persist through adversity, and inspire others to do the same.
- **Unlock Human Potential:** We combine mindset work, goal-setting, and personal accountability to help individuals and teams achieve meaningful, lasting transformation.

By integrating the life-changing philosophies of the pioneers of personal development, **The Mission Forward Project** equips our U.S. Military personnel with the tools, mindset, and heart to lead with empathy, drive connection, and create lasting impact. This isn't just about professional success—it's about helping people become the leaders they were born to be, capable of uplifting humanity in their homes, workplaces, and communities.

Our Impact Goal!

To make a sizeable impact on the U.S. through **The Mission Forward Project's** intent of creating compassionate leaders, we can think about both scale and the ripple effect of leadership.

Here's how we see it:

1. The Impact Multiplier

A single compassionate leader doesn't just impact themselves—they influence teams, families, communities, and organizations. On average, a leader can meaningfully impact **10-50 people directly** through their leadership style and decisions, and countless others indirectly.

2. A Reasonable Goal Over 10 Years

To create a **sizable and visible impact**, training **200,000** compassionate leaders over the next decade would be a strong, achievable target.

- **200,000 Leaders:** If each leader influences 20-50 people, the ripple effect could reach **4 to 10 million people** across homes, workplaces, and communities.

Why This Range is Achievable

1. **Population Size:** With over 330 million people in the U.S., training 200,000 leaders would represent a small, yet transformative fraction of the population.
2. **Delivery Channels:** Through in-person training, digital programs, workshops, and partnerships, reaching this scale is realistic with a decade-long effort.
3. **Cultural Shifts:** A network of leaders trained to “go first,” embrace empathy, and move from judgment to curiosity could catalyze a broader cultural shift toward compassion and connection.

The Mission Forward Institute

Recruiting retiring military personnel is an excellent strategy to address several of the workforce challenges outlined. Here's why this approach is beneficial:

1. Closing the Skills Gap

- **Why:** Military personnel often possess specialized technical and leadership skills that align with in-demand roles, such as logistics, IT, cybersecurity, healthcare, and engineering.
- **Benefit:** These skills can immediately address shortages in industries like technology, manufacturing, and healthcare.
- **Example:** Veterans trained in operating advanced equipment can transition seamlessly into manufacturing or tech roles requiring similar expertise.

2. Leadership and Problem-Solving Abilities

- **Why:** Retiring military members are trained to lead under pressure, adapt to challenges, and make data-driven decisions.
- **Benefit:** Their experience strengthens organizational leadership pipelines and improves decision-making at all levels.
- **Example:** Veterans often excel in middle and upper management positions due to their structured training in team leadership and operational planning.

3. Strong Work Ethic and Discipline

- **Why:** Military culture instills a strong sense of discipline, reliability, and commitment to goals.
- **Benefit:** Employers gain workers who are punctual, goal-oriented, and dedicated to completing tasks efficiently.
- **Example:** Veterans often exhibit lower turnover rates and higher productivity, reducing hiring and training costs over time.

4. Diversity and Inclusion

- **Why:** Military personnel come from diverse cultural, ethnic, and geographical backgrounds, and they are accustomed to working in multicultural teams.
- **Benefit:** They enhance workplace diversity and contribute to a more inclusive and collaborative environment.
- **Example:** Their experience working across different hierarchies and regions brings unique perspectives to organizational challenges.

5. Ease of Transition to Civilian Roles

- **Why:** Many military roles translate directly to civilian jobs, and programs like The Mission Forward Project arm these men and women with a transition program.
- **Benefit:** Employers can hire skilled workers with minimal training investments.
- **Example:** A military logistics officer can quickly transition into supply chain management with little additional training.

6. Filling Labor Shortages

- **Why:** Retiring military personnel often seek second careers and are available to fill critical gaps in the labor force.
- **Benefit:** Employers gain access to a pool of experienced, motivated, and ready-to-work candidates.
- **Example:** Veterans are a strong fit for sectors experiencing shortages, such as healthcare, transportation, and cybersecurity.

7. Tax Incentives for Hiring Veterans

- **Why:** Programs like the Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) provide financial incentives for hiring veterans.
- **Benefit:** Companies benefit economically while solving workforce challenges.
- **Example:** Employers may receive tax credits for hiring veterans with specific service-related challenges, such as disabilities.

8. Alignment with Corporate Social Responsibility

- **Why:** Supporting veterans aligns with many companies' goals to give back to the community and support national initiatives.
- **Benefit:** Enhances the company's reputation and appeal to customers and employees who value corporate social responsibility.
- **Example:** A company with a robust veteran recruitment program may see improved brand loyalty and recognition.

Potential Challenges and Solutions

1. **Challenge:** Veterans may need help translating military experience into civilian terms.
 - **Solution:** Provide training on resume building and civilian workplace expectations.
2. **Challenge:** Cultural adjustments from military to civilian work environments.
 - **Solution:** Implement mentorship programs pairing veterans with existing employees for smoother transitions.

Why Focus on Veterans?

