

## Talking Points #3:

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

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

However, with so many military jobs available to your child, 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 and fulfilling career in the Military is a lot easier to realize. Here's a look at four steps that your child should take into account when going through the enlistment process and considering job options:

#### **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 that an individual must achieve or fall within in order to qualify. Of course, the needs of the Military at the time, candidates' backgrounds, and the physical demands of certain jobs do play a role. However, the higher your child scores on the ASVAB, the more job opportunities—and choices—he or she will have in the Services.

As in college, doing well in high school and taking part in extracurricular activities also play a role in getting a specific job in the Military. So if your child is interested in enlistment, education is very important, and a diploma or GED is required.

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

A major benefit to the ASVAB is that it also helps your child identify what he or she is interested in, through a self-scoring interest inventory. Based on the interest inventory, your child can explore military jobs and figure out which jobs he or she would most enjoy.

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

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

#### **Step 3: Consult with a recruiter.**

As your child's point of contact with the Services, recruiters are also their best allies when it comes to discovering a career path—they are ready and willing to answer questions, provide advice, and address concerns.

Your child should talk with recruiters about potential jobs on a continuing basis and get 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

You should also feel comfortable talking with the recruiter to answer your own questions and calm your fears.

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

In addition to talking with a recruiter, at the Military Entrance Processing Station (MEPS) your child 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 the respective Service
- Assigning candidates to specific jobs

**FINAL THOUGHTS**

Your child should know that their first Military career does not have to be their last. While it depends on Service needs and the availability of training, it is possible to switch careers while serving. Keep in mind that many Military careers have an associated contract and your child may have to serve in that role until they have fulfilled that commitment. Your child should talk to their recruiter before joining to get a sense of contract lengths for various careers.

Your child should also try to identify people more senior to him or her 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.