THE PATHFINDER PROJECT

What Veterans Tell Us About the Transition to Meaningful Civilian Work

In the military, Pathfinders go first so others can follow safely. Disability:IN's new study listens to veterans with service-connected disabilities who have built successful corporate careers. Their experience shows employers how to clear the path for the veterans coming next, and why bringing veteran and disability inclusion initiatives work together drives stronger retention, productivity, and advancement.



BY THE NUMBERS

+60% never or rarely refer to themselves as disabled at work.

65% of disabled veterans have never requested a workplace accommodation, compared with 36% of civilians with disabilities, revealing a gap in receiving support that could help them thrive at work.

72% say informal support from colleagues helped them more than formal transition programs.

88% of disabled veterans who rate their culture and job satisfaction highly say their leadership skills are used at work.

Get the complete findings, veterans' stories and recommendations for employers at disabilityin.org/resources/veterans-at-work

Want to help put these findings into practice? Join phase two, where Disability:IN and the Ares Charitable Foundation are building a career-long playbook with partner companies. Email **CorporateRelations@DisabilityIN.org**

HOW TO USE THE FINDINGS ACROSS YOUR COMPANY

Who to Share it With, and What to Ask

Share With	Lead With	Suggested Action
Executive Sponsors and Senior Leaders	Veterans who rate their culture and job satisfaction highly are especially likely (88%) to say their leadership skills are used at work. Military-style culture showed little link to satisfaction.	Name one leader to sponsor veteran and disability efforts, and add both to the same talent review or success scorecard.
Talent Acquisition and Recruiters	Disabled veterans report more trouble getting interviews, often because military experience isn't translated.	Review two or three job descriptions for roles where veterans apply. Work with your veteran ERG to list the military roles and skills that fit them.
People Managers	Managers who make informal arrangements, like time for VA appointments, help veterans thrive.	Create cultures of support before anyone has to ask. Help managers understand how veteran and disability identities overlap. Identify one that could be offered to everyone, such as flexible scheduling.
HR, Benefits and Accessibility Teams	65% of disabled veterans have never requested an accommodation, compared with 36% of civilians with disabilities.	Embed disability inclusion into veteran onboarding. Add a short, plain-language section on these to veteran onboarding, including how to join the veteran ERG.
Veteran and Disability ERG Leaders	72% of veterans say informal support from colleagues was more useful than formal transition programs.	Plan one joint event between the veteran and disability ERGs this quarter. Set up peer mentoring for newly hired veterans.

Source: *Disability:IN, The Pathfinder Project, 2026. Based on interviews with 15 disabled veterans and a survey of more than 200 veterans and civilians.*

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