Personal Support for Veterans:

1. **Reintegration into Civilian Life “Mindset Reset”:**
 - Veterans often face challenges transitioning from military to civilian culture. The Mission Forward Project can offer training in emotional intelligence, communication, and empathy to help them connect with others and navigate the complexities of

civilian relationships. We like to say “personal development starts with self and ends with unity.”

- Programs that emphasize self-awareness and adaptability can help veterans manage the psychological and emotional stresses of transition.

2. **Building Resilience:**

- Mission Forward's focus on fostering empathy and innovation can help veterans develop new tools for managing stress, overcoming obstacles, and maintaining emotional balance.

3. **Purpose and Confidence:**

- Many veterans struggle with finding a sense of purpose after leaving the military. Mission Forward's goal to Train, Transform, and Thrive aligns with helping individuals rediscover their personal strengths and align them with meaningful opportunities.

4. **Support While Seeking Employment:**

- An essential part of veteran workforce integration is addressing the skills gap by providing access to technical training that prepares veterans for high-demand careers. A "Technical Skills Institute" dedicated to veterans would offer them the opportunity to learn skilled trades, such as welding, plumbing, electrical work, HVAC systems, and advanced manufacturing. These industries not only provide stable and lucrative employment opportunities but also align well with the hands-on problem-solving and discipline veterans bring from their military experience.

5. **Bridging the “Human” Skills Gap:**

- Veterans possess unique leadership, teamwork, and problem-solving skills honed in the military, but they may struggle to translate these into the language of civilian employers. **Mission Forward** can assist with workshops and coaching to help them articulate their skills effectively during interviews and on resumes.

6. **The Importance the Mission Forward Institute:**

- The state of skilled trades in America today highlights a significant opportunity for growth and development. According to recent labor market data, there is a severe shortage of skilled tradespeople, with many industries facing a "skills gap" crisis. Baby boomers, who make up a large portion of the current trades workforce, are retiring at a rapid pace, leaving behind positions that are crucial to maintaining the nation's infrastructure and economy. Despite the high demand, there are not enough young professionals entering these fields, partly due to a societal undervaluing of skilled trades as viable career paths.

- **ARMORUPPE (Ultimate Professional Performance Education):** Currently, this would be the only such program that exists wherein Veterans will be trained to use Advanced AI Problem Solving Tools. The skills learned in this unique program will provide Veterans with advanced problem solving skills that are applicable to a wide range of industries and organizations. Armed with this skill enables our Veterans to command a much higher wage as they will be equipped to guide corporations and organizations into the next generation of AI.



- Creating a Technical Skills Institute for veterans addresses this gap by providing:
- **Accessible Training:** Veterans often have a strong foundation in technical skills, such as mechanics or engineering, from their military training. A dedicated institute would build on this foundation with certifications and apprenticeships tailored to civilian industries.
- **Economic Stability:** Skilled trades offer competitive wages and job security, making them an ideal choice for veterans transitioning to civilian life. Many trades also provide opportunities for entrepreneurship, allowing veterans to start their own businesses.
- **Career Pathways:** Unlike traditional four-year degrees, skilled trades training is typically shorter and more cost-effective, allowing veterans to enter the workforce quickly and begin building their futures.
- **Addressing National Needs:** By increasing the pool of well-trained tradespeople, the institute would help meet the growing demand for skilled labor, ensuring that critical infrastructure projects and industrial needs are met.
- **Community Impact:** Empowering veterans with trade skills contributes to community development. Skilled tradespeople are often involved in building homes, schools, and hospitals, making them vital contributors to society.

7. Human Skills for Workplace Success:

- The workforce increasingly values human-centric skills like collaboration, conflict resolution, and adaptability. Mission Forward's training programs can prepare veterans to integrate seamlessly into workplace cultures that often differ from military environments.

8. Creating Inclusive Workplaces:

- Partnering with businesses to train them in fostering inclusive cultures ensures that veterans feel valued and supported. By helping employers understand the strengths and challenges of hiring veterans, Mission Forward can enhance veteran retention and job satisfaction.

9. Long-Term Career Development:

- Beyond finding a job, veterans need opportunities for growth and development. Mission Forward's leadership programs, such as **Limitless Leadership**, can help veterans excel and transition into management or entrepreneurial roles.

Why This Matters:

Investing in Veterans through programs like those offered by **Mission Forward** strengthens organizations and communities. Veterans bring unique perspectives, dedication, and resilience to the workforce. By equipping them with the tools to thrive personally and professionally, **Mission Forward** not only transforms individual lives but also contributes to building stronger, more inclusive workplaces.

Resilience First Program Curriculum Outline:

Program Name: Resilience First: Reconnecting Strength, Restoring Hope

Module 1: Building Emotional Resilience

Objective: Equip veterans with practical tools to manage stress, regulate emotions, and build a positive mindset.

1. Session 1.1: Understanding Emotional Resilience

- Definition and importance of resilience in civilian and workplace life.
- Recognizing the unique challenges veterans face.

2. Session 1.2: Stress and Emotional Regulation Techniques

- Breathing exercises and mindfulness practices.
- Tools for recognizing and managing triggers.

