GO HEROES INC.

THE HERO CAREER PLAYBOOK

5 Steps to Your Next Chapter After Service

Translate what you did. Pick your lane.
Close the gap. Build proof. Find your people.

A FREE GUIDE FROM GO HEROES

For veterans, first responders,
and healthcare heroes in transition

WELCOME

You already have the hard part.

You already have the hardest skills to teach: leadership under pressure, accountability, and calm in chaos. What most heroes lack after service is not ability — it is a plan for translating that ability into civilian currency.

These five steps are that plan. This magazine takes the original playbook and gives you room to actually work it: worksheets, checklists, and a 90-day plan you can write in, not just read.

How to use this playbook

- **Read it in order the first time.** Each step builds on the one before it.
- **Write in it.** The worksheets on pages 5, 8, 13, and 14 are yours — a playbook you fill in is worth ten you skim.
- **Do one step at a time.** Finish the worksheet for a step before you move on. A finished step beats a perfect plan you never start.
- **Bring it to a conversation.** Show your translated sheet and your proof page to a mentor, a hiring manager, or a Go Heroes coach — that is what they are for.

A note before you start

This guide is general career advice, not a promise of a job or a placement. Go Heroes does not guarantee employment. What it does give you is a clear, repeatable way to show employers what you can already do — and where to get help closing the gaps.

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The five steps in one line each:

- **1. Translate** — say what you did in civilian language.
- **2. Pick a lane** — choose an identity before you chase jobs.
- **3. Close the gap** — get the credentials your lane actually requires.
- **4. Build proof** — show one result, documented.
- **5. Find your people** — one association, one mentor, one event a month.

STEP 1

1

Translate Your Service

Write your experience in the language hiring managers use. Convert every role into three lines: what you led (people, budget, equipment), what you improved (numbers help), and what you were trusted with.

> *“Supervised a 12-person team, zero safety incidents in 18 months” beats any job title. Titles do not travel well across the military–civilian line. Results do.*

Try it on one role first

- **What you led:** how many people, what budget, what equipment, what area — in plain numbers.
- **What you improved:** time saved, errors cut, safety improved, throughput raised. If you do not have an exact number, use a honest range or a clear before-and-after.
- **What you were trusted with:** lives, sensitive information, high-value equipment, decisions under pressure. Say it plainly — that trust is the point.

Watch out for

Jargon, acronyms, and rank without context. If a civilian hiring manager would need a glossary to read your resume, rewrite that line until a neighbor would understand it.

Your worksheet for this step is on the next page. Fill it in before you move to Step 2.

WORKSHEET • STEP 1

Your translated experience sheet

Pick your most recent role, or the role closest to the lane you want. Write it three ways, then keep the civilian version.

Role, as it appears on your record

What I led — people, budget, equipment

What I improved — with numbers, if you have them

What I was trusted with

Now write it as three civilian lines:

Read it back out loud. If a civilian friend would understand it without asking what an acronym means, it is ready.

STEP 2

2

Pick the lane before you chase jobs

Decide your leadership identity first, then target roles that buy that identity. A focused search of 10 right-fit roles outperforms 100 scattered applications.

Lanes heroes often lead in

- **Operations** — running teams, schedules, and day-to-day delivery.
- **Safety** — keeping people, patients, and workplaces safe and compliant.
- **Training** — teaching, coaching, and building other leaders.
- **Logistics** — moving people, supplies, and equipment where they are needed, on time.
- **Management** — owning a unit, a department, or a program end to end.

Choose one lane for this search. You can change lanes later — but a search with no lane looks, to an employer, like a search with no direction.

Your 10-role list

Write down 10 roles that fit your lane, in organizations you would actually want to work for. That list is your search. Everything else is a distraction until those 10 are done.

My lane (circle one in your notes, or write it here):

STEP 3

3

Close the credential gap

List the credentials your target roles actually require, then sequence them cheapest-first. Many heroes qualify for more credit for prior experience than they expect — and programs like the Go Heroes Leadership Academy and credentialing pathways exist to close the rest without starting over.

Do it in this order

- **1. Read 10 real job postings in your lane.** Write down every credential they ask for, and how often each one appears.
- **2. Mark what you already have.** Include military training, licenses, and experience that may count — ask, do not assume it does not.
- **3. Sequence cheapest-first.** Start with the credential that unlocks the most roles for the least time and cost.
- **4. One at a time.** Finish one credential before you start the next. A half-finished list helps no one.

Credentials I need, in order:

[ ] Credential 1 — and what it unlocks

[ ] Credential 2 — and what it unlocks

[ ] Credential 3 — and what it unlocks

Ask about prior-learning credit before you pay for a course you may already have earned in service. It is the cheapest credential you will ever get.

