



PCS TO CORPORATE AMERICA was written specifically for the military officer and is the most powerful tool on the market today for any officer considering a permanent change of station to the business world.

PCSTO CORPORATE AMERICA was written by Roger Cameron, one of the originators of JMO recruiting and co-owner of the premier JMO recruiting firm, Cameron-Brooks, Inc. For over three decades, Roger has helped officers make successful transitions to the business world.

PCS TO CORPORATE AMERICA, Roger, and Cameron-Brooks are recognized worldwide as the authority on career transitions. Spotlighted on CNN and all major network affiliates, Roger has also received acclaim in publications including *FORTUNE*, *The Wall Street Journal* and *The Stars and Stripes*.

PCS TO CORPORATE AMERICA combines over three decades of experience in one career reference handbook. There is no other source of information available on the market today which provides the wealth of information contained in just this one book.

PCS TO CORPORATE AMERICA explains what to expect during the entire career search process—from resume guidelines, interview preparation, strategy, and techniques, through the follow-up process, accepting a job offer and starting your new business career.

PCS TO CORPORATE AMERICA provides the tools for success in a corporate interview and future business career. It will give any officer a foundation for world-class interview preparation and set him or her on a path for a world-class business career.

“PCS superbly taught me how to communicate the valuable traits I gained as a military officer in terms that Corporate America could understand. I am convinced that there is no better way to prepare yourself to leave a military career than through the processes that Roger eloquently illustrates in his book. PCS anecdotes that the greatest truths come in small packages!”

— Carl Herberger
Senior Project Manager
Campbell Soup Company

“PCS improves with age. As a former candidate turned recruiter, I see the value of Roger’s lessons repeatedly. It should be your primary resource in preparing for any professional interview, regardless of your background. PCS is not a one-time read. If your copy is not completely highlighted and book-marked by the time you are ready to interview, you have bypassed a key learning opportunity. Applying every aspect of the book is critical to your success.”

— Scott A. Milliren
Manager, Systems Development
Helmerich & Payne International Drilling Co.

“Roger’s book mirrors his organization and the process of placing JMOs in Corporate America. Not a word is placed without careful thought and clear purpose. Not a minute spent reading is without focus on the opportunity ahead and how to make the most of it. No JMO who is even remotely considering leaving the military can read this book too early. PCS will enhance every step of preparation, every minute of the career search and every day of your new career.”

— Dave Burggren
Branch Manager
Carrier Corporation

“PCS is about learning how to communicate your unique experiences into successful business terms. Invest the time to study this book. PCS is not about tricks, gimmicks, or clever answers. This book is about helping you know and represent yourself such that a company will invite you to the next step in the interview process.”

— Andee Hidalgo
Vice President, Institutional Sales
US Bancorp Piper Jaffray

“PCS is an excellent resource for any junior officer making a transition to Corporate America. The book guides you through the process using simple, real-life examples based on Roger’s decades of experience.”

— Ross Beaton
Project Manager
Vast Solutions, a division of PageNet, Inc.

“No other single resource in my transition to Corporate America covered such a broad range of pertinent information in such accurate detail. PCS is a well-organized guide and will help you gain an understanding of the complex, and sometimes overwhelming, process of successfully changing careers. Don’t just read it, put it to use!”

— Mark E. Oldford
Associate Manager
AC Nielsen BASES

“PCS to Corporate America is an exciting career reference book. It gave me a realistic view of Corporate America and helped me make a successful transition. I gained interviewing skills that I didn’t dream even existed. It made me aware of the impact I had made in the military and the impact I could make outside the military. It inspired me to always be challenging myself and learning new skills. PCS still sits on my desk and continues to be a reference for my career growth. Read PCS and get excited about the great opportunities Corporate America has to offer!”

— Paul Hill
Enterprise Application Manager
GreenMountain.com

“Be thankful for Roger Cameron who can help you prepare to succeed. It’s not unlike the importance of good military intelligence or market research...success and preparation are never very far apart!”

— Dave Heniges
Vice President and General Manager
Europe, Africa and Middle East
KeraVision International

“PCS gave me the outline and direction I needed to translate my military experience into applicable examples of how I would specifically make an impact in the business world. PCS also gave me the background I needed to walk into the interviews with confidence. Both of these elements were critical to landing the ‘best fit’ job for me.”

— Adam DeBoskey
Manager Shop Operations
General Electric-Quartz

“I marvel each day over the many exciting possibilities in my future and the flexibility and freedom I enjoy working in a high-tech FORTUNE 500 company. Don’t waste a second—pick up PCS, read, learn, and go!”

— Kristin Abaya
Database Administrator
Micron Technology, Inc.

“If you are leaving the military for Corporate America, read Roger’s book! Roger has set a standard for preparing junior military officers to enter the business world that no one else has come close to matching.”

— David Edmonds
Executive Vice President and Human Resources Director
AmSouth Bank

*“Roger drills you on what works, what doesn’t work, and gives you that much needed confidence boost. In **PCS**, Roger provides the knowledge, skills and attitude in proper balance. Don’t kid yourself, failure to prepare is obvious and limits your possibilities. Master this book, listen to Roger and make being prepared second nature.”*

— Tom Anderson
Marketing Director
Ethicon Endo-Surgery, a division of Johnson & Johnson

*“**PCS** is a must-read. It is a straight-forward, no-nonsense guide to what you have to do to prepare and successfully execute a transition to the corporate world. Applying what Roger says will make a transition seem easy! Read it before you talk to Roger or decide to leave the military, and then re-read it. You will benefit even if you decide to stay in.”*

— Aaron Dahnke
Strategic Planning Manager
E&J Gallo Winery

*“As a paratrooper, I had to trust my parachute before I could calmly exit the aircraft. As an aviator I had to trust my aircraft before I could fly. Having faith in the **BEST** equipment was key to my success in the military. As a **JMO** departing the military, **PCS to Corporate America** was the equipment I most relied on to ensure my success. Thanks to Roger and his advice, I landed a career with a company that almost exclusively recruits from Top 10 MBA schools.”*

— James “Chip” Clingham
Brand Management
Kraft Foods

*“**PCS to Corporate America** is the best single reference I have found on interviewing, making a positive first impression and taking the ominous world of Corporate America by storm! Now that I am in the business world, I make sure that **PCS** is never further than an arm’s reach away. The fact is, as I continue to meet more and more influential people, I find myself using many of the concepts presented in Roger’s book. I firmly believe that the skills I learned from **PCS** have given me the edge for rapid advancement.”*

— Charlie Rizzo
Equipment Engineering Leader
Corning, Inc.

“PCS was my bible for getting out of the Army. It helped me understand and prepare for some of the cultural differences I would be facing in the civilian world. Since starting my civilian career, I have used what I learned in PCS as a guide when conducting interviews for my company. I realize how lucky we are as JMOs to have this resource because the information in this book puts you far ahead of your civilian peers.”

— Martha C. Wehner
Consultant
Arthur Andersen

“Long after my initial purchase, I still find myself referring to Roger’s book. Daily, I find myself in some variation of an interview, where I am challenged to quickly and effectively communicate an idea and support the position with facts or personal experience. The tips contained in PCS help prepare people for just those situations. It is full of advice to help develop personal insight, improve communicative skills, manage challenging assignments, seek opportunities for broad personal growth, and maintain a reasonable work life balance.”

— John C. Sanchez
Business Sector Controller
Kimble Glass

*“Roger’s wisdom and insight into the hiring mind is tremendous. Following Roger’s guidance will improve your performance by a factor of 10. **PCS to Corporate America** is a great tool for anyone in the job market. It’s a great handbook on how to land a great job and prosper in it.”*

— Greg Bowman
Director, Facility and Supply Procurement
H.E.Butt Grocery Company

“PCS is about modeling excellence in everything you do. Roger’s advice is tremendous. Everything I do counts for or against me in Corporate America. The popularity contests of high school and college days are ancient history. Roger espouses the benefits of being professional, knowledgeable and articulate in every interaction. When you do this, the competition is likely to be left spinning in the wake, confused, but still ‘cooler’ than the person who just beat them. Model excellence, there is too much at stake to be cool.”

