

# Best Practices in Manufacturing for Military Veteran Hiring

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## Military Degree Equivalence at Dow



## › Company Overview

Dow is one of the largest chemical producers in the world. Headquartered in Michigan, Dow's portfolio of plastics, industrial intermediates, coatings and silicones businesses delivers a broad range of differentiated science-based products and solutions for its customers in high-growth market segments, such as packaging, infrastructure and consumer care. As a core pillar to their Ambitions and Values, Dow strives to "champion a fully inclusive workforce that reflects the world in which we do business, because it's the right thing and smart thing to do." During the COVID-19 health crisis, Dow responded quickly by significantly increasing its production of hand sanitizer and other PPE for frontline workers, which was donated to many hospitals near Dow communities.

## › Program Summary

In line with their corporate emphasis on developing an inclusive workforce, Dow recently began to focus their efforts on developing new ways to hire and retain members of the military community in roles across the organization. The effort to attract more veterans to work for Dow led directly to the adoption of the Military Degree Equivalence (MDE) program, which grants veterans in the U.S. and Canada equivalency to a bachelor's or associate degree for Dow's job openings. This allows members of the military community to leverage their experiences in the military as though they had spent that time in school earning a degree and to bring a broader scope of training, experience, leadership, and success in performing in high-pressure situations to a successful career at Dow.

Job postings on Dow's website that require a diploma or degree are also listed with their military service equivalents. To accomplish this task, HR professionals are trained to rethink how a wider variety of experiences might make a person a good candidate for the job in question. In this way, the MDE program is a recognition both of veterans' experience in the military as preparing them for individual success in the workplace, but also that Dow benefits from bringing these experiences into their company.

In a further effort to recruit and retain members of the military, Dow has also developed company policies that ensure that active duty servicemembers are supported through a Military Leave of Absence policy that offers compensation to employees who participate in active-duty assignments and guarantees that they have jobs waiting when they return.

## › Program Impact

The company's focus that has led to the MDE program is echoed throughout the organization and has led to significantly larger numbers of veterans employed company-wide and a supportive culture that comes from listening to veterans' needs.

### Title of Project



**Military Degree Equivalence Program**

### Tags



Recruitment, Hiring, Retention

### Point of Contact



**Greg Bunker**  
Global Business Director,  
LDPE and Wire and Cable



Dow's Military Degree Equivalence program is an example of our efforts to create a more inclusive work environment, where diverse backgrounds and levels of experience are welcomed and valued."

– **Jane Palmieri**, President for Industrial Intermediates and Infrastructure

Dow's innovation in the space of veteran and military hiring has led to a blossoming of its VetNet employee resource group (ERG). Currently, VetNet has over 17 active chapters and over 1,700 participants across the globe. Under the executive sponsorship of Jane Palmieri, this ERG has focused on developing a culture of support for veterans and their allies. As part of their engagement program, these chapters are participating in an innovative mentor-matching service to help new hires adjust to the workplace and culture at Dow. This mentorship program plays a major role in creating an infrastructure of support at the company, and its expansion into other ERGs is helping to build a culture of inclusion across the entire organization.

## › Lessons Learned

- ✓ Dow's Military Degree Equivalence program offers bachelor's and associate degree equivalence for military experience in all job postings that list a degree requirement. This innovative approach resulted in a better appreciation for the variety of ways that veterans bring value to the company.
- ✓ The company's VetNet ERG offers a mentorship program that includes an innovative mentor-matching service. Mentorship programs help transitioning servicemembers adapt to a company's workplace and culture. They can also help to create a stronger support system in the community.
- ✓ Active duty servicemembers at Dow are supported with Military Leave of Absence policy that offers paid time off and guaranteed employment when they return from duty. This is not only a benefit to the men and women who currently serve in the national guard, but also helps Dow to build a pipeline for a younger generation to serve their country and gain experiences that the company considers valuable.
- ✓ Dow supports the broader military community by providing resources for military spouses, sponsorships for events, and offering paid time off for participants in Team Rubicon and other community outreach campaigns. Assisting veterans in helping other veterans is a proven way to show support for your workers and participate in the community in a meaningful way.