

Marching Forward: Exploring Practices for Veteran Hiring and Integration

This report outlines strategies for recruiting and supporting military veterans in the workforce that various major corporate employers have implemented. It also looks at veteran hiring and integration interventions in other countries across the world.

RESEARCH REPORT # 2025-01-001
January, 2025 | ABCEL Publications

Terms and Conditions

- You understand that all the Materials provided are the proprietary property of ABCEL or Companies within Aditya Birla Group and are protected by copyright, trade secret, and other applicable laws in the respective jurisdiction.
- You have the limited right to access the material for personal, educational, or non-commercial purposes only. Any other use, including but not limited to reproduction, distribution, display, or transmission of the content, is strictly prohibited without prior written consent from ABCEL.
- You acknowledge and agree that you have no right to modify, edit, alter or enhance any of the Materials in any manner.
- You agree not to use the Materials in any way that would compromise the proprietary nature of the Materials. Without limiting all of the foregoing, you agree not to deliver the Materials themselves, either reproduced or modified, or anything derived from the Materials, either orally or in writing, as part of any seminar, training program, workshop, consulting, or similar business activity which you make available to your clients or to others, except with the prior written permission of ABCEL.
- Except as expressly stated herein, you acknowledge that you have no right, title, or interest of any kind on any legal basis in or to the Materials.
- The research material is provided "as is" without any representations or warranties, express or implied. ABCEL makes no representations or warranties in relation to the material, or the information and materials provided.
- In no event shall ABCEL be liable for any damages (including, without limitation, damages for loss of data or profit, or due to business interruption) arising out of the use or inability to use the material, even if ABCEL has been notified orally or in writing of the possibility of such damage.
- These terms and conditions are governed by and construed in accordance with the laws of Mumbai, and you irrevocably submit to the exclusive jurisdiction of the courts in that location.



1. Introduction
2. The Indian Context
3. Methodology
4. Executive Summary
5. The Indian Landscape: Sector wise
Company Practices
6. The International Landscape: Country-
wise Practices
7. Conclusion

1. Introduction



1. Introduction

The recruitment of veteran officers in India is increasingly recognised as a strategic advantage for companies, as these individuals are seen as a unique blend of skills, discipline, and leadership qualities. However, India faces challenges in veteran employment, with limited private sector engagement and a less developed resettlement infrastructure.

The U.S., and Japan are among a few nations that have more comprehensive systems, leading to higher veteran employment rates compared to India. Whereas India relies more on government reservations with less emphasis on private sector integration, other countries have more active participation from the private sector in veteran hiring, leading to more opportunities outside government jobs.



2. The Indian Context



The Indian Context

An ABCEL survey of 150 veterans provides insights into the career trajectories of this cohort. Of those surveyed, **31% were employed**, **22% were actively exploring** career opportunities, and **38% were currently on a sabbatical**

Of those on sabbatical, 56% cited the lack of suitable career opportunities as the primary reason for their career break. Additionally, 21% mentioned they were uncertain about their career direction, and 12% noted a skill mismatch as a contributing factor.

These results highlight a gap in the labour market—a gap that, if addressed, could unlock a wealth of untapped potential. For veterans, lack of meaningful work opportunities appears to be a significant challenge. This led us to dig deeper into corporate India and the systems in place for veteran hiring and integration.

