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**FORMATIVE EVALUATION OF THE VETERANS'
EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING SERVICE'S TRANSITION
ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (TAP) EMPLOYMENT WORKSHOP:**

**FINDINGS FROM OBSERVATIONAL VISITS; ANALYSIS OF
CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEY; AND OPTIONS FOR
FUTURE EVALUATION OF TAP**

FINAL REPORT

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract	iv
Acknowledgements	v
I. SYNTHESIS OF FINDINGS FROM OBSERVATIONAL VISITS TO BASES IMPLEMENTING THE NEW TAP EMPLOYMENT WORKSHOP CURRICULUM	1
A. Introduction	1
B. Synthesis of Key Findings from Observational Visits.....	3
1. Fidelity to the Tap Employment Workshop Curriculum	3
2. Participant Responses to the TAP Employment Workshop.....	6
3. Performance of TAP Employment Workshop Facilitators.....	7
4. Adequacy of Workshop Facilities and Equipment	7
5. Workshop Attendance and Characteristics of Attendees.....	8
C. Summary of the Findings from the Observational Visits	9
II. ANALYSIS OF TAP EMPLOYMENT WORKSHOP CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEY DATA.....	10
A. Introduction.....	10
B. Background on the Customer Satisfaction Survey.....	10
C. Survey Sample and Response Rate.....	11
D. Customer Satisfaction Data Processing and Analysis	12
E. Customer Characteristics and Satisfaction Results.....	13
F. Qualitative Comments on TAP Workshop	19
G. Conclusions	22
III. OPTIONS FOR FUTURE EXPERIMENTAL AND NON-EXPERIMENTAL EVALUATION OF THE TAP EMPLOYMENT WORKSHOPS	23
A. Introduction	23
B. Background on Previous VETS' Sponsored Evaluations of the TAP Employment Workshop and Customer Satisfaction Surveys.....	23
C. Potential Experimental Research Designs for Evaluating TAP.....	29
1. Types of Experiments.....	30
2. Applying Experimental Methods to the TAP Program	30
D. Non-Experimental Research Design Options for Evaluating TAP	32
1. Before-After Design.....	32
2. Interrupted Time Series	33
3. Propensity Score Matching	34
4. Regression Discontinuity Design.....	37
5. Conclusions on Nonexperimental Approaches.....	38
E. Potential Process/Implementation Evaluation Designs for Evaluating TAP.....	39
1. Site Visits	40
3. TAP Workshop Participant Surveys.....	44
4. Conclusions.....	45
F. Recommendations for Future Evaluation of TAP Employment Workshops.....	45

ATTACHMENTS:

ATTACHMENT I-A: SITE VISIT OBSERVATIONAL GUIDE.....	49
ATTACHMENT I-B: FACILITATOR DISCUSSION GUIDE	70
ATTACHMENT I-C: AFTER-ACTION REPORTS.....	75
ATTACHMENT II-A: DESCRIPTIVE TABLES OF CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONDENTS TO THE TAP WORKSHOP CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEY	94
ATTACHMENT II-B: DESCRIPTIVE TABLES OF RESPONSES TO KEY QUESTIONS ON THE TAP WORKSHOP CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEY.....	115
ATTACHMENT II-C: DESCRIPTIVE TABLES OF RESPONSES TO CONTENT KNOWLEDGE QUESTIONS ON THE TAP WORKSHOP CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEY	128
ATTACHMENT III-A: REFERENCES.....	131
ATTACHMENT VI-A: MEMORANDUM ON OPTIONS FOR IMPROVING MONITORING OF THE TAP EMPLOYMENT WORKSHOP	135

Abstract

In February 2012, the U.S. Department of Labor contracted with Avar Consulting, Inc., along with subcontractors Capital Research Corporation, Inc., and George Washington University, to conduct a formative evaluation of the redesigned Transition Assistance Program (TAP) Employment Workshop for members of the military before their separation from active duty. This report is broken into three main sections. Section I provides a synthesis of findings from three observational visits of the revised 3-day TAP Employment Workshop conducted by a team of Avar researchers in May and June 2013. Overall, these exploratory visits found that facilitators at the three sites demonstrated fidelity in the delivery of all sections of the curriculum, including the exercises and activities, as set forth in the Facilitator Guide (FG). The facilitators all possessed a thorough understanding of the subject matter, and delivered it in a professional and competent manner, generally within the timeframes suggested within the Facilitator Guide. Based on their own professional experiences, the facilitators modified some and added other exercises and activities to better meet the needs of the workshop participants. Uncomfortable classroom conditions due to lack of adequate ventilation in two of the three sites presented challenges for the workshop facilitators and the participants. Section II of this report provides analyses of customer satisfaction survey collected from TAP Employment Workshop participants. The survey results suggest a high level of satisfaction with the TAP Employment Workshop among workshop attendees, with only slight difference in satisfaction levels across questions, service branches, facilities, or separation status (retirees versus separatees). Section III of this report examines potential approaches for formally evaluating the TAP Employment workshops, including discussions of potential experimental and non-experimental impact evaluation approaches and a process/implementation evaluation effort.

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I. SYNTHESIS OF FINDINGS FROM OBSERVATIONAL VISITS TO BASES IMPLEMENTING THE NEW TAP EMPLOYMENT WORKSHOP CURRICULUM

A. Introduction

In 2011, DOL initiated an effort aimed at revamping and updating the TAP HCCC curriculum. In February 2012, DOL contracted with Avar Consulting, Inc., along with subcontractors Capital Research Corporation, Inc. and George Washington University, to conduct a formative evaluation of the redesigned TAP curriculum being piloted at the Employment Workshops at 11 selected military bases. The purpose of this formative evaluation effort is to determine if the redesigned TAP curriculum provides exiting service members with the skills, tools, and resources needed to transition into civilian employment. The results of the first phase of this evaluation study, including key study findings and recommendations, were discussed in the *Interim Report* submitted in May 2012. This earlier report documented some deficiencies in the curriculum and suggested changes. After the *Interim Report* was submitted, VETS again extensively revised the TAP curriculum, pilot-tested the new curriculum, and implemented the new TAP curriculum at military bases in the United States and worldwide.