— Luke Lozier
Field Clinical Representative
Guidant Corporation

*“Just like going through Airborne School to prepare you to jump out of a perfectly good airplane, **PCS** is a prep course for jumping into Corporate America. Roger’s book is comparable to FM 7-8 in the tactics needed to combat tough interview questions. Thanks to **PCS**, my transition to Corporate America had a successful landing and I continue to refer to it throughout my career.”*

— Andrew Shipe
Manager, Customer Logistics
Campbell Soup Company

*“It is extremely important to be fully prepared to meet the challenges of making a transition to Corporate America. The pace is fast, the expectations are high, excuses are not tolerated, and failure has a long lifeline. The insight **PCS** provides is more than any executive management book can provide. Roger’s grassroots view of the corporate world and of the officer as a civilian—competent, successful and capable of hitting the ground running—is commendable.”*

— Stephanie Y. Street
Manager, Human Resources
Bausch & Lomb

*“**PCS** was my first step in a three year adventure to Corporate America. I also read four other ‘military-to-civilian’ books, and found Roger’s to be the most complete and insightful. I felt so strongly about it that I referred it to several JO friends with my own personal money-back guarantee! **PCS** was instrumental in earning my ideal job with a company that is ideal for me and my family.”*

— Cory Bouck
Brand Management
General Mills, Inc.

*“**PCS** is the strongest, single reference that I have seen to develop candidates for Corporate America. In the book, Roger offers insight into how companies make executive hiring decisions and provides valuable information to ensure that there are no surprises during the entire hiring process.”*

— Michael Banks
Account Manager
WaferNet, Inc.

*“**PCS to Corporate America** is the best guide available to help prepare the JMO for the interviewing process and for a future in Corporate America. Roger’s book helped me hone my interviewing skills and present myself with confidence to corporate recruiters. Study this book and follow Roger’s advice, and you will successfully earn those job offers!”*

— Andy Russell
Consultant
Andersen Consulting

*“**PCS to Corporate America** gave us the foundation needed to transition successfully from the military to a **FORTUNE 500** company. In **PCS**, Roger tells it like it is. The book set our expectation levels and increased our confidence in successfully engaging with individuals in the corporate world. **PCS** helped us make a lasting first impression and also taught us how to maintain it throughout our business careers.”*

— Laura and George Hluck

Market Development Engineering Manager and Project Leader,
Information Technology (respectively)
Corning, Inc.

*“My journey into Corporate America started with Roger eight years ago when I read **PCS**. Today, I am 32 years old and running an \$80 million open-heart surgery device business for a publicly traded company. Roger knows what he is talking about and what Corporate America is looking for—success! Those who have set and accomplished goals in high school, college and the military will continue to excel in the business world.”*

— Pat Mackin

Vice President
Genzyme Surgical Products

*“**PCS** was the most influential part of my decision to exit the military. The book provided me with the knowledge and tools to transition to the business environment without skipping a beat. In **PCS**, Roger outlines those qualities that great leaders use in all arenas but combines the specific business expertise required to train you to become technically and tactically proficient for the corporate battlefield. I now refer to **PCS** as my career bible to keep me honest with my own development plan.”*

— Mark Buck

Manager
Solectron Corporation

*“**PCS to Corporate America** and my association with Roger Cameron marked the turning point in my professional career. **PCS** prepared me for a move from the ordinary to a dream job and career. Many people have asked me how I managed to land such a great job right out of the military. The answer: **PCS** laid the groundwork and taught me to control my environment.”*

— Beth Gulitus

Regional Business Director
Ethicon Endo-Surgery, a division of Johnson & Johnson

*“**PCS to Corporate America** is a great tool for any junior military officer thinking of leaving the service for a career in Corporate America. It does a great job of preparing you for a transition to the corporate world, from initial resume preparation through the interview process. The suggested reading and exercises in **PCS** provide you with the necessary vocabulary to be successful in interviews and in a business career.”*

— Sean O’Reilly
Account Executive
Leo Burnett Advertising

*“Heed Roger’s advice because he focuses on what’s really important in a career transition: Quality Preparation! If you are not afraid of the hard work it takes to succeed, read **PCS**. Listen to Roger and you will gain much more than a new career. You will reap the life-long benefits that come from self-knowledge and a passion for reading and self-improvement.”*

— Jason Bingo
Production Operations Manager
Dell Computer Corporation

*“In **PCS**, Roger will show you the map, coordinates and compass to successfully navigate a life-changing journey into Corporate America. Follow his lead. Be on time and on target. Read this book!”*

— Joe Hagans
Information Technology
Procter & Gamble

*“**PCS** is a must-read for anyone considering a transition in today’s job market. Roger Cameron hits a grand slam in leading the reader through the challenges of making a successful career transition, from what to expect and how to prepare to how to be at the top of your game for the big opportunities. I continue to refer to it five years after a successful win at the Cameron-Brooks Career Conference.”*

— Phil Cobb
Divisional Sales Manager
Ethicon Endo-Surgery, a division of Johnson & Johnson

*“**PCS to Corporate America** was the cornerstone for my transition preparation. In my career thus far, I have reached back hundreds of times to the advice contained in **PCS**. **PCS** is about more than simply how to prepare an excellent resume or to interview successfully; it offers valuable insight into how to communicate and present yourself and how to treat people in a manner that will help you to achieve and inspire others throughout your professional career!”*

— Donna Gandt
Manager, Business Process Improvement
Nextel Communications

“PCS is a remarkable enabler for the JMO striving for a career in Corporate America. It dispels the mystery of interviewing, offering critical guidance for a successful transition. Reading PCS gave me unshakeable confidence in my interviews. It can do the same for you!”

— Craig A. Williams
Brand Management
Kraft Foods

“The most critical tool I had in transitioning from the military to Corporate America was PCS. The advice, guidance, and wisdom contained in this book was essential to my career transition. It not only prepared me for the transition from the military to Corporate America but it also provided the foundation for my success at Indigo. All individuals who desire to make a career transition should read and know this book well.”

— Christopher Prentice
Brachytherapy Specialist
Indigo, a division of Johnson & Johnson

“PCS is an excellent reference tool because it offers all of the advice and information you need for a successful transition to Corporate America. It is succinct and to the point—just simple no-nonsense lessons for success. PCS also continues to be useful after you enter the business world. Roger’s lessons on communication, professionalism and attitude will always be crucial to your success in Corporate America.”

— Corinne Johnson
Mechanical Engineer
Guidant Corporation

“At some point in every officer’s career, you are faced with the decision to stay or go. Before you make up your mind, read PCS. This book was a tremendous catalyst for me to start asking the right questions and thinking critically about my future. Don’t rely on second hand information when your career hangs in the balance. Read PCS early in the decision-making process and make an informed decision based on quality research and real life experiences.”

— Charlie O’Neil
Content Production Manager
pcOrder.com

*“In interviewing, as for any important inspection, tactical exam, or actual operation in the military, knowledge of the battlefield and preparation are the keys to success. **PCS** is the book that lays out the ‘interviewing battlefield’. It will help you identify and avoid pitfalls and enable you to use aspects of the interviewing environment to your advantage. If you study it, apply the time-proven techniques, and utilize process discipline in your preparation, you are guaranteed to have career options open up and the ability to select the right career for you.”*

— Bill Sheehy
Department Head, Equipment Engineering
Corning Asahi Video Products Co.

*“**PCS to Corporate America** is more than a guide for a transition to corporate employment. It is a mini-MBA course for officers who are considering leaving the service for Corporate America. The concepts Roger presents in **PCS** will make you a better performer—period. It made me a better officer in my last two years of service, and it prepared me for success in my new career. At Procter & Gamble, I work mostly alongside MBA graduates, and I can honestly say I have never felt at a disadvantage with respect to my peers. The principles in **PCS** are a roadmap for career success anywhere.”*

— Randy Sadler
Brand Management
Procter & Gamble

*“The beauty of **PCS** is that it prepares candidates in every facet of their professional life. It helps candidates to know themselves and develop a long-term professional plan. As a result, you are not just thinking about what job you want and where you want to work today, but also about what and where you want to be tomorrow and how you will get there. I always ask candidates whom I interview (military and non-military) what their long-term professional objective is. Rarely do I find someone who knows. I hire the ones that do.”*

— Kurt A. Bradtmueller
Group Marketing Manager
Westell Technologies

*“**PCS** gave me the tools I needed to earn top notch opportunities with top notch companies. Read and reread it again and again. Complete every exercise at least three times. Be disciplined and you will not be sorry. I am proud to be a 12%-er and associated with the most professional recruiting firm available.”*

— Elaine Rudolphi
Team Leader
General Mills, Inc.