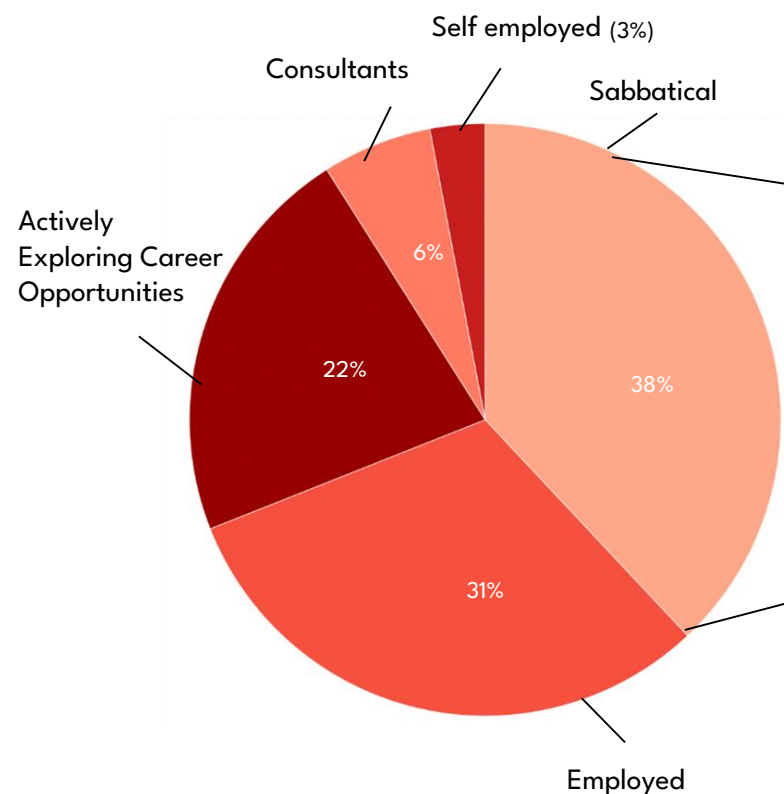


Fig. 1: Career Trajectories of Veteran Officers in India. (N)=150

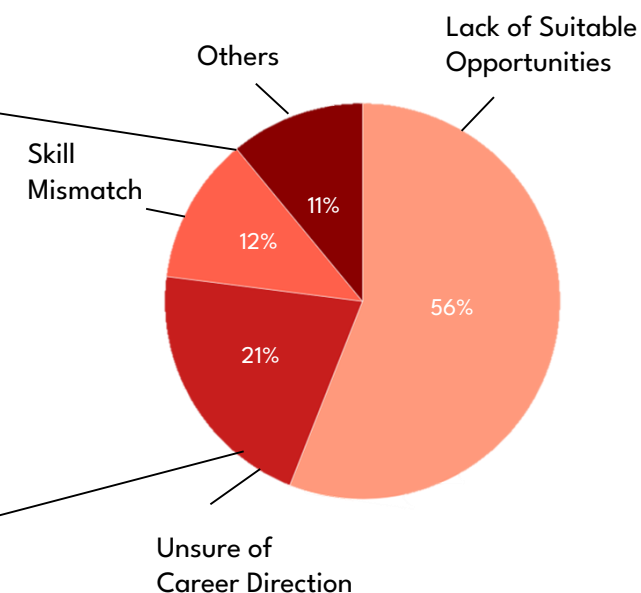


Fig. 2: Reasons for Taking a Sabbatical

3. Methodology



Methodology

The methodology employed for this research was based on primary data collection through virtual interviews. The process involved conducting in-depth, structured interviews with key representatives from companies actively engaged in hiring Armed Forces Veterans. The interviews were designed to explore various dimensions of veteran recruitment, onboarding, and retention practices, using a comprehensive questionnaire to ensure consistency in responses.

By engaging directly with company representatives, the research captured detailed insights into policies, challenges, and strategies for integrating veterans into corporate environments.

This approach provided qualitative data, allowing for a nuanced understanding of practices and emerging trends in veteran employment initiatives.

Data was categorised under specific sectors (e.g., IT Sector) only if representatives from at least two or more companies were interviewed. Individual companies were placed under a combined “Others” category.

This report is a collaborative effort between the Aditya Birla Centre for Enriching Lives (ABCEL) and Brisk Olive Business Solutions Pvt Ltd.