In a meeting held at USDOL on March 12, 2013, VETS and CEO staff updated the Avar research team on recent developments regarding implementation of the new TAP curriculum and requested that the Avar researchers conduct three observational site visits to military bases that were using the new TAP Employment Workshop.¹ The purpose of these observational site visits was to determine if the DOL VETS revamped TAP workshop curriculum is being implemented with fidelity.² These visits particularly focused on:

- whether the curriculum modules are being presented fully and the amount of time required for each module;
- whether videos, exercises, and interactive/group activities are being presented and the reaction of workshop participants to such activities;
- the extent to which workshop participants are engaged, appear to understand key points made during each module, and have an opportunity to interact and ask questions;
- the extent to which participants scheduled for the TAP workshop attend all modules/days of the workshop;
- whether participants emerge from workshops with completed resumes, and receive instruction on effective job search strategies and interviewing techniques;
- whether information is provided about American Job Centers (AJCs) and how to register at an AJC;

¹ In addition to these observational visits, the Avar team was responsible for conducting two other tasks during this 3½-month period: (1) analysis of customer satisfaction surveys completed by TAP Employment Workshop participants; and (2) development of experimental and non-experimental research designs for future evaluation of the TAP Employment workshops. The results of these two study tasks are provided in the final two sections of this report..

² This purpose was identified for the initial round of visits and the overall assessment effort in the original Performance Work Statement by DOL for the task order assignment.

- whether the facilitator delivers the curriculum in a manner that optimizes learning and an assessment of how the facilitator presents the curriculum (e.g., extent to which facilitator is knowledgeable about each module’s content, quality/effectiveness of presentation/delivery, time allocation and ability to complete module topics, ability to balance lecture and participant interaction, and ability to provide appropriate/effective responses to participant questions); and
- whether the TAP workshop facility is adequate (e.g., adequacy of space/seating/ventilation, ability of participants to hear the facilitator and view slides/videos) and whether computers are made available/used during the workshop.

DoD selected the three military bases that were the focus of the observational visits under this study: (1) Langley Air Force Base in Hampton, Virginia (conducted May 14-16, 2013); (2) Camp Lejeune Marine Base in Jacksonville, North Carolina (June 4-6, 2013), and Ft. Bragg Army Base in Fayetteville, North Carolina (June 25-27). On these visits, the Avar team joined a number of other observers from DoD, DOL VETS, and the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), and at one base, a representative from the state Employment Commission. The Avar team observed the 3-day TAP Employment Workshop, which is part of the 5-day TAP.³ The Avar team for each visit consisted of two senior project staff, all of whom were part of teams that had conducted similar visits in the earlier phase of the study. During each of the three site visits, Avar senior staff observed the modules presented as part of the 3-day TAP Employment Workshop. The team used a site visit observational guide to systematically rate and record comments about specific components of the workshop and its delivery (with a particular focus on assessing the fidelity with which the new TAP curriculum was being presented at each of the three workshops observed). See Attachment I-A for a (blank) copy of the observational guide used. Near the conclusion of the workshop, members of the site visit team also interviewed the TAP Employment Workshop facilitator for approximately an hour to gain the facilitator’s perspectives on the revamped TAP curriculum. See Attachment I-B for a copy of the interview instrument used in these discussions with the facilitator of each of the workshops observed. Following each visit, a brief After-Action report was prepared and submitted to the DOL for review and comment (see Attachment I-C for copies of the three After-Action Reports).

Once these three visits were completed, the Avar team synthesized key findings across the three observational site visits, which is the focus of the remainder of this section of the final report.

³ The TAP is a five-day workshop. Other informational sessions are held on the day before and the day after the three-day DOL Employment Workshop. Although the specific presentations varied across the three sites, staff with each base’s program responsible for providing transition services (e.g., Airman and Family Readiness, Army Career and Alumni Program) and the Department of Veterans’ Affairs discussed topics such as stress management, budgeting, financial planning, the MOC crosswalk to civilian jobs and veterans’ benefits during these sessions.

B. Synthesis of Key Findings from Observational Visits

Key findings from the three observational site visits are presented below. Topics addressed are grouped into five categories: (1) fidelity to the TAP workshop curriculum; (2) participant responses to the workshops; (3) performance of the facilitators; (4) adequacy of workshop facilities and equipment; and (5) workshop attendance and characteristics of attendees.

1. Fidelity to the Tap Employment Workshop Curriculum

Throughout the three-day workshops, facilitators at all three sites demonstrated compliance in the delivery of all sections of the curriculum, including the exercises and activities, as set forth in the Facilitator Guide (FG). The site visit teams learned that any substantive modifications to the workshop curriculum as provided must be approved by the management teams at GBX or its partner, Inverness Technologies, to ensure universal implementation across sites.⁴ However, facilitators are encouraged to use relevant examples and anecdotes – based upon their professional experiences – to augment and illustrate the workshop content. While they are not permitted to add any new slides to those provided, they can add exercises and activities to enhance the learning experience.

- **Coverage of Curriculum Content.** The FG clearly states (FG, p. 1) that the “examples and suggestions for facilitating learning...do not restrict the facilitator’s ability to customize the material to best fit a particular group of participants.” However, the facilitators at the three workshops observed generally followed very closely the content of the instructional material as presented in the FG. While two of the facilitators adhered to the sequence of the major sections and topics as set forth in the FG for the most part, the third re-ordered some material, believing that some of the instruction was not presented in a logical sequence. The site visit teams also observed that the vast majority of the learning objectives highlighted at the beginning of each instructional module were addressed for the seven sections of the curriculum. For example, the critical topics in *Section 4: Build an Effective Resume*, a lengthy module with many interconnecting components, were ultimately covered in each site so that all participants were trained on how to develop a resume.
- **Performance in Meeting Suggested Timeframes.** The teams typically observed the presentation of Section 1 and part of Section 2 on Day 1, continued presentation of Section 2 and Sections 3 and 4 on Day 2, and continued presentation of Section 4 and Sections 5 through 7 on Day 3. The facilitators were able to present all sections of the workshop within the allotted three-day timeframe. However, because of the amount of material to be presented, the facilitators had to move quickly and keep the participants focused and on task to cover all of the topics. The FG (FG, p. 1) notes that “times for major blocks are somewhat flexible” and, in keeping with that guidance, facilitators typically adjusted the time devoted to selected sections, based on past experiences