“With Roger’s help, I was able to get a job that was normally reserved for business school graduates from Harvard, Stanford and Wharton. He demands and gets high standards from his candidates. There are many young executives in Corporate America who have Roger to thank for their opportunity to enter industry.”

— Kevin Corning
General Manager
Nike de Chile S. A.

*“An absolute must-read! The tools in **PCS** not only enable one to make a successful military to civilian transition, but also provide an excellent framework for success in any business setting.”*

— Henry Stoeber IV
Senior Brand Manager
Kraft Foods

*“You won’t go wrong if you follow Roger’s advice for your **PCS** to Corporate America! Roger offers great tips on how to make a successful transition to the corporate world and insight into everything you need to know...but don’t know to ask.”*

— Diana Hutchinson
Project Manager
Motorola

“By far the single most helpful resource I used before and during my transition. It’s worth reading even if you decide to continue your career in the military.”

— Andy Brawer
Project Manager
Sapient Corporation

*“**PCS to Corporate America** is the most comprehensive and effective career transition guide. I recommend it to any officer leaving the military. No other preparation guide cuts right to the critical fail points and prepares you as well for high-powered interviewing. Roger’s guidance doesn’t just help you command the hiring process. It powers you through the toughest of Corporate America’s environments.”*

— Mike Norris
Category Leader, Facility Procurement
H.E. Butt Grocery Company

*“PCS is loaded with wisdom and gives the JMO interested in moving into a business career a leg up on the competition. Don’t try a PCS to the business world without **PCS to Corporate America**. Roger offers valuable insight for every step of the way!”*

— Doug Porter
Executive Vice President
Worldwide Management Director - McDonald’s
Leo Burnett Advertising

*“Five years after embarking on a career in Corporate America, **PCS** retains a prominent place on my business bookshelf. It is concise, loaded with guidance and insight, and continues to serve as a reminder of the reasons Corporate America comes to Roger to hire military officers—the ability to produce results in very demanding conditions. I strongly encourage embracing the wisdom and applying the principles in **PCS** not only during your transition but also throughout your career.”*

— Dave Burke
Director, Telecommunications Group Systems
Bell Atlantic

*“Read **PCS to Corporate America** as your first step in considering a transition from the military. Roger covers all aspects of the rewarding process of getting to know yourself and preparing yourself for a challenging civilian career. Roger understands the valuable assets you’ve developed as a JMO and tells you how to (and, perhaps, more importantly, how not to) demonstrate these skills during an interview. If you follow Roger’s advice, you are sure to improve yourself and your chances of finding the civilian career you desire.”*

— Eric Treschuk
Assistant Marketing Manager
General Mills, Inc.

*“This plain-language, no-holds-barred manual about achieving goals is hands-down the most valuable reading I have ever done. The immediate bonus was an improvement in my military performance, the long-term reward was achieving a career as a consultant at Arthur Andersen. Read this book now and take it to heart. No matter where your future takes you, **PCS to Corporate America** will help you succeed at it!”*

— Scott LePage
Senior Consultant, Computer Risk Management
Arthur Andersen

*“I cannot imagine trying to transition to Corporate America without reading **PCS**! Roger’s step-by-step process told me exactly what to expect every step of the way, giving me the competitive edge I needed in tough interviews. Roger knows what companies look for and tells you how to use your military background to secure the best job offers. The investment you make in this book will pay back tenfold!”*

— Debra Crew
Associate Brand Manager
Kraft Foods

*“**PCS to Corporate America** is the only SOP for success. The principles in this book are as crucial and practical today as they were 30 seconds before my first interview two years ago.”*

— Nelson Santini
Project Manager
Varco International

“Roger’s wisdom has and continues to serve me well as I grow professionally and recruit JMOs. From the tools Roger imparted during the job hunting process to the critical look at myself that Roger made me dig deep to understand—all have had a significant impact on my career. Roger is the best in the business and knows what it takes to be a success. “

— Troy Barrington
Vice President of IVUS
Boston Scientific-SCIMED

*“**PCS** should be your first step in considering a transition to Corporate America because you have to think like a business person first! Listen to what Roger has to say. People in the military are not out to make a profit....there is no bottom line. At the forefront of every business decision is the bottom line. Corporate America appreciates all the awards a candidate has received, the great performance reviews, etc. etc. But what a recruiter is really thinking is, ‘How can this person improve shareholder value for my corporation?’ Read **PCS** and make the principles of **PCS** part of your life.”*

— Kevin Crane
Operations and Control Consultant, Corporate Audit
International Paper

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I want to give a warm thank-you to the members of the Cameron-Brooks team who have been “cornerstones” for the writing of my books. Each has traveled thousands of miles with me during their careers, offering quality insight and advice. It would have been impossible to experience all of my success without them.

A special thank-you to Julie Welch for working with me on this third edition of *PCS*.

To my friends, business associates, clients and Cameron-Brooks alumni who continually encourage and support me, a special thank-you and appreciation. I have had the best job in America, having the opportunity to interact with so many exceptional people.

Those of you who have written words of praise as readers of *PCS* deserve a special acknowledgment. It has been inspirational to hear from thousands whose lives have been and continue to be impacted positively as a result of this book. I cannot count the number of individuals who have told me they consistently refer to *PCS* for promotional interview preparation and furthering their career. These individuals espouse the long-term value of the many lessons taught in this book.

I am appreciative of the Cameron-Brooks alumni in Corporate America who are adamant about hiring JMOs for their openings and hiring them from Cameron-Brooks. At every one of our

Career Conferences, it gives me great satisfaction to hear of the successes of our alumni and to work with the many alumni who attend our Conferences in search of hiring talented JMOs.

And, finally, thank you to the business world for believing in the quality of our military officers. Many of our client companies have been hiring junior officers from us for over 30 years and have watched the JMO move up the corporate ladder to the very top.

FOREWORD

In 1990 I wrote the first edition of *PCS to Corporate America*. Since then I have received very positive feedback from JMOs regarding the book's value in helping them prepare for corporate interviews and a transition to the business world. However, the interviewing world is very dynamic—a world in which better methods of identifying and selecting talented employees are constantly evolving. In 1994 I rewrote *PCS*, identifying changes that had occurred, clarifying points, and bringing up new issues. Again, I received positive feedback. In 2000 it again is necessary to communicate to you the changes that have occurred in the world of corporate recruiting. I have rewritten *PCS* for a third time with the goal to continue to bring our candidates and other military officers to the marketplace better prepared. I feel confident that this updated edition includes enhancements that will benefit both your interviewing and business career success. As always, you must take **action** to gain the full benefit of this book.

My intent for this book is to address the bottom line. You won't find any "fluff." I felt it best to write a book you could get into immediately, one that focuses on what you need to do to be successful in interviews and to make a successful transition to the business world. I am confident this book will help you do exactly that.

You won't find in this book what you, as a military officer, already do so well. Many things are so innate to you that I don't need to discuss them. Often after having gone through my interviewing workshops, military officers come away feeling as if they will never do anything right. I always point out that I only address the issues you have a tendency to miss or do incorrectly. Reading a book about things that are natural to you and that you already know how to do would be a waste of your time and mine. Some of the suggestions in *PCS* may challenge you. However, I feel strongly that I cannot allow minor issues to prevent you from being successful when I could have mentioned them. I am proud to be one of the originators of the process that transitions military officers successfully to the business world. My goal is to help you do just that.

Throughout this book I recommend ways of addressing specific questions. It is not my intent that you repeat the verbiage word for word. Instead, use the suggested ideas and develop your own answers. Be yourself. If you allow a company to hire you while you hide behind a facade, it won't work. Ultimately, the company will wonder why they hired you. Make sure a company hires you for who you are rather than what you might pretend to be during your interviews. If some of the concepts in this book are new to you and you agree with them, begin immediately to use them at work and in your life. In this way, by the time you begin interviewing, you will be giving credible information to the recruiter.

