

## Discussion Starter #3: Finding the Right Job in the Military: A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE

With thousands of jobs in more than 142 career fields, there are obviously numerous opportunities to seize and avenues to explore in the Services.

However, with so many military jobs available to young people, finding and obtaining the right one may seem a bit overwhelming at first.

But the truth is, with the proper preparation and direction, the path to a successful as well as fulfilling career in the Military is a lot easier to realize. Here's a look at four steps that every young person going through the enlistment process and considering job options should take into account:

### **Step 1: Do not underestimate the importance of doing well on the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) test and in school.**

Each job in the Military has a corresponding ASVAB score or range, which typically an individual must achieve, or fall within to qualify for. Of course, the needs of the Military at the time, candidates' backgrounds, and physical demands of certain jobs do play a role, but the higher a person scores on the ASVAB, the more job opportunities—and choices—he or she will have in the Services.

Much like college, doing well in high school and taking part in extracurricular activities also plays a role in getting a specific job in the Military. So for students who are interested in enlistment, education is very important; and a diploma or GED is required.

### **Step 2: Recognize interests and find jobs in the Military that relate.**

A major benefit to the ASVAB is that it also helps young people identify what they're interested in, through a self-scoring interest inventory. Based on the interest inventory and ASVAB test results, young people can explore military jobs and figure out which jobs they would most enjoy.

Most people prefer career fields that relate to their interests. The sooner a person identifies his or her interests, the better the chances of that person finding a job that will be rewarding and fulfilling.

For an overview of all jobs available in the Services, please visit the careers section of [www.todaysmilitary.com/careers](http://www.todaysmilitary.com/careers).

### **Step 3: Consult with an advisor.**

As potential recruits' point contact person to the Services, advisors are also their best allies when it comes to discovering a career path—ready and willing to answer questions, provide advice, and address concerns.

Candidates typically talk with advisors about potential jobs on a continuing basis, and are provided with the following:

- Information regarding available jobs in their respective branches
- Recommendations about which military careers they might be appropriate for
- ASVAB scores and qualifications needed to obtain each job

#### **Step 4: Consult with a military career counselor.**

In addition to talking with an advisor, at the Military Entrance Processing Station (MEPS) each candidate will meet with a military career counselor to further discuss career possibilities and actually select a job.

A military career counselor's duties primarily include:

- Determining what jobs candidates qualify for
- Conveying the job needs of his or her respective Service
- Assigning candidates to specific jobs

**Important Note:** If a job that a candidate is interested in at the time of enlistment is unavailable due to available training dates, he or she should ask about the Delayed Enlistment Program, or explore other Services that may have equivalent jobs.

#### **FINAL THOUGHTS**

When candidates do choose jobs, it's important for them to know that the jobs they select are not set in stone. If they have aversions to their selected career paths or find new ones they are more interested in, there are indeed opportunities to switch job fields.

Recruits should try to identify people more senior to them at every duty station and try to cultivate a mentor/advocate relationship. Senior personnel can really help young people forge successful career paths—especially if that means changing jobs.