⁴ GBX Consultants, Inc. and its partner, Inverness Technologies, provide training services to government and private organizations. These two organizations began providing facilitators for the DOL Employment Workshops in January 2013

presenting this instructional material. For example, although five hours are allocated for *Section 1: Transition Planning*, the facilitator at Langley AFB spent a little less than four hours on this topic, in part because some of the material had already been covered in the previous day's presentations. However, she devoted an additional 1.5 hours beyond the suggested 2.5 hours to *Section 2: Career Exploration and Validation*, which enabled her to expand and carry to the second day the instructional and activity time for the Professional Introduction (the "30-second elevator speech").

- **Completion of Suggested Exercises and Activities.** Nearly all suggested exercises and activities (over 30) were conducted during the three observed workshops, although all facilitators implemented some adjustments and enhancements to better meet the needs of the participants in their classes. For example, all the facilitators modified and expanded the "Expectations Icebreaker" activity as described in the FG to allow for collection of additional information about workshop participants that could be used to guide the focus and emphasis of subsequent instruction and activities. The revised formats asked participants to share such information as their career field of interest, relocation destination, and expectations for the workshop. The facilitator at Fort Bragg also included an additional icebreaker activity that involved the interpretation of participants' drawings of pigs to provide insights into their personality traits. Facilitators also employed different strategies for practicing the "Professional Introduction" speech developed in *Section 2: Career Exploration & Validation*. In two sites, facilitators led an interactive "Bicycle Chain" exercise (suggested in the FG, p. 78) that enabled participants to develop and share professional introductions (or "elevator pitch") multiple times with different partners. This exercise, similar to "speed dating," appeared to provide a good opportunity for the participants to practice the STAR method live and was well received by the participants. At Ft. Bragg, where five workshops are conducted concurrently, participants had the opportunity to practice their elevator speeches with multiple audiences, first sharing it with tablemates, next with others in the class, and finally with participants in other workshop sessions. The final element of this exercise closely resembled the noisy environment of a job fair or networking event, but it appeared that the participants were highly energized and engaged during the exercise. This exercise also allowed participants in the enlisted personnel workshop to practice with older, more experienced participants from the workshop for higher ranking personnel. Facilitators also added new exercises and activities to their presentations to better illustrate and reinforce the instructional material. Examples of some of these added exercises are provided below:
 - **Analyzing Job Posting Exercise.** Two facilitators conducted a useful exercise that required each participant to analyze a job posting they had brought to class using criteria provided in the Participant Guide (PG) (PG, p. 93). The exercise was a creative method for enhancing the instructional component as presented, reinforcing prior training (e.g., key words), and introducing the content of upcoming sessions.
 - **"Bad Call, Good Call" Skits.** Building on the "Bad Call, Good Call" video, one facilitator had her participants work in teams to develop a skit with their own

“bad” or “good” fact-finding call to an employer which they then shared with the class. This activity reinforced the lessons presented in the video and provided an opportunity for lively interactions among the participants.

- **Interview Preparation Activity.** The facilitator at Camp Lejeune conducted a group exercise asking participants what they would do to prepare a week before, three days before, and the day before the interview. Participants broke into three groups and selected a representative to present each group’s findings.
- **Use of the Facilitator Notes and Comments in the FG.** The FG provides suggestions, examples, and additional guidance in the right-hand margin of each page to aid the facilitator in presenting and illustrating the instructional material. Although, as noted above, the presentation may be customized to meet the needs of the participants, the majority of these suggestions were intended to reinforce the training implemented in accordance with the FG instructions, with some exceptions when the facilitators made modifications based on their own experiences. For example, in Section 1 (FG, p. 10), a suggestion is made to introduce a fictional Transitional Service Member (TSM) character who is making the transition from military to civilian employment, asking the group to provide a name and then to use this fictional character to illustrate many of the situations and scenarios discussed in the workshop. The TSM character was not used to illustrate instructional concepts by any of the three facilitators. In one site, the site team learned that use of the TSM character (mentioned frequently throughout the FG notes) resulted in loss of facilitator credibility with participants, who could not identify with this imaginary person. While the FG’s facilitator notes provide a helpful cross-walk to the PG page formatting, two of the facilitators chose not to use the FG to guide their instruction, instead relying on a personally annotated version of the PG. At Ft. Bragg, for example, the instructions and suggestions from the FG have been cut and pasted into the PG in the appropriate sections so that the facilitators can easily see the same pages, tables, etc. that the participants are seeing during all discussions. This modification has not resulted in any changes to the instructional material.
- **Use of PowerPoint Slides and Videos.** The PowerPoint slides provided with the curriculum were all shown and discussed during the workshop in a manner that complies with the FG. In addition, all of the provided videos were shown during the workshop.
 - There are 60 slides and they were all shown, including live demonstrations of several websites (e.g., www.bls.gov and www.careeronestop.org) in two of the sites. (Demonstrations of websites were not completed at Ft. Bragg due to technical problems with connecting to the Internet.)
 - No additional slides were shown (i.e., that were not part of the standard curriculum).
 - Consistent with the FG, two videos were shown (i.e., “Bad Call/Good Call” and “Wordsmithing”). An additional video produced by the Office of Personnel Management, “Finding and Applying for Jobs in the Federal

Government,” was shown at two sites to supplement the information provided on USAJOBS.gov in *Section 5: Federal Hiring, Federal Resumes and Federal Programs*. The video, “Who Stole my Cheese” was also added to the presentations conducted at Ft. Bragg.