Psychologically speaking, you have three selves—you at your best, you at your average, and you at your worst. **In an interview situation, you must be at your best.** Companies expect you to interview at 100 percent. This is the only percentage that will get you hired. During the entire career search process, you must be at your best. It is critical that you understand this concept. Companies will never believe you are better than what their

recruiters see or hear in the interview. **Your goal as you prepare for a career transition is to achieve this percentage and nothing less.**

How do you achieve “being at you best”? Preparation. Hard work. Recruiters have said to me, “Roger, if an individual won’t work hard to accomplish one of their own objectives (a great career), why should I assume he or she will work hard to accomplish objectives that we give them?” I have to agree. Amazingly, some officers will come to the marketplace assuming success without preparation. This is like you telling me that you are having an annual inspection on Monday morning and that you started preparation for the inspection on Friday. Or, like going to war without having practiced combat maneuvers. You know what will happen. You will fail. You may say that you should be natural interviewees. That would be great, but it won’t work. Every officer I interview tells me they want an outstanding career with high compensation but not every officer is willing to commit to world-class preparation to accomplish this goal. You have to prepare for tough objectives. And, as you know, the harder you prepare, the more successful you are.

You learned this in grade school: The harder you studied, the easier your exams were and the higher your grade point average became. Everything in life is based on preparation. Not one of us is natural at everything we do.

I put our success for facilitating transitions to Corporate America against any other recruiting firm or recruiter in America. I have listened to what great companies are looking for, and I have seen the kind of individuals they are hiring to lead their companies into the future. I have seen the individuals who have gone to the top of Corporate America. I recognize the pattern. It is a pattern created from day one—the pattern of preparation and diligence—of people who do their work thoroughly. It is gratifying to watch

the career progression of those officers I help transition to the business world.

Basically, there are three ways for the JMO to transition from the military to the business world:

1. Step **DOWN** into a business career. In this case the JMO takes a position that has less responsibility and less career potential than he or she had in the military. The JMO usually interviews for and accepts a position designed for the fresh college graduate. Companies who have less of an understanding of the capabilities of the JMO will try to hire you for a position like this.
2. Step **ACROSS** into a business career. In this case the JMO takes a position with responsibility and career opportunity that is equivalent to what he or she had in the military. The JMO interviews for and accepts a position that any JMO can fill. In other words, the company places value on the JMO's military experience (unlike the first situation) but does not distinguish between different caliber JMOs. While this type of career will utilize your skills, very rarely will it be a development position.
3. Step **UP** into a business career. In this case the JMO takes a development position with enhanced responsibility and career opportunity. The JMO interviews and accepts a position designed for a top caliber JMO. These are extremely competitive interviews in which the company looks for the best of the best. While these types of positions are highly desirable, they also require the highest level of preparation and skill development.

Cameron-Brooks only recruits for development positions in Corporate America. We work with officers who have a strong desire to step "up" into a business career. Early in the process

candidates build their resumes, read business books, increase their skill package, and start working on how to handle the difficult interviewing questions. It seems the better the candidates are, the earlier they start their preparation. They are not procrastinators. They know it takes a lot of time and preparation to be at their best and to transition “up.”

I am frequently asked, “What is the bottom line, Roger? What is Corporate America looking for in Development Candidates?” This is a good question, and there is an easy answer. They are looking for individuals who can get things done in spite of the difficulties that arise—**make-it-happen, goal-oriented, mission-oriented types. Leaders. Individuals who have a history of accomplishments. Basically, all-around high achievers.**

Corporations want people who do the following:

- Control their environment;
- Use their time effectively;
- Are extremely well-organized; and
- Know exactly what needs to be done, when it needs to be done and how to get it done.

Over the years, I have accepted only 12 percent of all the officers I have interviewed. Often, they say, “Roger Cameron is tough.” I am tough because Corporate America is very demanding. Companies come to us to hire their future leaders. They only want to see the best of the best. I listen to my client companies. I bring them what they tell me they want.

Some people who are probably very good performers are not going to be hired because of their inability to communicate. What is more important than the ability to communicate, to persuade, to get your peers, superiors, team members, customers, and competition to see your point of view? People say, “Roger, if they would hire me, they would see that I’m a good performer.” Sometimes,

I feel the same way. If they would just hire some military officers, they would discover how talented they are. Unfortunately, recruiting just doesn't work that way.

I encourage you to read this book with a positive attitude. Say to yourself, "I'm going to listen to an individual who has worked with military officers and helped transition them successfully to the business world for over three decades."

This book is written in a very direct way, but that is pretty much the way Corporate America thinks. I have watched recruiters decline individuals I felt were very capable. In fact, I knew they were good because I had read their performance evaluations, but, because they did not have the ability to communicate their successes, recruiters walked away from them.

People have often asked how I could stay in this business for over 30 years. I always give the same answer. In all these years, I have had thousands of jobs presented to me, yet I have never seen a job that interested me enough to take more than a casual look at it. I'm not so sure that there is a more exciting business than that of recruiting talented young men and women for top development positions with some of the best companies in Corporate America. It has been exciting to watch these young men and women move up the corporate ladder, have their successes, and become key leaders within their companies. I have received thousands of letters of appreciation over the years, and every one of them made me feel good. They made me realize how lucky I am to be in this business.

Officers we assisted—10, 15, 20 years ago—are still using many of the techniques our team and I taught them. I am very proud of our alumni. Each time I recruit an individual for Corporate America, I ask myself the question, "Do I want to put my name beside this individual as he or she transitions to the business

FOREWORD

world?” This is important to every member of the Cameron-Brooks team. We want to be proud of every candidate we help transition to the business world. And, of the overwhelming majority, we can be. We have had very few failures over the years.

This book will help you interview for any position in any organization. I would like to put my plug in for the profit-oriented world, the world of capitalism. It is a world that is exciting and challenging. When I think of how young America is, I realize that our greatness is based on the innovative nature of the United States. We have been leaders in numerous areas for many years. Sure, it is true that some countries have copied products we originated and made them better because of circumstances in their countries such as cheaper labor. But, I will still put America against anyone else. I will put our leaders, engineers, finance people, and information technology experts up against any in the world.

Working with the quality of companies I have represented over the years is very exciting. I have companies today who have a 20 to 40 percent annual growth factor and some of them even higher. When you take a highly sophisticated company that has this kind of growth, you need to have outstanding people to accomplish and manage it. The military officers I have introduced to the business world have loved the fact that they are not practicing but are, in fact, **doing**. What they learn on a daily basis, they can apply. When they go home at night, they can measure the fact that their company has been able to take a step closer to its objective. It is challenging but also satisfying to be in an environment in which you know you must constantly be changing and improving. It is also gratifying to work with positive-minded people who come to work in the morning because they **want** to be there, who are excited about what their company does and what their products can do for mankind, who find it exciting to be paid and promoted based on performance.

Recruiting military officers for Corporate America has always been interesting. I cannot say it has always been fun. I remember when I helped originate this business; I talked to companies about why they should hire military officers. I also remember some of their comments: “Excuse me, Roger, you’re suggesting that we should hire somebody who operates in the world of nonprofit, in the world of appropriation instead of the world of profitability? Roger, what are we supposed to do with this individual who, for the last five years, has been involved with tanks, guns and artillery, airplanes and ships? I’m a little confused as to why we should hire this person. We should hire someone who is proud that he or she spends the entire budget? As a matter of fact, they even put it on their resumes.”

That’s the way things were when the military recruiting industry started. Interestingly, it has grown over the years—grown to the point where today military officers have demonstrated their value to Corporate America. Today, we can point to military officers who are presidents and CEOs of some of the top companies in Corporate America. Suddenly, corporate recruiters who have been cynics over the years about military officers are starting to take a very hard look at them. Today, companies are calling us rather than us calling them.

You’ve been good. As a matter of fact, you’ve been great! I don’t know of any individual who has had more impact on Corporate America than the military officer. We admit to you that we made a lot of mistakes over the years in evaluating military personnel, but today we know you very well. We know what makes you successful and what your weaknesses are as you leave the military. We have developed programs that will bring you up to speed quickly in areas where you need more development. We know where to recruit to find a particular background. We know what you need to do in the military to make yourself successful in business. Today, we know the kind of private lifestyle you need

FOREWORD

for success in your business career. You were an unknown when we started this business. It has been fun to watch the progress of our candidates and yet agonizing to observe some of their failures. Fortunately, these failures are at a minimum in relation to what they were when we first started recruiting military officers.

