



Elevating
Excellence:
Strategic
Wisdom and
Expert Guidance
from Seasoned
Leaders of
Award-Winning
Veteran Talent
Programs

Open Q&A with
Lisa Rosser
Founder and CEO
of
The Value Of a Veteran

www.linkedin.com/in/lisarosser
lead@TheValueOfAVeteran.com
877-881-9900 ext 1

Sample Survey Respondent Demographics

Fortune 10 Retailer

Fortune 20 Food and Agribusiness Company

Fortune 100 Aerospace & Defense Firm

Fortune 200 Aerospace & Defense Firm

Fortune 200 Computer Software Firm

Fortune 500 Entertainment Company

\$20B Media and Communications Company

\$3B Facilities Management and Real Estate
Services Company

\$400M Pharmaceutical Company

\$171M Regional Bank

Veteran Talent Budget and Team Size?

- No dedicated budget, 1 person team
- No dedicated budget, 6 person team
- \$80k, 4 person team
- \$125k, 10 person team
- \$150k, 3 person team
- \$200k, 1 person team
- \$600k, 1 person team
- \$750k, 6 person team
- \$5M , 7 person team



Veteran Talent Budget and Team Size, cont.

- Does **NOT** include team member salaries
- Does include
 - Travel to events
 - Career fair exhibition (base, RecruitMilitary, etc)
 - Swag
 - Advertising / marketing
 - Conference attendance (like **VetRec** 😊)
 - Sponsorships of events (like SVA's National Conference)
 - Partnerships (like HoH, NGAUS, ENGAUS, MOAA)
 - Vendor agreements for consulting (like **VOAV** 😊) or RPO staffing services (like PeopleScout)



What do you include in your veteran talent business case to get more resources, commitments and influence for your team?

- Must put together a governance board and have executive sponsors
- Must address the “people pain points” of the business units / operations teams – how will your veteran talent solution solve their talent-related problems
- Redefine “ROI” – get away from defining it as “You spent \$XX,XXX to exhibit at MBA Veterans - how many hires did you get” mentality
- Stories = budget – be ready with testimonials from business unit leaders, impact current veterans have had, point out high performing veterans, emphasize leadership skills and “soft skills”
- DATA DATA DATA
- Some details on what your competition (or your aspired-to programs) are spending on veteran talent programs – *“if you want to compete with Amazon, Walmart or Wells Fargo, you better be making bigger investments”*
- Details on “veteran-talent only” savings (tax credits, SkillBridge, etc.) – *“the program **should** pay for itself, within a few years”*
- Compare it to investment made in University recruiting – that is a ton of money spent on entry level candidates. YOU are bringing in LEADERS and experienced hires.

Where Does the Money for Your Veteran Talent Program Budget Come From?

- Talent Acquisition only (to a company – always the smallest budgets)
- Business Units (to a company – always the largest budgets)
- Enterprise (typically answered by companies with executive sponsors)
- Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) / Corporate Philanthropy
- State grants for veteran employment initiatives
- Diversity / Equity / Inclusion



Biggest Mistakes New Veteran Talent Program Managers Make

- Recently separated veterans become program leads, but don't understand corporate TA strategy and execution
- Jump right to “what career fairs can I attend?” without learning about the people pain points from business units / operations
- Not taking time to develop a holistic view of what the program could be, and then focusing on ONE area to get traction
- Be consistent with veteran hiring. Don't take foot off gas when candidate pool is flush and then run like a crazy person when candidates pool is low
- Let the perception persist that “we only do free events” – free may not get you the talent you seek, and you'll quickly be perceived as someone who can't deliver
- Chase “bright, shiny objects” (i.e., SkillBridge, vendors who promise the world) without developing a real strategy
- Have unrealistic expectations (and in turn SET unrealistic expectations) of how long it takes to get traction and results (*“do the work in year 1 and see initial results in year 2”*)

Biggest Mistakes New Veteran Talent Program Managers Make, cont.

- Don't train (or provide training to) recruiters and hiring managers
- Don't vet external vendors
- Don't do internal change management – stories, testimonial, data “sooooo many 1:1 meetings”
- Money comes easier when you have executive sponsors. Prove your value = get money (usually the way it works the first time). Most of your budget should come from business units, not talent acquisition
- Having to change expectations of what veteran talent is (not a program for entry level talent – more middle management level, experienced hire)



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lisa@TheValueOfaVeteran.com

703-867-8940

<https://thevalueofaveteran.com>