- **Demonstration of suggested websites.** In two of the three sites, key websites identified in the FG were demonstrated live. In the third site observed – Ft. Bragg – due to technical difficulties, the Internet connection was not available for the first, second, and a portion of the third day of the workshop. However, while it was not possible for the facilitator to demonstrate the websites live at Ft. Bragg, she was able to discuss most of the websites identified in the PG during workshop sessions.
 - As suggested in the FG (FG, p. 44), the facilitator at two sites (with Internet availability) demonstrated navigation of the BLS and Career OneStop websites. The American Job Center service locator website was discussed in all three sites visited, but not extensively in two sites. The facilitator in the third site (one of the two with Internet availability) demonstrated how to search for local offices in three different states using zip codes.
 - Some other websites mentioned in the PG (e.g., www.mynextmove.org/vets/) were described but not demonstrated live. However, participants with laptops, tablets and smartphones could access any of the websites discussed during the workshop where an Internet connection was available.
 - Social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter, MeetUp, and Pinterest were all discussed, but more emphasis was placed on LinkedIn. Facilitators shared their own experiences with LinkedIn to explain its function and utility; two facilitators also assigned exploration of LinkedIn as a homework assignment.

2. Participant Responses to the TAP Employment Workshop

Overall, the participants in the three workshops observed appeared engaged and interested throughout the sessions, participating in the exercises and activities, responding to questions and offering feedback based on their own experiences. At Langley AFB, the mixture of older retirees and younger separatees seemed to contribute to a positive learning environment as the more experienced in the group were able to share their knowledge with the younger participants. At Ft. Bragg, where the site visit team observed a workshop for younger separatees, there was less sharing of personal job search and interviewing experiences since the majority had little experience in that area. Many participants appeared eager to read, refer to, and retain the new PG. The site team heard participant comments that were favorable, saying, “This is a great book with a lot of useful information,” and “I’m going to keep this forever.” The participatory exercises and activities, particularly the Professional Introductions and the Mock Interviews (during which participants took turns acting as the interviewee, employer, or observer/assessor) seemed to be especially popular with the attendees, resulting in productive learning experiences. Attendance at the workshops is mandatory, and, overall, there was little attrition from day to day. However, some attendees left the sessions early and missed some instructional components. For example, by 3:00 PM on the Day 3, only 12 participants remained in the classroom at the

Langley AFB workshop (out of the 28 participants attending the workshop over the 3-day period).

3. Performance of TAP Employment Workshop Facilitators

Two of the facilitators (Camp Lejeune and Ft. Bragg) observed were employed by GBX Consulting, Inc.; the facilitator at Langley AFB was employed by Inverness Technologies. Although their background and experience varied, all three individuals have led the three-day Employment Workshops since January 2013, with two facilitating on a near weekly basis. The facilitators at Langley AFB and Fort Bragg conducted the three-day workshops on their own; the facilitator at Ft. Bragg was assisted on the third day by a second facilitator who provided one-on-one help with resume development and review. Based upon site team observations, the facilitators conducted the training with a high degree of fidelity to objectives, content, and format of the FG. The facilitators all possessed a thorough understanding of the subject matter, and delivered it in a professional manner. They all did an excellent job keeping the participants engaged by providing anecdotes and experiences shared in other workshops and by encouraging continued participation and interaction among the attendees.

Despite difficult surroundings and challenging circumstances in some sites (see below), the facilitators never lost control of their classrooms but managed to make adjustments to cover the required material. For example, the facilitator at Ft. Bragg had to deal with the loss their Internet connection on the first and second days and most of the third, forcing her to adjust her typical presentation schedule to work around that challenge. In addition, a late-afternoon evacuation due to severe weather and reported fires on the second day resulted in an early end to that day's session. However, the facilitator did her best to move quickly the next day to cover the majority of the critical instructional topics. Questions by participants were answered appropriately or in rare cases (e.g., questions on federal hiring requirements in one site) were deferred with a recommendation to consult with designated staff elsewhere on the base.

4. Adequacy of Workshop Facilities and Equipment

Although there were some minor variations across the sites at the time of the site visits, the TAP Employment Workshops were typically conducted on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays, from 8:00 AM until 4:00 PM, with an hour break for lunch and 10-minute breaks every hour (per workshop protocols). Details on the facilities and equipment at the sites where workshops were observed are provided below.

- **Facility Set-up/Appropriateness.** Workshops were typically conducted in locations on the bases. At workshop breaks, participants had easy access to vending machines, as well as snack bars and cafeterias located on the base. Participants generally sat at tables accommodating from three to twelve per table and were asked to prepare tent cards with their names. All rooms had screens for videos and slides; one had only a white board, one had only a flip chart, and the third had both. While the overall environment in the room used for the workshop observed at Camp Lejeune was adequate, the conditions in the rooms at Langley AFB and Ft. Bragg presented challenges that proved distracting and

detrimental to instruction. Although a large fan provided some air circulation, the room at Langley was very hot, stuffy, and uncomfortable. Both doors were kept open in hopes of improving air circulation, but this allowed for occasional distracting noises from the hallway. The site team was told by base staff that efforts to secure another workshop venue were underway. At Ft. Bragg, partitions were installed to divide a large conference room into three classrooms. There was no air conditioning in the middle classroom and the room was extremely hot and uncomfortable, despite the use of fans. The facilitator reported that she often provided additional breaks when the temperature created an intolerable working environment for the participants.

- **Access to Computers.** At Ft. Bragg, laptop computers were provided for each participant, normally enabling them to work on resumes and to access the various websites referenced in the PG. Unfortunately, the Internet connection was not operational during most of the workshop observed. Participants at Langley AFB were encouraged to bring their own laptops to the workshop; base-provided laptops were available for those who requested them. In-class Internet connection was available, and was used on occasion by the facilitator and some participants. At Camp Lejeune, there was an insufficient number of electrical outlets and power cords to support laptops for the entire class; about half of the participants brought their own laptops or tablets and most of the rest had smart phones that they could use to access the web.
- **PowerPoint Slides/Audiovisuals/Demonstration of Websites – Technical Aspects.** All classrooms had projectors that allowed for slides to be shown on the wall in the front of the room. During the site visit to Langley AFB, there were operational problems with the computer equipment used for uploading, displaying, and advancing slides, making it difficult for the facilitator to move easily from one slide to the next. As described above, participants had no access to the Internet at Ft. Bragg at the time of the site visit.