After officers I have helped transition to Corporate America have been in the business world for a while, I often ask them what, if anything, they feel they have gained or lost by transitioning to the business world. Usually, I receive three positive answers and, in the old days, one negative answer.

The three positives I hear have never changed. The first positive is the quality of life—the ability to tell your sons or daughters with confidence that you are going to be at Little League at 6:00 P.M., to tell your family you’ll be home for dinner, to know that evenings and weekends are yours, to set a vacation six months down the road and know that you will be there. I have rarely seen a vacation canceled by a company in all the years I’ve been associated with Corporate America.

The second positive relates to the input and control you have over your career. Companies ask you: “What is it you want to do? What kind of positions will enhance your career? What do you expect your company to do to ensure that you have a successful career?” You have a lot of input—veto rights for locations, positions, and the timing of promotions. When this veto right is exercised, it will RARELY have a negative influence on your career.

Third, our candidates have told us that their net worth has significantly increased. Why? Because companies provide exceptional retirement plans such as 401Ks, company-matching, and other savings vehicles, which allow employees at all levels to amass a significant amount of wealth. It used to be that most

people in America created the bulk of their net worth through the equity built up in their homes, but two years ago we saw for the first time more equity in retirement plans than in one's home.

We get many other positive comments, but these three comments are the most significant in encouraging officers to make a career transition to the business world. The one negative we heard years ago is that officers felt they did not immediately enjoy the same degree of camaraderie in corporate life that they enjoyed in the military. We received this comment from military officers and their spouses. Today, when military officers join a company, usually former officers are there to greet them, and many companies now provide sponsors who will introduce you to the neighborhood and community. For the officer today, the transition to corporate life is easy and comfortable.

The Cameron-Brooks Alumni Association, made up of thousands of our candidates who have successfully transitioned to business, is a powerful influence in making the transition easier for our candidates. It is virtually impossible for you to come to Corporate America without being touched by Cameron-Brooks either by being hired, mentored, or managed by one of our alumni. This alumni network offers tremendous support to newly transitioned officers, their spouses (or significant others) and families. Our alumni will go out of their way to help make the transition as smooth as possible for you. One of the major reasons we have become such a powerful force in our industry is our alumni. Cameron-Brooks alumni are adamant about hiring junior officers for their positions and about hiring them from Cameron-Brooks.

As I've always said to military officers, it's not that one environment is good and the other bad. They are different. Some of you will determine that the military is better for you than the business world. We understand that. We like to think that as some of you read this book you will feel more confident that Corporate America

FOREWORD

is where you want to have your career. For those of you who make this choice, here's a word of caution. Do not think that Corporate America is going to be a cure-all for the problems you might have had in the military. We have our problems. Some of the things we do are not always smart. We are influenced by economic conditions, just as the military is.

There is no ideal company, job, or environment. However, I feel it is critically important that you come to Corporate America as an individual who intends to go to work for a great company and to stay with that company. I am a strong advocate of conducting thorough and proper analysis to determine which company is right for you. I do not encourage moving constantly from one company to another. Sometime during the course of your career, some personal challenges will arise that will divert you from your job. These challenges will cause you to need special focus on your family. You want to know that your company will support you during these difficult times. Too many times people switch from one company to another, looking for that better situation, only to find greater difficulties. If you expect the company to remain with you during the difficult times of your life, it is only fair that you stay with the company during difficulties they might have. Many employees want to leave a company when they see the product lose market share. They reason that it is okay for the company to support them during **their** difficult times, but they don't want to reciprocate when the **company** has difficult times. That is not fair. I encourage you to be loyal. Switching from one company to another will not always advance your career. All you have really done is change the problems. Every time you make a move, it is difficult for you and your family emotionally, and it tells many things about you that you may not want said.

I hope you find this book a valuable tool for preparing for corporate interviews and a career transition. Any time you have a question on an issue discussed in the book, feel free to contact

me. I wish a book could cover everything, but I know it can't. It's similar to the preparation prior to our Career Conferences. We try to prepare for every question we think a candidate may encounter in an interview, but, after years of experience, I have found corporate recruiters can still surprise me. I think you will find the major issues for military officers are covered in this book. Have fun reading it, and the best of luck to you in your career search.

**STOP! STOP! STOP!
DON'T READ ANY MORE
OF THIS BOOK WITHOUT
A HIGHLIGHTER.**

Use a highlighter to emphasize those issues that are important to you. As a matter of fact, all of your interviewing and career transition preparation should be done with a highlighter and note pad in hand! Don't hesitate to write notes to yourself in the borders of each page so that you can quickly refresh your memory and flip back through the book.

PCS is a career reference book. It is a book I hope you will read, refer to, reread, and refer to again as your career progresses. Do not loan it or any other reference book from your personal library. Throughout your career these books should never be out of arm's reach. There are some books I reread every year to remind me of valuable points. Every quality book should be read, referred to, and reread.

CHAPTER 1

The Evaluation Process

*“Roger is the recognized authority in his industry. His 30-plus years of experience give him a unique perspective of candidates and Corporate America. Roger is demanding, doesn’t mince words and consistently challenges you. No one works harder to give you that little edge. Listen to him—he will make you better. Within five years of transitioning from the military I was serving on the senior leadership team of a \$3 billion company with 20,000 associates. Roger has impacted my life and the way that I think about success more than any other teacher, coach, or mentor. Reading **PCS** will ensure that you are well prepared to rise to the occasion and seize the opportunities.”*

— Tim Fliss

Vice President, Human Resources
Schneider National

CHAPTER 1

The Evaluation Process

Early Recruiting Days

Corporate America initially believed that the military officer would have a difficult time being competitive in the business world as a Development Candidate. There were three basic reasons for this belief.

When we first started recruiting the military officer, most were leaving the military five to seven years after their age group graduated from college and entered the business world. That meant officers spent five to seven years in the nonprofit world (the military) and were then entering the world of profitability. Given the difference in experiences, how could the military officer logically catch up to his or her business world contemporaries in minimum time?

I compare this situation to a track race in which you are competing with recent college graduates. To be considered a winner, you have to finish in the top 10 percent. No problem, you say. But, when you get to the track and you're in the blocks, I reach down to tap you (the military officer) on the shoulder and I say, "By the way, when I pull the trigger, you stay at the blocks. Wait until all the college graduates in your age group get a fifth of the way around the track. Then you may start." Undoubtedly, you would stand up and say, "Come on, Roger, that's not realistic." Similarly, it makes sense that you, the military officer, would have a hard time catching up with your age group as you entered the business world. You notice that I said **age** group, not **year** group.

In the military, you need to be concerned about being competitive with your **year** group. In contrast, when you begin a career in business, you are measured by your **age** group.

As we examined the bulk of officers coming out of the military, we discovered that well over 90 percent of you had never used your education as it was designed to be used. Education is a tool in the business world, not a ticket. This was a second strike against you.

The third reason companies believed military officers were going to have difficulty being competitive in the business world was that we had a difficult time making a connection between many of your positions in the military and what we had to offer in Corporate America. What could a Damage Control Assistant, Field Artillery Officer, Infantryman or an Intelligence Officer do in the business world? We knew there existed some relatable knowledge, but we were not sure it was enough to overcome the disadvantage of time.

Post-Vietnam Recruiting

What forced recruiters to rethink this situation? The Vietnam War! Corporate recruiters discovered that when they went to the college campus to hire Development Candidates, there weren't enough students available due to the draft. Suddenly, recruiters had to reassess the military officer as a potential hire. Corporations started hiring officers, but reluctantly, because they felt officers would have a hard time competing with their age group. Because of this, officers interviewed for only a small fraction of the positions they see today. But, as Corporate America measured your performance in the business world against the very best from the college campus, they discovered you were catching up very quickly.

This was an exciting discovery for the corporate world. All of a sudden, companies had two supply sources for hiring Development Candidates—the college campus and the military. In most cases, companies were hiring more college students than military officers, sometimes by a ratio of 80/20. However, many companies today have virtually reversed this ratio as they have witnessed military officers effectively transfer their military skills to the business world and immediately make an impact.