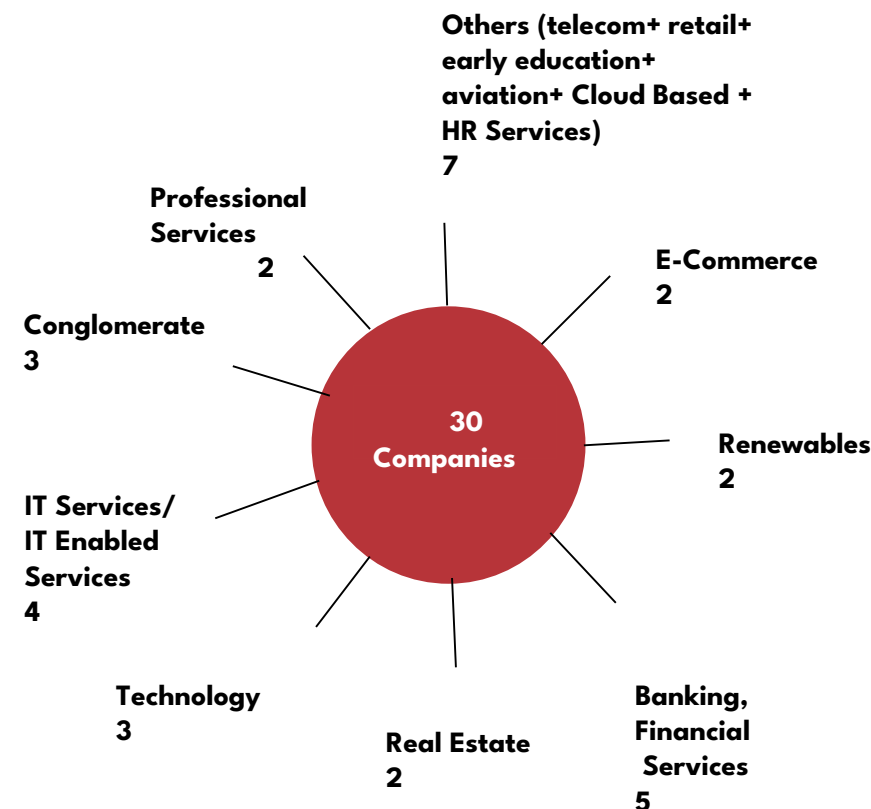


Fig. 3: Participants' Profile

4. Executive Summary



Executive Summary 1/2

Key Insights

- ❖ Veteran recruitment and integration in India is gaining traction but remains fragmented. In many cases, veteran recruitment and integration efforts in India are reactive rather than strategic, leading to inconsistent and fragmented programs.

The lack of standardization could prevent companies from tracking the long-term success of these practices.

- ❖ Common barriers to veteran hiring include **skill mismatch, policy gaps, and lack of awareness.**
- ❖ Strategic collaboration between corporates and government agencies is crucial for a structured hiring and integration of veterans in the workforce.

5 common practices

The 5 most frequently occurring hiring and integration practices across most sectors included:

1. **Support and Mentorship:** Many companies provide support networks and mentorship programs to assist veterans in adapting to their new roles and integrating into the company culture.
2. **Recognition of Military Experience:** There is a common practice of acknowledging the value of military experience, with efforts made to leverage veterans' skills in appropriate job roles.
3. **Dedicated Recruitment Initiatives:** Many companies actively participate in veteran job fairs and collaborate with veteran organizations to attract skilled veterans.
4. **Customised Job Postings:** Companies frequently tailor job postings to highlight opportunities that align with veterans' skills and experiences.
5. **Integration Programs:** Several companies offer programs to assist veterans in transitioning into civilian roles, including training and development. These programs are intended to assist veterans in adjusting to the corporate environment and learning new skills.

Executive Summary 2/2

Challenges in Veteran Hiring/Integration

- ❖ **Skill Mismatch:** Military skills often do not directly translate to corporate job descriptions.
- ❖ **Limited Awareness:** Hiring managers lack understanding of the value veterans bring.
- ❖ **Credential Recognition:** Military qualifications may not align with industry certification standards.
- ❖ **Integration Barriers:** Cultural adjustments required for transitioning to a corporate environment.
- ❖ **Policy Gaps:** Absence of strong government incentives for private sector veteran hiring.

Emerging Best Practices

- ❖ *Aligning veterans' skills with job roles* is essential for successful integration.
- ❖ *Specialised skilling programs* help bridge the gap between military and corporate roles.
- ❖ *Supportive culture and training programs* are shown to have a positive effect on retention, as seen in a professional services consulting company.
- ❖ *Skills translation programs* have found to be useful, and are used across multiple sectors.
- ❖ *Internal Support Groups* within companies are a desirable practice for integrating veterans into the work environment.

5. The Indian Landscape: Sector-wise Practices



Diversified Conglomerates

A conglomerate is a large corporation that consists of multiple diverse businesses operating in different industries or sectors. These businesses may be unrelated in terms of products or services but are owned and managed under a single corporate entity.

- ❖ **Dedicated recruitment initiatives:**

These are designed targeting veterans, including job fairs and collaborations with veteran organizations.

- ❖ **Customised job postings:** These are tailored to align with veteran skills and experience.

- ❖ **Integration programs:** These are designed to help veterans transition into different sectors of the company, with industry-specific training.

- ❖ **Support networks and mentorship programs:** They are conducted to help veterans adapt to new roles and company culture.

- ❖ **Employee Resource Groups (ERGs):** The company supports or is in the process of establishing ERGs for veterans, creating a supportive network within the organization.