5. Workshop Attendance and Characteristics of Attendees

Attendance at the TAP Employment Workshop is currently capped at 50 participants. At Langley AFB, the workshop was offered two to three times a month. To address high rates of separation, six workshops were being conducted each week at Camp Lejeune and five at Ft. Bragg at the time of the site visits. The number of participants in the classes observed ranged from 23 at Camp Lejeune, to 28 at Langley AFB, and 45 at Ft. Bragg. Participants were required to sign in each day in order to receive credit for completing the workshop.

The majority of the participants in the observed workshops were male; of the 88 participants, only 9 were females. At the two sites where multiple workshops were held concurrently (i.e., Camp Lejeune and Ft. Bragg), the participants in the classes observed were exclusively separatees, primarily enlisted personnel and generally younger, mostly in their mid-20's and 30's. The workshop at Langley AFB (where only one workshop was being conducted at the time of the site visit) was a mixed class, with 11 retirees and 15 separatees in attendance. The age of the participants in this group varied; the youngest appeared to be in their mid-20's, while the oldest seemed to be in their mid-40's. Participants were a mixed group of enlisted

members, non-commissioned officers, and commissioned officers. During the icebreaker activity, only three participants in this group reported that they intended to further their education, compared with almost half of the younger group of separatees observed at Ft. Bragg. A few participants at each site reportedly had jobs already lined up for the post-service period.

C. Summary of the Findings from the Observational Visits

Overall, these exploratory visits found that facilitators at the three sites demonstrated a high degree of fidelity in the delivery of all sections of the curriculum, including the exercises and activities, as set forth in the Facilitator Guide (FG). The facilitators all possessed a thorough understanding of the subject matter, and delivered it in a professional and competent manner, generally within the timeframes suggested. Based on their own professional experiences, the facilitators modified some and added other exercises and activities to better meet the needs of the workshop participants. Uncomfortable classroom conditions due to lack of adequate ventilation in two of the three sites presented challenges for the workshop facilitators and the participants.

II. ANALYSIS OF TAP EMPLOYMENT WORKSHOP CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEY DATA

A. Introduction

As part of this overall assessment of the TAP Employment Workshops, the Avar research team analyzed a customer satisfaction survey administered by the Department of Defense (DoD) with TAP workshop participants. This section provides tabulations and analyses of customer satisfaction surveys conducted between July 2012 and February 2013 with slightly over 2,000 separating/retiring individuals participating in 286 TAP workshops held at 88 military facilities.

B. Background on the Customer Satisfaction Survey

The TAP Employment Workshop Customer Satisfaction Survey, conducted with TAP workshop participants at the conclusion of the 5-day TAP workshop, collected participant demographic and service information, as well as responses to a series of customer satisfaction and knowledge questions. The analyses provided in this memorandum focus customer feedback for the 3-day Employment Workshop portion of the TAP workshop. The TAP Employment Workshop participants' demographic and service information included in the database provided by DoD/VETS included the following data items: branch of service, facility, session start date, whether the participant was the spouse of a separating service member, length of service, rank, separation date, separation type, and service type. The survey focused on participants' ratings of their level of satisfaction on a 5-point Likert scale (1-Strongly Disagree to 5-Strongly Agree) on the following 11 questions:

- Q1. The instructors were professional and knowledgeable.
- Q2. I found the learning resources for this session useful (e.g., notes, handouts, reading, audio-visual materials).
- Q3. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective -- Complete the Transferable Skills Inventory.
- Q4. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective -- Research Industries, Occupations, Trends.
- Q5. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective -- Analyze Job Postings.
- Q6. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective -- Develop an Initial Draft Master Resume.
- Q7. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective -- Understand Special Appointing Authorities for Veterans.
- Q8. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective --Types of Interviews.
- Q9. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective -- Evaluate Job Offers.
- Q10. I expect to use what I learned in this session in my transition planning.
- Q11. This session contributed to my confidence in transition planning.

Additionally, TAP workshop participants were asked three questions that were intended to assess each participant's substantive knowledge (post-workshop) of several key concepts included in the Employment Workshop curriculum:

- Q12. The STAR technique for telling an effective story stands for what?
 - A. Situation, Time, Action, Results
 - B. Situation, Task, Action, Results
 - C. Scenario, Task, Action, Reaction
 - D. Situation, Task, Aim, Results

- Q13. Which of the following is true with regards to corporate and federal resumes?
 - A. The information contained in a corporate and federal resume is identical.
 - B. A federal resume should be written to the vacancy announcement and a corporate resume should be written to the job description.
 - C. A corporate resume will include social security number and citizenship status.
 - D. A federal resume is typically shorter and less detailed.

- Q14. When responding to interview questions, it is important to:
 - A. Volunteer additional information you are not asked for.
 - B. Respond with lengthy answers.
 - C. Try to relate each response to the position you are applying to.
 - D. All of the above.

Finally, the last item included in the questionnaire was an open-ended question, allowing participants to provide comments on any aspect of the TAP Employment Workshop.

C. Survey Sample and Response Rate

A total of 2,036 participants completed the TAP Employment Workshop customer satisfaction survey. The number of workshop participants attending workshops who did not complete the survey is unknown. A total of 5 records were excluded from the analysis because they reported TAP session start dates that were before July 1, 2012 (the date at which the new TAP Employment Workshop curriculum was first pilot tested) and 2 additional records were excluded because the session start date had been incorrectly entered (e.g., for dates in the future). A total of 2,029 TAP workshop customer satisfaction surveys were analyzed. As shown in several attached tables to this memorandum, the numbers of workshops for which surveys were completed per base/facility, as well as the number of customer satisfaction surveys completed per workshop, varied substantially; for example:

- Of the 88 bases/facilities where customers were surveyed, one-quarter (22 bases) had 25 or more survey respondents; in contrast, 24 bases where surveys were completed (27 percent) had only one completed questionnaire within the database.