Over the years, interest, enthusiasm, and excitement for the military officer have grown. Today, I can point my finger to officers who have made the transition, have been highly successful, and have made their way to the top of major corporations. Today, more and more companies are eager to hire military officers and benefit from your ability to make things happen and make them happen better. Companies specifically seek out military officers to fill unique leadership roles with more responsibility, more opportunity for upward mobility, and in a wider range of job positions and career fields than ever before.

The Development Candidate

Not all career paths are the same in the business world. Industry to industry and company to company, there are differences in the way a company will structure a career path. Fundamentally, there are two types of career paths—development and non-development.

The **Development** career is designed for candidates who will be future leaders in a company. While you will always fill specific jobs as a Development Candidate, the company will expose you to various functions within a corporation to develop you as a generalist. Regardless of where you start your development career, as your career progresses, the company will teach you skills in finance, accounting, information technology, supply

chain management, operations, sales, marketing, human resources, etc. The intent of such broad knowledge is to develop your skills to be a future leader in the company. Without these general management skills, a person cannot lead a company (just as a general or admiral cannot lead in the military without excellent combined forces knowledge).

A Development Candidate needs to have a burning desire to rise to the top 10 percent of major corporations and the perceived ability to accomplish that objective. It is important that you understand (as you enter the business world) how you, as a commissioned officer, fit into a major corporation. Corporate America will spend a lot of time, money, expertise, and effort getting you (the Development Candidate) to the point where you can have a major impact on the direction of your company.

A **Non-Development** career seeks people to fill jobs in a specific area of expertise. These managers are not targeted to be the future top 10 percent leaders of a company but rather are oriented toward developing an expertise in one functional area of a company. It's not that they can't be Development Candidates but rather that their goal is to develop along the line of a specialist. Regardless of where you start your career as a Non-Development Candidate, your career path is designed to make you a future expert in one area of the company (engineering, IT, finance, HR, etc.). As an example, let's say you begin your career in Information Technology. As your career progresses, you will learn more and more about a company's IT infrastructure, perhaps specializing in security, broadband networks, or enterprise databases. These positions are important in any company because experts ensure that a company can get maximum return on capital, but the key is that experts never lead companies.

I am not saying that one career path is more important than the other, but they are radically different. As you consider your

options in the business world, it is important that you determine the type of career in which you are interested. Remember, not all companies hire Development Candidates. Some companies and industries have no programs in place to develop future leaders and thus have no interest in recruiting Development Candidates. These industries and companies “pool” promote, which means all hires jump into the pool and whoever floats to the top when a management spot becomes available gets promoted. Most new companies start out this way as they do not have the depth of personnel to develop leaders from within the company. However, as many companies mature and become more sophisticated, they will move toward the hiring of Development Candidates (fast trackers) as a means of developing future leaders from within the company.

Career progression in a company is not an overnight venture any more than it is in the military. Advancing from LTJG through LT to LCDR and up the chain of command takes time and a considerable amount of investment. There are many things you need to learn and experiences you must have to become a top-level leader in a company. It is important to realize that these steps are necessary, and it takes time for them to happen. No matter what the size of the company or the type of business, there are few “overnight sensations” in Corporate America.

The business world wants Development Candidates who are “growable” people. This is what having that “burning desire” to be a top 10 percent leader is all about. In other words, **you understand the investment that it takes to be a leader in a successful organization.** Hoping or simply wanting success is worthless without the burning desire to prepare for it.

Over the last 30 years, I have interviewed literally tens of thousands of JMOs. So many of them will say they want to be

successful, but, unfortunately, a small percentage know the investment in personal growth that it is going to take to get there. Find any group of the top 10 percent of leaders in the business world, and I promise you will find people who are constantly reading and expanding their knowledge base and skill set. These individuals know the importance of a diverse skill base, and they work on becoming knowledgeable in all areas of a company, not just their specific position or function. They seek higher degrees as they advance in age, keeping their formal education current so they remain competitive and in position for promotion. They know there is no substitute for knowledge, so they are constantly in the learning mode. They have outstanding leadership ability and interpersonal skills. They are mission-oriented leaders with a track record of making significant contributions to their past organizations. This is what I mean when I talk about having a burning desire to be in the top 10 percent of the leadership of a company.

Should You Use A Recruiting Firm?

Anyone reading this will feel this is a biased, opinionated statement. To a degree, it is. Nevertheless, the answer is “yes.” Without fail the first thing you should do once you have made the decision to enter the business world is to become associated with a quality recruiting firm.

Most companies prefer to hire through recruiting firms. If their normal ratio for hiring is one out of 200 interviews, a company is going to be very reluctant to turn down 199 people who are going to be out on the street as potential buyers of their product. Rejected job applicants may buy a competitor’s product just because the other company turned them down. For the company, it’s much less “costly” to have a recruiting firm say “no” to the majority of applicants.

Quality recruiting firms are evaluated by the success the client company has in terms of the number and quality of talent they hire. The measuring tool companies use to judge recruiting firms is based on the factor of 10 interviews. When a company seeks the help of a recruiting firm to fill their openings and interviews 10 people, on the average how many do they say “yes” to? Of every 10 people they pursue beyond the first interview, how many receive offers? For every 10 who are offered jobs, how many accept? And, for every 10 who accept, how many are successful and promotable? Companies judge recruiting firms very carefully. It will be important for you (in making your decision) to determine the recruiting company with whom it will be best for you to partner (depending on your needs, interests, situation, openness to location, etc.). In making your choice, I encourage you to use a recruiting firm that has developed outstanding relationships with its client companies.

Many of you come to us suggesting that two or three recruiting firms represent you. We understand your reasoning. It’s just that recruiting firms that work with candidates over an extended period of time and prepare them for corporate interviews put in a tremendous amount of time and effort on your behalf. This is a large investment on their part. Obviously, these recruiting firms are not willing to develop individuals so they can interview on their own or through another recruiting firm. If you’re going to choose one of the best recruiting firms, it is to your advantage to be loyal to that company until they have had the chance to show you to their client companies. I know of no recruiting firm in America that asks for 100 percent exclusivity. If they do, walk away from them. However, for a **quality** recruiting firm to ask for exclusivity **until after** they have shown you to their client companies is simply good business.

Can you do a search on your own? Yes, absolutely. Usually, it is much more costly, but it can be done and done successfully.

Networking with associates in various organizations and handing your resume to someone you know who works for a company and who in turn can hand it to a hiring manager on your behalf are the best ways to conduct a search on your own. Your success is limited when you send your resume to companies without knowing people there who can recommend you to the hiring manager. Many companies have thousands of candidates applying on a weekly basis, so putting a resume into that mass and hoping a company will call you is going against all odds. Having a friend, acquaintance, or parent hand your resume to a hiring manager of their company can ensure better success than the mail-in route.

If you are an officer doing your own search, it will be difficult for you to verify that a position is a development position. I'm not sure how you would do this. If you ask, and I would, you would probably want further verification.

Other disadvantages to conducting a search on your own are that 1) it is difficult to explore as diverse opportunities as a recruiting firm will show you, and 2) as you interview with companies individually and receive offers individually, you will only be able to evaluate one offer at a time. Most companies won't allow you to keep an offer for a long period. A good recruiting firm can show you several opportunities at one time. Also, quality recruiting firms will work closely with you during the "follow-up process" (the weeks that follow an initial interview in which companies invite candidates for second and third interviews and extend offers to those candidates who best fit their criteria and culture). During the follow-up process, quality recruiting firms will help you evaluate your different offers and arrive at the career decision that is best for you.

Today, you can post your resume on the Web. However, most of these positions are for Non-Development Candidates or for those who already have specific business experience. As good as it

might seem, companies have responded more negatively than positively about this new avenue for job seekers. They say they are fed up with the tens of thousands of resumes they receive on a weekly basis via the Web. Resumes received online seem to clog up the system with applicants whose qualifications are incompatible with the company's needs. I have seen few officers have any luck in finding high potential development positions through an Internet search.