Banking and Financial Services Sector

Banking and financial services companies are institutions that provide a wide range of financial products and services

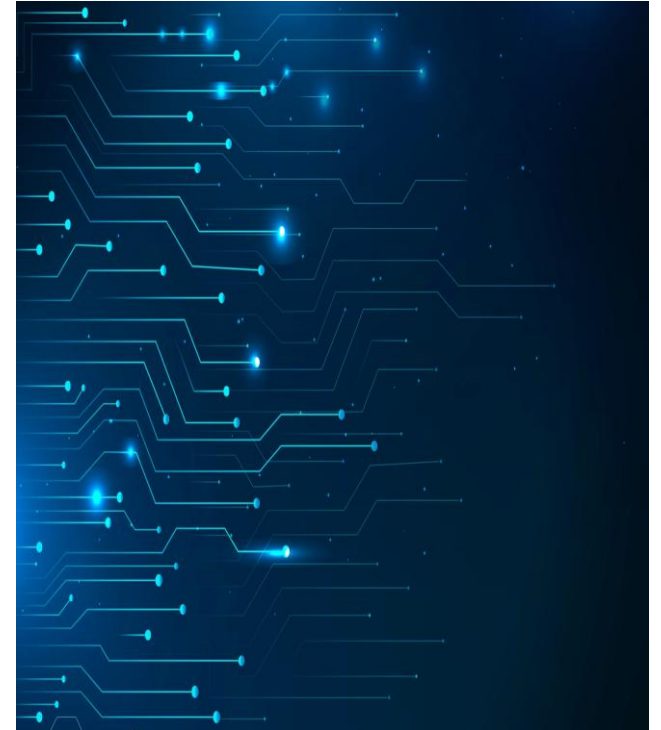
- ❖ **Dedicated Team:** Veteran recruitment team focuses on identifying and leveraging the unique skills that veterans bring to the organisation.
- ❖ **Partnerships with Veteran Organisations:** Collaborations with veteran organizations and government agencies enable companies to connect with a talented and diverse pool of veterans.
- ❖ **Customised Job Postings:** Job postings are tailored to highlight opportunities that align with the skills and experiences of veterans.
- ❖ **Hiring Events:** Veteran-focused job fairs and networking events provide opportunities for veterans to interact directly with recruiters.
- ❖ **Recognition Awards:** Recognition programs to celebrate veterans' contributions are regularly conducted as part of central initiatives.
- ❖ **Tailored Onboarding:** They offer specialised onboarding programs designed to help veterans transition smoothly into their new roles within the company.
- ❖ **Diversity & Innovation:** Veterans contribute unique perspectives and experiences, enhancing the company's ability to innovate and solve complex problems.
- ❖ **Veteran Integration Programs:** Some bank offers integration programs to help veterans transition.



IT Services/IT Enabled Services Sector

IT services companies specialize in providing technology solutions, infrastructure, and consulting to businesses across various industries

- ❖ **Appropriate Role Matching:** Some companies in this sector have found that facilities roles are a good fit for veterans but may lack dedicated strategies to attract and retain veteran talent across the organization.
- ❖ **Targeted Job Postings:** Others actively recruit veterans through targeted job postings, job fairs, and collaborations with military transition programs.
- ❖ **Skill Translation Programs:** Some offer skill translation programs to help veterans align their military skills to the IT and BPO sectors.
- ❖ **Inclusive HR Policies:** Some companies have inclusive HR policies that ensure veterans with disabilities are considered for qualified positions.
- ❖ **Learning modules and training programs:** They are offered to bridge skill gaps.
- ❖ **Peer-to-peer learning Programs:** Some companies offer these programs, but they may lack a formalised structure.
- ❖ **Structured onboarding and mentorship programs:** These are provided to facilitate smoother integration of veterans in the workplace.



Professional Services Sector

Professional services companies provide specialised expertise, advice, and solutions to businesses and individuals

- ❖ **Support Programs:** Companies have programs to support veterans and their families with job opportunities.
- ❖ **Internal Employee Resource Groups:** Internal employee resource groups for veterans are sometimes offered.
- ❖ **Marketing and outreach strategies:** These are targeting veterans, including agreements with defense forces.
- ❖ **Support programs:** They are designed to help veterans transition into civilian roles, including training and mentorship are also used.



E-Commerce Sector

E-commerce companies are businesses that buy and sell goods or services over the internet.