- Miramar MCAS had the highest number of responses of any facility, where 327 service members (16 percent of all surveys) completed customer satisfaction surveys. Norfolk Naval Station and Eglin AFB each had over 140 respondents, or 7 percent each. Ft. Sill and Nellis, Hill, and Offutt AFBs each had at least 82 respondents (representing 4 to 5 percent of the total respondents).
- The number of participants completing surveys at each of the 286 TAP employment workshop sessions⁵ from which questionnaires were received varied substantially. The number of workshop sessions per facility from which surveys were received ranged from 1 to 18. The number of survey respondents per workshop session ranged from 1 to 40.

D. Customer Satisfaction Data Processing and Analysis

After receiving DOL TAP Customer Satisfaction Survey data in an Excel file, the Avar research team read the data into an SPSS file and conducted data cleaning, including labeling the variables and values. There were 561 duplicate Participant IDs in the data set; however, since they appeared to be unique cases (e.g., it is possible that individuals took the TAP workshop more than once or that the same Participant ID was entered for more than one workshop attendee), these cases were included in the analyses. The seven cases that were out of the time frame of interest (from July 2012 through February 2013) were excluded from the analyses. Data analyses were conducted to:

- Examine the characteristics of TAP Workshop Customer Satisfaction Survey respondents,
- Explore the relationship between TAP Workshop participants' level of satisfaction with the workshop and their branch of service, facility, separation type (retirees versus separatees), and the time interval between workshop date and expected date of separation, and
- Summarize the participants' suggestions and recommendations for future improvement.

Content analysis was conducted on qualitative data collected in the one open-ended question at the end of the survey questionnaire. The open-ended comments were analyzed, listed, and coded into appropriate categories to identify common themes.

⁵ Within the database provided by VETS, in a small number of instances, there were session start dates at bases/facilities provided for individuals that were within several days of each other, which made it difficult to determine whether ratings were for the same workshop (but the satisfaction survey was completed on different days) or whether more than one workshop was underway that perhaps overlapped. The analysis uses the session start date to determine which workshop was attended by each participant in the database, and so, the 287 separate TAP workshops might slightly overestimate the number of actual workshops at which customer satisfaction surveys were conducted. However, the varying dates for session start dates occurs in relatively few instances, and so, does not much affect the analysis and has no effect on overall levels of satisfaction discussed in this memorandum.

E. Customer Characteristics and Satisfaction Results

Characteristics of the Survey Respondents. Exhibit II-1 shows a summary of overall characteristics of survey respondents (across all bases and workshop sessions). More detailed breakdowns of the characteristics of customer satisfaction survey respondents are attached to this report (see Tables A.1 – A.9 in Attachment II-A). Key characteristic of respondents to the survey (as shown in Exhibit 1) are the following:

- Nearly two-thirds (62 percent) of workshop participants who completed questionnaires were from the Air Force, with 17 percent from the Marine Corps, 11 percent from the Navy, 9 percent from the Army, and less than 1 percent from the Coast Guard;
- 60 percent of survey respondents were separatees and 40 percent were retirees;
- Only one percent of respondents (13 individuals) were spouses of separating service members;
- Of 2,016 participants who provided their years of service in the military, one-third (33 percent) had served for 20 years or more, with 12 percent serving for 11 to 19 years, 25 percent for 6 to 10 years, and 31 percent for 1 to 5 years.
- In terms of rank, 8 percent of survey respondents were junior enlisted personnel (E1–E3), one-quarter (25 percent) were E4's, one-fifth (20 percent) were E5's, and one-third (33 percent) were senior noncommissioned officers (E6–E9). Only one percent were warrant officers. The remainder, 14 percent, were commissioned officers below general or flag rank (O1–O6).
- Only one percent of the 2,016 TAP customer satisfaction survey respondents attended a workshop after separation. Almost half (48 percent) attended a workshop 121–365 days (i.e., 5–12 months) before their expected separation date, 42 percent participated in a session 0–120 days (1–4 months) before their expected separation date, and 9 percent attended the workshop more than one year before their expected separation date.
- Workshops at Miramar MCAS had the highest number and proportion of TAP survey respondents (16 percent of the 2,029 analyzed questionnaires), followed by Norfolk Naval Station and Eglin AFB (7 percent each) and Ft. Sill (5 percent). Eighteen facilities contributed one to four percent of the survey respondents, and 66 facilities with fewer than 25 respondents contributed the remaining 21 percent.

Exhibit II-1: Select Characteristics of TAP Workshop Customer Satisfaction Survey Respondents

Selected Respondent Characteristics	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
Branch	Air Force	1265	62.3
	Marines	351	17.3
	Navy	221	10.9
	Army	189	9.3
	Coast Guard	3	0.1
	Total	2029	100.0
Retiree v. Separatee	Separatee	1211	59.9
	Retiree	811	40.1
	Total	2022	100.0
Years of Service	1 to 5 years	619	30.7
	6 to 10 years	497	24.7
	11 to 19 years	231	11.5
	20+	669	33.2
	Total	2016	100.0
Rank	E1	14	0.7
	E2	28	1.4
	E3	108	5.4
	E4	506	25.1
	E5	406	20.1
	E6	220	10.9
	E7	292	14.5
	E8	108	5.4
	E9	43	2.1
	O1	1	0.0
	O2	23	1.1
	W3	8	0.4
	W4	4	0.2
	O3	83	4.1
	O4	91	4.5
	O5	58	2.9
	O6	23	1.1
	Total	2016	100.0
	Days Between TAP Workshop and Separation	After Separation	18
0 - 30 Days Before		203	10.1
31 - 60 Days		218	10.8
61 - 90 Days		222	11.0
91 - 120 Days		197	9.8
121 - 365 Days		974	48.3
366-730 Days		132	6.5
More than 730 Days		52	2.6
Total		2016	100.0