The Internet is a great information source. I encourage you to use it actively to research companies, positions, and the business world in general. The Web is not a perfect information distribution system, but it is a direct pipeline to information. Company web sites offer information similar to what you might see in company literature or brochures. Studying individual company web sites is a great start for learning about different industries and companies.

Some officers will not earn the right to be represented by a recruiting firm. That's not a harsh statement—it's an honest statement. Every recruiting firm which agrees to represent an officer must ask themselves, "Does my client company need to pay me a fee to find this person?" Unfortunately, many times that answer is "no." We are not suggesting that the person is not a quality person and a potential good hire for a company, but client companies are very specific about the skill set of individuals they want us to recruit for them.

At our recruiting firm, we have said over the years, "We have the knowledge and capability to show candidates as many high-potential positions in the business world for which they are qualified. We know how to guide candidates through a successful transition, and we know how to develop candidates so their start in the business world is on a track for moving up." Candidly speaking, we want to get reimbursed for that time, effort, and knowledge. It's just good business.

Present a quality picture of yourself to your recruiting firm. Officers sometimes make statements that cause me to rule them out. They will rationalize, “Well, I wouldn’t say that to a company.” Let me emphasize, “You have just said it to a company.” You must remember that a recruiting firm is retained by the corporation. If you make the statement to us, it’s like making it to the company. We can’t ask you not to make a statement. We can’t be unprofessional and suggest you cover up what you said, or say, “Don’t dare say that in front of the company; they won’t hire you.”

Officers have told me they’re not sure whether they want to go into the business world. That’s fine, the business world is not for everyone. But, can you imagine a company saying, “Roger, we want to pay you a fee to find us an individual who’s not certain whether they want to operate in the profit-oriented or the non-profit world.” These are diametrically opposed operating philosophies. We can only agree to partner with you as you transition if you are someone who has a **burning desire** to enter the profit-oriented world, be a capitalist, and rise to the top. We must **hear** that desire.

Some individuals say to me, “Several years down the road, I want to have my own business.” I have to rule those individuals out. You wouldn’t want someone to walk into your place of business and say, “I want you to develop me, educate me, increase my skill package, and pay me a high salary. Then, I can become an expert, save money, go across the street, open my own business, and go into competition against you.”

I’m not asking you to be dishonest. I am asking you to evaluate what you want to do with your professional career. If it is to open your own business, I respect that. After all, I own my business. But don’t use somebody else to do it. Just go open your business

THE EVALUATION PROCESS

and be successful. If you want a career in Corporate America, then come committed. Use all of the development opportunities my client companies will offer. Be a leader within that company. Go to the top. Things can change in the future, but to start a high-potential development career with a company knowing you're going to leave them in the near future is purely unprofessional and dishonest.

Give the recruiting firm the information they need to professionally represent you. Produce quality applications and supporting file material. Never refer to your resume on your application. I interview more than 20 people a day. I don't have time to review over 20 different resume formats to find the information you're referencing. Take time to fill out your application and other forms thoroughly, carefully, and accurately. Show us you believe your application material is important. You want to be represented as the professional person we know you are. Don't wait until the last minute to get your college transcripts. Get everything ahead of time. Document everything sent to your recruiting firm, and keep a copy yourself. Watch your spelling and sentence structure. Keep the material in your file current as your job title or other information changes. As you get new officer evaluations, forward them to your recruiting firm. Your career transition is too important for you not to be extremely organized, timely, thorough, and willing to work with the recruiting firm regarding the material in your file so they can best represent you to their client companies.

SLOPPY APPLICATION MATERIAL = DECLINE

Many applications cause us to decline the officers immediately. I say to myself, "I don't even want to take the time to write a

decline letter, put a stamp on it, and mail it.” This file doesn’t warrant taking our time, but, professionally, we do it anyway. As sloppy application material is sent to us, we say to ourselves, “Obviously, this wasn’t very important to the candidate because it is so sloppy.” These applications could misrepresent you—on the other hand, they may not!

You want to work with a quality recruiting firm. Check out the firm. Ask to speak with former candidates with whom they partnered and successfully transitioned to business. Ask the recruiting company about their program and success rate. How do they prepare candidates for a transition? What percentage of the candidates are successful at a conference? You have every right to know this information. It’s important for you to get a recruiting firm that works in partnership with you. Unfortunately, some recruiting firms only send your resume to different companies and hope the companies respond. Unless a recruiting firm is doing a lot for the company—screening your background thoroughly and working with you to educate you about business and to build your skill package, it is doubtful the recruiting firm represents much value to a company. The great companies in Corporate America are smart. They put their money where they get the best value.

I’ve heard officers say, “I’ve already been accepted by another recruiting firm.” I say, “When were you interviewed?” They answer, “I haven’t been interviewed. I was accepted over the phone.” What would Procter & Gamble, Dell Computer Corporation, Arthur Andersen, Johnson & Johnson, or any other quality company say if a recruiting firm calls them to say, “We want you to interview a candidate we haven’t seen.” Can you imagine that? If a recruiting firm isn’t willing to commit the time and expense to come to your base or post, interview you, and work with you over a period of time, do you really need them?

Many of you tell me that recruiting firms don't want to talk to you unless you're within three to six months of getting out of the military. Do you realize what that recruiting firm is saying? They don't want to do the work it takes to develop you and set you up for success in the business world. They don't want to look into your background and help you do what you need to do to transition "up." They don't want to invest time and effort into developing officers; they simply want to place you with a company. They're saying, "No, we just want to show you to a company, hope you get placed, and receive our fee."

Make sure the recruiting firm is willing to do the kind of work it will take to develop you over a period of time. You don't need a recruiting firm that looks at you with a dollar figure in mind. Unfortunately, too many recruiting firms do just that. When you know major companies are paying top dollar to recruiting firms to select, interview, develop, and bring talented people to them, you have every right to demand certain standards. It is your professional future you are placing in the hands of a recruiting firm, and you owe it to yourself to work with a recruiting firm that is going to give you the best possible start and future in a business career.

The Evaluation Process

Last year in my travels around the world looking for Development Candidates for our client companies, I interviewed over two thousand officers from the Navy, Air Force, Army, and Marine Corps. Out of the two thousand, I was able to accept only 12 percent. This was not by design but by normal evaluation of credentials and what was stated in the interview against the needs and requirements of our corporate clients. What makes me consistently able to accept **only** 12 percent of the officers I interview? Let's look at the evaluation process.

Three Categories Of Your Life

If you were to look at the profiles of the top 10 percent of

management in business today, you would find certain commonalities (behavioral traits, attributes, skills) that go all the way back to high school. If you come to an interview talking only about what you have done in the military, you're attempting to stand on only one of three legs—the other two being your high school and college careers.

We evaluate **equally** the performance factors in your high school, college, and military careers. Equally is the key word. First, we evaluate high school records on quantifiable factors: the grade point average, the size of your class, your ranking within that class and SAT/ACT scores. This gives us a good indication of how you compared to the performance of other students. We look at the difficulty of the curriculum. Was it an honors program? Did you challenge yourself all four years of high school? Then, we look at extracurricular activities. What did you do outside of academics? In extracurricular activities, our most important questions are: “Were you elected to leadership roles by your peers or superiors?” and “What contribution did you make?” We would also like to see the beginning of a positive work ethic. Overall, we look to see how motivated you were to do more than only what was required of you.

After looking at your high school accomplishments, we evaluate your college years. We cover the same areas and questions used in evaluating high school performance, but we add two critical factors—the known quality of your college or university and the known quality of your curriculum.

What is the first thing we look for in the military? The positions you've held. In your particular branch were these positions career enhancing? Did you get them at the right time? Did you hold them for the right length of time? We then proceed to your officer evaluations. We look for impact statements—statements that indicate high achievement and set you apart from your peers.

THE EVALUATION PROCESS

Each of you knows (in the different branches of the military) the evaluation inflation factor. So do we. We know every nuance, every idiosyncrasy of individual statements made in your officer evaluations. We also look at your academic performance. Remember Corporate America is an academic environment. Therefore, your performance in military schools is important.

Then, we look at more subjective factors. This is the conversational portion of the interview. We evaluate the following:

- 1) Your ability to develop instant rapport;
- 2) Your use of first names;
- 3) Your body language; and
- 4) Your ability to communicate persuasively.