- ❖ **On-the-job training:** These are designed to help veterans transition into civilian roles that may require additional hands-on training.
- ❖ **Specialised training programs:** These are sometimes offered to help veterans translate their military experience into relevant corporate skills.
- ❖ **Feedback Gathering:** Feedback is collected from veteran employees to adapt policies.
- ❖ **Partnerships with Veteran Organisations:** Some have initiatives aimed at hiring veterans, with partnerships with veteran organizations and job fairs.
- ❖ **Support networks and mentoring programs:** These are sometimes available.
- ❖ **Specialised Onboarding Programs:** Some have a dedicated veteran recruitment team, and collaborate with veteran organizations and government bodies, providing specialised onboarding programs.



Renewable Energy Sector

Renewables sector refers to the industry focused on generating energy from sustainable and naturally replenishing sources

- ❖ **Targeted Campaigns:** Some companies use social media, veteran job boards and veteran consultants to reach veterans.
- ❖ **Partnerships:** There may be collaborations with government and accredited companies to facilitate hiring.
- ❖ **Internships & Apprenticeships:** Hands-on experience and training are sometimes offered via internships and apprenticeships, with a syllabus for each role after a gap analysis.

Dedicated Teams: Some companies have in-house military skills translation and alignment teams to match veterans' skills with suitable roles.

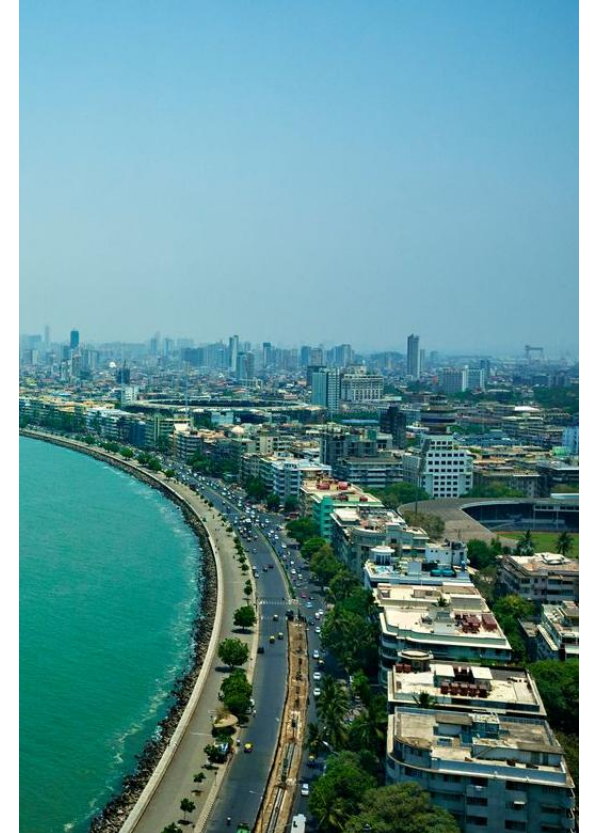


Real Estate Sector

Real estate companies specialize in various aspects of property ownership, development, management, buying, selling, and leasing

- ❖ **Specialised Team for Recruiting Veterans:** A specialised team focused on recruiting veterans is seen in various companies. They partner with veteran organizations and participate in veteran-focused job fairs.
- ❖ **Tailored training programs:** These are designed to help veterans transition to civilian roles.
- ❖ **Targeted Recruitment:** These targeted marketing and outreach strategies are used to attract veteran applicants.

- ❖ **Tailored Onboarding Programs:** Implementing a tailored onboarding program to address the unique challenges veterans face in transitioning from military to corporate life and providing specialised training to bridge any knowledge gaps.
- ❖ **Recognition Programs:** Recognition programs that celebrate their contributions are conducted often.



Others

Representing Individual organisations from these Sectors: Telecom, Retail, Early education, Aviation, Cloud Based Services, Human Resource Services

- ❖ **Leveraging Veteran Networks:** A particular school collaborates with organizations like the Directorate General of Resettlement (DGR) to connect with transitioning veterans, ensuring access to a skilled and disciplined talent pool.
- ❖ **Tailored Outreach**
Strategies: Some companies also use veteran-friendly job listings on specialised platforms and job boards, making roles accessible and appealing to veterans.
- ❖ **Comprehensive Onboarding Programs:** Some companies also introduce mentorship and training initiatives designed to help veterans seamlessly transition into corporate roles, fostering their professional growth.
- ❖ **Employer Branding Amongst Veteran Community:** By demonstrating a commitment to veterans, some companies build their reputation as an inclusive and socially responsible employer.
- ❖ **Support and Mentorship:** A few companies also provide support networks and mentorship to assist veterans in adapting to their new roles and integrating into the company culture.
- ❖ **Recognition of Military Experience:** Veterans' military experience is acknowledged and valued, with efforts to leverage their skills in relevant job positions across the retail chain.
- ❖ **Recognition Awards:** Recognition programs to celebrate veterans' contributions are regularly conducted as part of central initiatives.

