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Published: May 30th, 2011 15:28 EST



Is the Fear of Mental Illness a Factor Why Employers are Hesitant to Hire War Veterans?

By [Ron G Anselm](#)

With lots of Iraq and Afghanistan veterans coming home and making the decision to get out of the military, the job market is now getting a lot of diversity of skills and experience in it. With the recent collapse of the economy a few years ago and the lagging economy that picks up speed towards recovery and instills self-confidence with the unemployed that maybe now they will be able to finally find a job, then the economy slows down once again because of rising gas prices and lagging company budgets that are still trying to catch-up to needed profits to be able to start hiring again, no one really knows how the economy and job market is going to fare in the long run.

One major fact that is now starting to get noticed and is now becoming an issue is those combat veterans that are coming home from Iraq and Afghanistan are having a very hard time finding jobs. The question that is being asked is, are employers being hesitant on hiring combat veterans because of the fear of mental problems?



Some of the staggering numbers of veterans out of work has risen to unbelievable levels and those veterans that cannot find jobs are now being compared to the ones without a high school diploma. If you don't have a high school diploma and especially competing in this tight job market, you basically prepare for the long haul because you more than likely will not find a job. These combat veterans are in the same category as the non high school diploma recipients but those veterans are being compared to those without a high school diploma for different reasons.

The percent of veterans coming home from the wars that cannot find jobs is at a 15.2 percent unemployment level since January 2011 and that percentage has risen about 2.6 percent from January 2010. Way to high for the men and women that have served our country and given you freedom.

Yes, for those of you that have never seen the Hell of combat and have never felt what it is like to wonder from day to day if you are going to ever come home to once again hug your children or be able to tell your wife you love her one more time is living and excruciating pain on top of having to worry at anytime during the day or night if a sniper is going to take you out or if an RPG (Rocket Propelled Grenade) is going to make your wife and kids widows shakes your mind to the core. And being in long-term stress like this for even the toughest soldiers does take its toll on you. One of the toughest parts of being in combat is to watch your brothers and sisters the ones you serve with being killed or wounded. Of course for anyone going through this will eventually stand the possibility of developing emotional problems. We are all only human.

Many symptoms these veterans are facing coming home from the wars is PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder) *"Nearly a third of the troops returning from Iraq and Afghanistan report symptoms of PTSD, severe depression or traumatic brain injury," a 2008 Rand Corp study found. The U.S. Defense Department says it's 20 percent. Burdened by these "invisible injuries," veterans find that employers, most of whom know little about these disorders, are hesitant to hire victims of PTSD. (General Health News, 2011)*

Just because these veterans may have PTSD, depression, etc...does not mean they have mental problems or are going to cost their potential employer money because they have to go to the doctor more often. What employers need to first realize is that when these men and women come home from serving, most of them if they are diagnosed with any type of disorder, depression, and especially PTSD are extensively treated. This condition is very treatable and most if not all of these veterans make it back to being their normal self once again.

No, these men and women are not going to suddenly have a flashback in the workplace or cause problems. They want to fit in and be part of the group and team as bad as the employers wants them to fit in and be a part of the team.

The VA (Veterans Administration) makes these Veterans or any Veteran come in initially to be seen. They are

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