

Committee on Veterans' Affairs
U.S. House of Representatives
Testimony of Robert W. Smith III, Major General, U.S. Army Reserve
March 24, 2004

Adding to the Bottom Line with a Veteran

It is my distinct privilege and honor to have an opportunity to share with you from a personal perspective as a combat veteran, some of my thoughts of why hiring a veteran can be added value and help improve the bottom line.

People are the greatest asset a company or organization can have or invest in. As a finance professional, the attached balance sheet below is part of my world and is the underpinning for development of a business case for hiring a veteran. The left side of the balance sheet represents what companies' value, while the right side lists the skills of the veteran that correspond to each category.

In my 30 years at Ford Motor Company, I have no doubt the preceding veterans' demonstrated skills have been both an asset to the company and me. For example, we veterans can help improve a company's bottom line by: utilizing leadership; a "can do" attitude; and, teamwork skills to help create, implement and manage a global financial reporting infrastructure which can result in worldwide cost reduction for redundant operations and /or processes.

My skills have enabled me to experience an outstanding career at FORD. The skill sets of being able to multitask, manage time effectively, and embody the core value of selfless service, have enabled me to be a controller, facilities manager and military reservist simultaneously. This challenging triad has been part of the motivation to why I have remained with Ford for 30 years and encouraged others to stay, thus reducing training cost and personnel turnover cost.

The above listed skills of veterans can also lead to awards, honors, and recognition from companies. For me, these have included the company's Diversity & Worklife Award and the Leadership Excellence Award along with being selected by the company's chief operating officer to represent FORD as one of its Centennial Tour Speakers. I have also been recognized with the Recruiter Excellence Award, which was a result of my opportunity to help recruit many outstanding candidates.

I, as well as other recruiters, have found that military veterans often will rise to the top of the recruiter's recommendation for hire list during the interviewing process because of their skill sets and prior experiences coupled with their academic credentials.

Throughout my many years at FORD, I have met, mentored and networked with countless FORD military veteran employees from the plant shop floors to the board rooms here and abroad, and I have observed that several of them have retired with the ranks of Major General or Admiral. They have included Major General Bodycomb, United States Air Force Reserve (Former pilot for Henry Ford II), Admiral Landus,

United States Navy Reserve, and Major General Williams, United States Marine Corp Reserve.

I would like to thank the Committee on Veterans' Affairs for this opportunity to put forth my views about why hiring a military veteran is important. I am one military veteran. But there are thousands of deserving, skilled veterans whose hiring will benefit corporate America. So at the end of the day, hiring a veteran not only makes good business sense, but sound financial sense since their skill sets will help add black ink to the corporate bottom line.

Attachment

VETERANS' PERSONNEL BALANCE SHEET

Companies Value:

Innovation

Elimination of Waste

Reduction of Health Care Cost

Reduction of Training Cost

Reduction of Personnel
Turnover Cost

Improvement of Corporate Image

Black Ink \$\$\$

equals

The Book Value of the Veteran:

Leadership

Adaptability

Ability to multitask

Worldwide Travel

Time Management

"Can Do" Attitude

Task Oriented

Work Ethic- Accomplish the Mission First

Physical Fitness

Dental Fitness

Anti-drug Culture

Stress Management (Mental and Physical)

Leadership Training

Skills with Real World Experience

Teamwork Skill Set

Ethics -- Leave No One Behind

Leadership Skills

Ethics -- Loyalty to Unit

Leadership

Ethics -- Integrity

Core Values -- Selfless Service

Live the Diversity Model

Military Veterans as Human Capital