6. The International Landscape: Select Country-wise Practices for Veterans



Select Country-wise Practices for Veterans (1/2)

Australia:



- ❖ Has a Veteran Employment Program (VEP) to support veterans in finding employment through initiatives that raise employer awareness, recognize veteran skills, and provide employer resources.
- ❖ Provides grant funding to support the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) initiatives.
- ❖ Offers a Veterans' Wellbeing Package focused on mental health, social inclusion, and financial security.
- ❖ Provides comprehensive healthcare services through the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA).
- ❖ Offers housing and education assistance.

Canada:



- ❖ Provides disability support through pensions, lump-sum payments, and income support for service-related disabilities.
- ❖ Offers financial assistance through retirement benefits and allowances for low-income war veterans.
- ❖ Ensures comprehensive medical coverage, rehabilitation, and home care support.
- ❖ Offers career transition guidance and long-term care facilities for veterans.

Japan:



- ❖ Offers a Self-Defense Forces (SDF) Retirement Pension that provides financial security based on years of service and rank.
- ❖ Provides a Disability Pension for veterans injured or disabled due to their service.
- ❖ Offers access to medical care through its Public Health Insurance System, including specialised services for service-related conditions.
- ❖ Has a War Victims' Relief Act that provides financial assistance and healthcare to veterans injured during service and to the families of those killed in action.

Select Country-wise Practices for Veterans (2/2)

Singapore:



- ❖ Implements a Veteran Employment Program (VEP) that offers career coaching, job placement, skills development, networking, and post-employment support.
- ❖ Provides Veterans' Wellbeing Packages, including healthcare, financial aid, social and recreational support, and national recognition.
- ❖ Offers additional support programs such as veteran mentorship, family support, home modification aid, and legal/financial advisory services.

USA:



- ❖ Operates the Veterans Health Administration (VHA), which offers comprehensive healthcare services including specialised care for PTSD and TBI.
- ❖ Provides education and training programs such as the Post-9/11 GI Bill and Montgomery GI Bill.
- ❖ Offers housing assistance through the VA Home Loan Guaranty Program and HUD-VASH Program for homeless veterans.
- ❖ Provides employment services through the Transition Assistance Program (TAP) and Veteran Employment Through Technology Education Courses (VET TEC).
- ❖ Offers mental health services for PTSD, suicide prevention, and substance abuse treatment.

Vietnam:



- ❖ Provides veterans with free or subsidised healthcare, including specialised treatment for Agent Orange-related issues.
- ❖ Offers educational programs including scholarships, vocational training, and job placement assistance.
- ❖ Provides job placement assistance, career counseling, and priority hiring for government jobs.
- ❖ Offers financial support for housing, monthly pensions, and medical expense reimbursement.

7. Conclusion



Conclusion

The research reveals that veteran hiring and integration practices across various industries show consistency, with only a few differences in the strategies. However, due to this limited sample size, the findings should be considered as indicative rather than exhaustive and may not fully represent broader industry trends.

The country wise comparison demonstrates the critical need for a holistic and integrated approach that combines government programs, private sector engagement, and a strong focus on the well-being of veterans.

The successful models highlight the importance of comprehensive financial assistance, healthcare, education, housing, and employment services, alongside specialised support for mental health and social inclusion.

While Indian companies have programs in place, the lack of a structured approach to veteran hiring and recruitment could create challenges for the cohort. Without clear frameworks, veterans may face difficulties in transitioning to civilian roles, potentially leading to underemployment or misalignment of their skills.

There is need for more organised interventions and conversations to facilitate better support, clearer pathways to employment, and greater integration of veterans into the workforce, maximizing their potential and contributions to various sectors.

CONCEIVED & POWERED BY



Aditya Birla Centre for Enriching Lives (ABCEL) is a **multidisciplinary institution for research, innovation, and co-creating solutions** that enhance contemporary well-being of individuals and communities.

Guided by the Aditya Birla Group's purpose of enriching lives, ABCEL harnesses collective wisdom to design pathways that drive meaningful change. The vision **Enrich Lives, Enrich Society** is rooted in the belief that individual progress and societal prosperity go hand in hand.



@abcel.connect



@abcel.connect



@aditya-birla-centre-for-enriching-lives

www.abcel.in