We start with poise, self-confidence, and interpersonal skill. This is important because you will be placed in a new environment and be expected to make an immediate impact. You must have the poise, confidence, and people skills to move into an unknown situation and perform quickly. You need to be able to get buy-in from people across the organization (your team members, peers, and superiors) and have the ability to create a positive work environment.

You must be able to communicate persuasively in order to make an impact in as short a period of time as possible. Show us you use time effectively. There are many ways to make that determination even though, for the most part, it is a subjective evaluation.

Finally, we look for a person who is constantly striving to grow. Sometimes, when we evaluate an officer's high school and college experiences, we find extremely outstanding credentials. We ask ourselves, "How did they get it all done?" However, when we get to the military, we discover they do **nothing** but their job. We don't see the growth outside the job. The military encourages

you to design your life around your job. We're not saying the military is wrong in that. We're simply saying that's not what we're looking for in Corporate America. We seek individuals who have continued to develop their family interest, extracurricular activities, and life outside the military. We want to see continued academic growth. We have little interest in a person whose age has advanced but whose formal education has not.

We look for people who have developed outside interests, and we don't really care what they are. We like to see a good balance between intellectual and activity-oriented interests, but we don't care whether it's running, hiking, handball, family outings, reading, computers, writing, chess, flying, boating, camping, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Young Life or Big Brothers/Big Sisters. We like to see a diversity of activities. We're not looking for carbon copies. We want to see people who are involved—people who are growing.

We are interested in your personal life, as well, so when you are discussing extracurricular activities, be honest with us. Tell us what you do. **Don't create an answer for us. Don't tell us what you think we want to hear.** Tell it the way it is. We want to know about all aspects of your life. Learn to be comfortable with yourself as an individual as well as with your ability to perform and make an impact.

Companies cannot mandate that their employees work well with others. At any time, employees can resign and walk out the door. Therefore, we look to hire people who are professional and have good interpersonal skill—people who are respected by others, who work well with others, and who are eager to come to work each morning. Companies want individuals who have the ability to create positive work environments. We're not interested in the cocky person whose self-confidence controls

them. We want people who have total control of their self-confidence. They don't have to wear it on their sleeve. They know they're good. They don't have to act as if they're the best.

I have learned that the really good people do not inflate numbers. The confident officers are not afraid to tell me that on a scale of 1-10, they're an 8 in leadership ability, a 6 in computer and information technology skills, or a 5 in mechanical aptitude. Only those who lack self-confidence feel they must tell me they're a 10 in everything they do. We want people who have good self-insight—people who know themselves. They can honestly identify their strengths and weaknesses. They want a company to hire them for who they are not what they pretend to be in an interview.

Do we always get a perfect candidate? In all my years of recruiting, I probably never have. We take an individual's entire history of background material from high school through the military and put the positives on one scale and the negatives on the other scale. We do, however, want the positive side of the scale to crash to the floor. This is the type of talented individual who makes it to the top of Corporate America and whom we can get very excited about hiring.

Computer Literacy

We are in the middle of an Information Revolution. Every development role in the business world is being affected by the enabling role of information technology (IT). To be a Development Candidate, you will need strong IT skills (regardless of the type of career field in which you have an interest). IT is a driving force behind the growth in Corporate America, and all business **leaders** of the future must have a track record of applying IT to solve complex problems. It is difficult to overstate the profound effects of IT in Corporate America. Today, we can show 30-40

percent more positions to candidates with strong computer skills. I expect this percentage will only continue to grow.

Unfortunately, the military (some branches and functional areas more than others) is behind the business world regarding IT. As a result, it is likely that you will have to catch up to your peers who have been in business during the boom in IT. The upside is that you have a lot of resources today that you can use to improve your knowledge of IT.

If you are only a user of IT, develop a strategy to improve your skills today. The key is to develop enough knowledge to help you solve complex problems using IT as a tool. In other words, you have a process problem at work, and you use IT to improve work flow, reduce bottlenecks, and improve results. You have a data management problem, and you use IT to develop a new database to improve knowledge sharing, etc. This is what I mean by using IT to solve problems.

Learn On A PC At Work

The quickest way to improve your IT skills is to take on a project at work where you can learn a new technology and apply it to solve a problem. Most PCs in the military are Windows based and come with Microsoft Excel and Access. This is where you need to start.

Specifically:

- Become familiar with Windows and/or Windows NT. At the very least, you should be an expert in Windows before you leave the military.
- Take advanced level classes in both Excel and Access and start using them to improve processes. Just being an expert

at Microsoft PowerPoint will do you no good in a business career. Excel and Access are much more broadly used for statistical analysis, managing data, reporting, and process improvement. You can find good classes in Excel and Access through the military or civilian programs.

- Seek out references at a bookstore in these applications (there are literally thousands of books on each).

Improve Your Knowledge Of Computer Networks

While strong PC skills are invaluable, you also will benefit from learning the essentials of computer networks. Remember, all PCs in the business world are networked, and it will be difficult for you if you do not have at least a basic knowledge of NIC cards, hubs, routers, switches, cabling, and network protocols like TCP/IP and ETHERNET. I recommend you take a class at a local community college on the essentials of computer networks. There are literally thousands of certification programs where you can take classes on this subject. You can also buy books at a bookstore on the subject (try the Dummies series). Get involved in a network related project at work so you can get hands-on experience.

Learn How To Write Programs

Programming is not what it used to be. In the past only programmers had to know how to program a computer. Today, if you want to solve a tough problem, you will have to understand how software is developed, modified, tested, and implemented. I recommend you start with the Internet. Learn how to write HTML and JAVA so you can develop web sites for your unit. You can take classes in both. I also think Visual Basic is an excellent language to learn as you can use it to customize Access databases and Excel workbooks.

Some other good investments of your time: Microsoft Project, Oracle, SAP, ATM, UNIX, and C++.

Finally, remember only you can improve your knowledge and skills. No one can do it for you. Do not rely on what you learned four or five years ago in school. It is outdated. If you are not able to leave the military for several years, make sure you are getting good advice about how to keep up with cutting-edge technology. Develop a plan to improve your skills while you are in the military so you remain on par with your peers in the business world. You will dramatically improve the number of development opportunities with which you can interview upon leaving the military.

Immediate Impact

As you enter Corporate America, you are expected to perform immediately. Officers often say, “Roger, could you tell me how a company in the business world is going to train me?” I encourage you to be cautious in overstating the need to be trained.

Corporations **train** fresh college graduates. Corporations do not expect to spend a lot of dollars or time to train military officers. You received training in the military, and you bring that valuable training to Corporate America. There’s no reason why you shouldn’t be able to have an impact on profitability (the bottom line) instantly. You’ve learned how to accomplish difficult objectives. You’ve learned how to prioritize, organize, and effectively manage time, to break tough objectives down into component parts, and to motivate your team members and peers to help accomplish those objectives. Whether you’re applying your expertise to solve a problem in the military world or a problem in the business world, the methods are the same. You need to suggest that as a military officer **you can make an immediate impact**. Companies will pay you more than a recent college graduate, and you will expect to be promoted faster than a recent college graduate because you already have had “training” that is valuable and costly. Most college graduates do not bring this to the table.

After all, if you're going to catch up with your age group, you'll want to get in and get started immediately. The less time you take to become effective, the more quickly you can move ahead of your age group into significant management roles.

Most companies provide you with some orientation to the new work environment, but orientation is different from training. Orientation is basically what is considered as "on the job training" in the military. At the same time you are performing, you also are learning.

So, rather than emphasize the need for training, show that you, the military officer, have the flexibility to adapt to the ever-changing, highly competitive corporate environment. You have the right attitude, and you will succeed in making an immediate impact in this environment. Give a recruiter proof and evidence of these qualities in your interviews.

Throughout this book I talk about characteristics or competencies, such as IT skills, being flexible, and having a positive attitude, that companies look for in Development Candidates. This does not mean you need to possess all or be strong in each of the characteristics I mention nor that every company looks for the same characteristics or competencies. Every candidate is unique, and every company and position is unique. I mention them to you to get you to think about the characteristics and competencies you possess and to know which ones are important to bring to light in an interview. As you read this book, refer to Appendix A for a list of key competencies recruiters look for in the Development Candidates they interview.