Exhibit II-1: Select Characteristics of TAP Workshop Customer Satisfaction Survey Respondents

Selected Respondent Characteristics	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
Base/Facilities	Miramar MCAS	327	16.1
	Norfolk Naval Station	148	7.3
	Eglin AFB	142	7.0
	Ft. Sill	93	4.6
	Nellis AFB	86	4.2
	Hill AFB	84	4.1
	Offutt AFB	82	4.0
	JB Charleston	74	3.6
	Barksdale AFB	69	3.4
	Jacksonville NAS	57	2.8
	Holloman AFB	50	2.5
	Malmstrom AFB	50	2.5
	Ft. Hood	47	2.3
	Kadena AB	44	2.2
	Beale AFB	38	1.9
	Goodfellow AFB	38	1.9
	Shaw AFB	36	1.8
	JB Andrews	35	1.7
	Grand Forks AFB	30	1.5
	Patrick AFB	29	1.4
	Yokota AB	28	1.4
	Kirtland AFB	25	1.2
	Other Facilities (Less than 25 Attendees) - 66 Facilities	417	20.6
Total	2029	100.0	

Overall Findings on Extent of Satisfaction. As shown in Exhibit II-2, the mean score for each of the survey question ranges from 4.37 to 4.58 on a five-point Likert scale, where 1 indicates “strongly disagree” and 5 indicates “strongly agree.” This reveals that, on average, the TAP workshop participants were highly satisfied with the TAP workshops, and there was not much difference in satisfaction levels across the questions. Attachment B (Tables B.1 – B.9) provides more detailed tables on satisfaction levels of participants, including cross-tabulations of responses by service branch and for retirees versus separatees.

As shown in Exhibit II-3, on average, 91 percent of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed with all 11 positive statements about the TAP employment workshops. Specifically:

- 94 percent of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the instructors were professional and knowledgeable (Q1; mean rating, 4.58);
- 92 percent of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that:
 - the session content adequately covered the types of interviews (Q8; mean rating, 4.46);
 - the session content adequately covered completion of the Transferable Skills Inventory (Q3; mean rating 4.44);
 - the session content adequately covered researching industries, occupations, and trends (Q4; mean rating, 4.44);
 - the session content adequately covered analyzing job postings (Q5; mean rating, 4.43);
 - the learning resources for the session (e.g., notes, handouts, reading, audio-visual materials) were useful (Q2; mean rating, 4.45);
- 91 percent of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that:
 - the session content adequately covered evaluation of job offers (Q9; mean rating, 4.40); and
 - they expected to use what they learned in the session in their transition planning (Q10; mean rating, 4.44);
- 90 percent the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that:
 - the session contributed to their confidence in transition planning (Q11; mean rating, 4.41), and
 - the session content adequately covered development of an initial draft master resume (Q6; mean rating, 4.40);
- 89 percent of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the session content adequately helped their understanding of special appointing authorities for veterans (Q7; mean rating 4.37).

Overall, Exhibit 3 shows that only between one to three percent of the respondents indicated that they were not satisfied with various aspects of the workshops by choosing the “disagree” or “strongly disagree” responses to the 11 statements.