STEP 4

4

Build proof, not just a resume

Employers hire evidence. Take one visible project — a process you improved, a team you trained, a community program you led — and document the before, the action, and the result. That one page will do more than a second degree in most interviews.

The proof page, in three parts

- **Before:** what was broken, slow, unsafe, or unclear — in one or two sentences.
- **Action:** what you actually did, and what you led others to do.
- **Result:** what changed, in numbers if you have them, in plain words if you do not.

My proof project

Before:

Action:

Result:

Take this page to your interview. When they ask, “Tell me about a time…,” you already have the answer.

STEP 5

5

Network on purpose, with a mentor

Join one professional association in your lane, attend one event a month, and find one mentor who is two steps ahead of you — not ten. Mentorship is a force multiplier: our Peer Mentorship Network matches transitioning heroes with established professionals for exactly this step.

A rhythm you can actually keep

- **One association** in your lane. Join it, read its job board, learn its language.
- **One event a month.** Go with one question you want answered, and one person you want to meet.
- **One mentor, two steps ahead.** Close enough to remember the transition, far enough to show you the next two moves.
- **Give before you ask.** Offer help, a connection, or a thank-you note. Networks grow on generosity, not requests.

How to ask a mentor

> Keep it short and specific: who you are, what lane you are aiming for, and one question. “Could I have 20 minutes to ask how you moved from operations into safety?” will get a yes far more often than “Can you mentor me?”

My association, my event, my mentor:

YOUR PLAN

Your 90-day starter plan

This is the whole playbook, on a calendar. Work it in order — do not skip ahead to applications before Steps 1 and 2 are done.

When	Finish this	Done when…
Weeks 1–2	Step 1 — your translated experience sheet (page 5).	A civilian can read it without a glossary.
Weeks 3–4	Step 2 — your target lane and 10 right-fit roles.	You have a 10-role list you believe in.
Month 2	Steps 3–4 — credential plan plus one documented proof project.	One credential started, one proof page written.
Month 3	Step 5 — association joined, mentor conversation held, applications running.	Applications are going to your 10 roles, with a mentor in your corner.

If you fall behind, do not restart the whole plan. Pick up where you left off, finish that step, and keep going. A 90-day plan that takes 120 days still works.

Check in with yourself each week: What did I finish? What is next? Who can help?

TOOLKIT

Resume & interview toolkit

Resume checklist

[ ] One page per 10 years of experience is a good guide — clarity beats length.

[ ] Every bullet starts with what you did, then the result — not just a duty.

[ ] No unexplained acronyms. No rank without context.

[ ] Your proof project (page 8) is summarized in 3 lines, near the top.

[ ] Contact details are current, and the phone number is one you actually answer.

Interview: three answers to prepare

- **“Tell me about yourself.”** Lane, then proof, then what you want next — in under a minute.
- **“Tell me about a time you led under pressure.”** Use your proof page: before, action, result.
- **“Why this role?”** Name the lane, name what you bring to it, and name what you want to learn.

After the interview, send a short thank-you note the same day. Mention one specific thing from the conversation. It is a small habit that sets heroes apart.

NEXT STEPS

Your next steps with Go Heroes

You do not have to do this alone. Go Heroes' Leadership Academy, preparedness training, and mentorship network are built for exactly this transition.

- **Leadership Academy** — leadership and workforce training for leaders at every level, virtual-first, with self-paced and cohort options. See the Services section on our site for current offerings.
- **Credentialing pathways** — including our Lean Six Sigma credentialing pathway, delivered with an accredited training partner. Ask about cohort dates.
- **Peer Mentorship Network** — transitioning heroes matched with established professionals, for Step 5 and beyond.
- **Jobs for Heroes board** — openings from employers who value veteran, first responder, and healthcare experience. Browse it at goheroes.icellence.com/jobs.html, and employers can submit a listing for review there.
- **Preparedness & emergency training** — including ICS 300, our online Intermediate ICS course for expanding incidents, on the Go Heroes site.

Start with the step you are on, not the whole catalog. If you are on Step 1, start with translation. If you are on Step 5, start with a mentor conversation.

Talk to us

Call 214-856-0498, or visit goheroes.org to book a service or a free consultation. Tell us which step you are on — that helps us point you to the right next move, not just the next page.

YOUR STORY

Your story, in your words

No one else can tell this for you — and no one in this magazine has tried to. This page is yours. Write the version you want a hiring manager to remember.

In one minute, I would say:

The proudest result I can prove:

The lane I am choosing, and why:

Read it out loud to someone you trust. If they can repeat it back, it is ready.

TRACKER

Tracker & notes

Use this page for your 10-role list. Fill in a row when you apply, and a date when you follow up.

Role	Organization	Applied	Follow-up

Notes

START TODAY

Your next chapter starts with Step 1.

Open page 5. Write your translated sheet.
That is the whole first move — and it is enough for today.

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