3. Session 1.3: Overcoming Setbacks

- Strategies for reframing negative experiences.
- Building a support system to navigate challenges.

Module 2: Restoring Purpose and Identity

Objective: Help veterans rediscover their strengths and align them with meaningful civilian roles.

1. Session 2.1: Recognizing Our Strengths

- Translating military experience into civilian language.
- Identifying transferable skills and personal values.

2. Session 2.2: Defining Our Mission

- Creating a personal mission statement.
- Setting actionable short- and long-term goals.

3. Session 2.3: Overcoming Identity Loss

- Rebuilding confidence in civilian roles.
- Understanding the value of purpose-driven work.

Module 3: Career Purpose Coaching

Objective: Provide veterans with the tools to successfully transition into meaningful employment.

1. Session 3.1: Civilian Workplace Basics

- Key differences between military and civilian work environments.
- Adapting leadership and teamwork skills to new contexts.

2. Session 3.2: Resume and Interview Preparation

- Crafting resumes that highlight military achievements.
- Role-playing interviews to boost confidence and clarity.

3. Session 3.3: Career Path Mapping

- Exploring career options and industries.
- Planning for long-term career growth.

Module 4: Peer Support and Community Building

Objective: Foster connections and provide ongoing support among veteran participants.

1. Session 4.1: Building Trust Through Shared Experiences

- Structured group discussions.
- Identifying common struggles and solutions.

2. Session 4.2: Mentorship Connections

- Pairing participants with veteran mentors.
- Sharing success stories to inspire action.

3. Session 4.3: Creating a Support Network

- Tools to maintain peer connections after the program.
- Access to veteran-specific resources and groups.

Module 5: Crisis Awareness and Mental Health

Objective: Reduce stigma around mental health and connect veterans to professional resources.

1. Session 5.1: Recognizing Crisis Warning Signs

- Identifying red flags in oneself and others.
- Encouraging open dialogue about mental health.

2. Session 5.2: Accessing Professional Help

- Overview of available mental health resources (e.g., Veterans Crisis Line, VA programs).
- How to seek help without fear of judgment.

3. Session 5.3: Suicide Prevention Training

- Interactive training on recognizing and intervening in crisis situations.
- Building confidence to act as a peer advocate.

Optional Add-On: Employer Education

Objective: Train employers on fostering inclusive workplaces for veterans.

1. Session A1: Understanding Veteran Strengths

- Educating employers on the unique skills veterans bring to the workforce.

2. Session A2: Creating Inclusive Policies

- Developing strategies to support veteran employees.

3. Session A3: Partnering with Purpose

- Encouraging organizations to participate in veteran workforce initiatives.

Program Outcomes:

- Veterans gain emotional resilience and purpose-driven skills.
- Increased awareness of mental health and crisis prevention.
- Stronger connections among veterans and within the workplace.
- Enhanced employability and career satisfaction.
- By investing in the creation of a well-educated pool of skilled tradespeople, we not only enhance the career opportunities available to veterans but also address a national economic challenge.
- Veterans bring a unique combination of discipline, leadership, and technical aptitude to the workforce, making them ideal candidates to lead the next generation of tradespeople.

- A Technical Skills Institute would be a critical step toward ensuring that veterans thrive while helping to rebuild and strengthen America's workforce.

Revisiting Our Impact Goal!

Just to be sure **Mission Forward** is realistic in its Impact Goal, according to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs approximately 21.1% of the veteran population is under the age of 45, reflecting a significant segment of veterans in the early stages of their civilian careers.

Annually, around 200,000 service members transition from active duty to civilian life. Setting a goal to train 200,000 veterans over a decade equates to assisting 20,000 individuals per year. Given the annual transition rate, this target represents approximately 10% of the yearly transitioning population, making it an achievable objective.

By focusing on this goal, programs can significantly impact the lives of veterans, providing them with valuable skills and opportunities that facilitate a successful transition into the civilian workforce...not to mention the spill over effect on the rest of the population.

Recruiting military personnel is a **win-win** for employers and the workforce. Veterans bring a unique combination of discipline, adaptability, and leadership, which, when paired with **advanced personal development** and **AI problem-solving tools**, transforms them into highly valuable assets for the future of work. This strategy not only addresses critical workforce challenges but also contributes to building a skilled, innovative, and resilient workforce that drives organizational success.

A Commitment From You:

Investing in **The Mission Forward Project** and **The Mission Forward Institute** is not just an act of generosity—it is a commitment to building a stronger, more resilient workforce and honoring the service of those who have given so much to our nation. Each year, the 200,000 service members transition to civilian life, many under the age of 45, bringing unmatched discipline, leadership, and technical aptitude. Yet, without the right support, their potential can remain untapped.

The opportunity to sponsor this initiative is a chance to bridge the gap, to empower veterans with the skills they need to thrive in high-demand industries while addressing the critical shortage of skilled tradespeople in America. By joining this mission, corporations and individuals can make a transformative impact, ensuring not only the success of our veterans but also the future of our economy and infrastructure.

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