**Exhibit II-2: Responses to TAP Workshop Customer Satisfaction Survey
Questions Mean Score by Question (N=2029)**

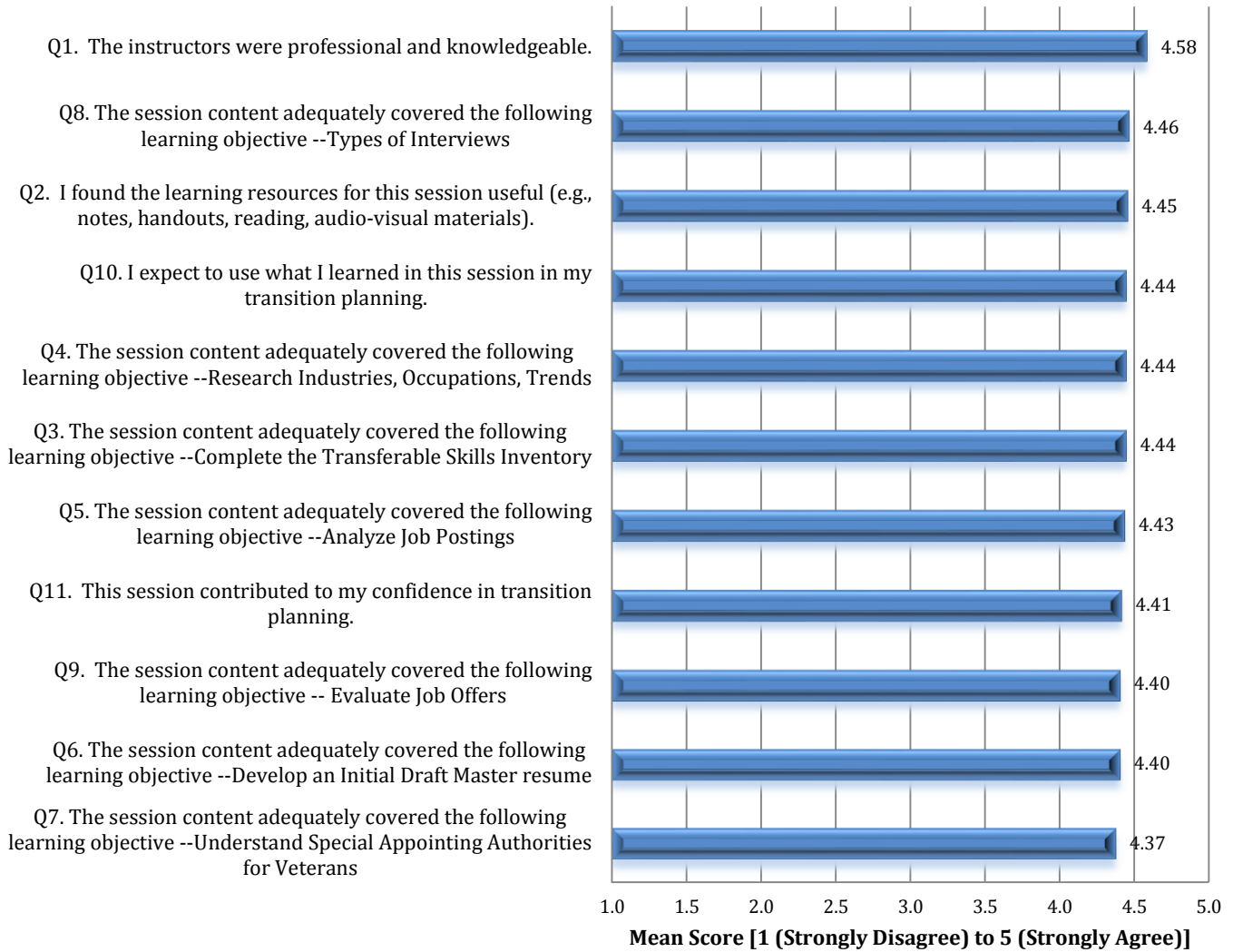


Exhibit II-3: Responses to TAP Workshop Customer Satisfaction Survey Questions—Percentages by Response and Mean Score by Question

TAP Workshop Survey Question	N=	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean Score
Q1. The instructors were professional and knowledgeable.	1991	0.8%	0.5%	4.7%	27.8%	66.2%	4.58
Q2. I found the learning resources for this session useful (e.g., notes, handouts, reading, audio-visual materials).	1979	1.4%	1.1%	6.1%	33.7%	57.8%	4.45
Q3. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective --Complete the Transferable Skills Inventory	1981	0.8%	0.9%	6.6%	37.2%	54.6%	4.44
Q4. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective --Research Industries, Occupations, Trends	1971	0.8%	1.1%	6.4%	37.1%	54.6%	4.44
Q5. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective --Analyze Job Postings	1972	0.9%	1.0%	6.3%	37.7%	54.0%	4.43
Q6. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective --Develop an Initial Draft Master resume	1974	1.1%	1.4%	7.9%	35.8%	53.8%	4.40
Q7. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective --Understand Special Appointing Authorities for Veterans	1972	1.0%	1.5%	8.5%	37.4%	51.5%	4.37
Q8. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective --Types of Interviews	1974	1.0%	0.6%	6.2%	36.2%	56.1%	4.46
Q9. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective -- Evaluate Job Offers	1970	1.0%	1.1%	7.1%	38.3%	52.5%	4.40
Q10. I expect to use what I learned in this session in my transition planning.	1978	1.7%	1.5%	6.2%	32.9%	57.8%	4.44
Q11. This session contributed to my confidence in transition planning.	1978	1.8%	1.2%	6.9%	34.3%	55.8%	4.41
Average Q1 - Q11	1976	1.1%	1.1%	6.6%	35.3%	55.9%	4.44

“Average Q1-Q11” is the mean percentage for the response across all 11 content rating items (not weighted by number of responses).

Finally, as shown in Exhibit II-4 (data also in Table B.2), the mean scores by service (Air Force, Army, Coast Guard,⁶ Marine Corps, and Navy) ranged from 4.10 to 4.48, indicating a high level of satisfaction and relatively small differences in ratings across service branches. Mean scores for the U.S. Army (4.10) were lower than the mean score for all branches combined (4.44), indicating a slightly lower level of satisfaction among participants at the TAP workshops held by the U.S. Army (but still high levels of satisfaction). It should, however, be noted that as shown in Table B.4 and B.5 in Attachment II-B, that one base (Ft. Hood, with 47 respondents and an average score of 3.21 across all questions) largely accounted for the slightly lower average score for the Army.

Highlights of Other Customer Satisfaction Results (shown in tables in Attachment II-B). Among all the facilities with more than 25 TAP workshop participants, Shaw AFB had the highest average mean score for all the questions (4.81), indicating the highest level of satisfaction with the workshop in general, while Ft. Hood had the lowest average mean score for all the questions (3.21), which indicates that the Ft. Hood respondents were less satisfied with the workshop (Table B.4).

As shown in Table B.6, there are only small differences (0 to 0.1) between the mean scores of retirees and separates for each question. Mean scores, ranging from 4.40 to 4.63, clustered around the overall mean, indicating uniform high levels of satisfaction for both separates and retirees. As shown in Table B.8, the mean score for each question varied hardly at all (from 0.01 to 0.09) by how long in advance of separation (or after separation) the service members were participating in the TAP workshops.

F. Qualitative Comments on TAP Workshop

The DOL's Veterans' Employment and Training Service's Transition Assistance Program Employment Workshop Customer Satisfaction Survey offered opportunities for respondents to provide open-ended comments about the TAP workshop. Although there was only one question in the questionnaire soliciting general remarks about TAP, respondents took advantage of the space and provided their feedback and suggestions on a variety of aspects and features of the workshops.

The survey had a total of 464 responses to this open-ended question, after removal of comments such as:

- No comment/none
- Not applicable
- Undecipherable comments texts, such as "test test...", "uuuhhhnn tiss", etc.

Among the 464 respondents with comments, 129 answered "no change." Excluding these 129 responses, the remaining 337 respondents provided unique substantive comments, which were coded into one or more themes.

⁶ Note that Coast Guard ratings are based on only three respondents and so are not discussed in this section, but are shown in the table.

Exhibit II-4: Responses to TAP Workshop Customer Satisfaction Survey Questions: Mean Question Scores by Branch

TAP Workshop Survey Question	All Branches (N=2029)	Branch of Service				
		Air Force (N= 1265)	Army (N= 189)	Coast Guard (N= 3)	Marines (N= 351)	Navy (N= 221)
Q1. The instructors were professional and knowledgeable.	4.58 (n=1991)	4.62 (n=1244)	4.32 (n=183)	3.67 (n=3)	4.56 (n=344)	4.62 (n=217)
Q2. I found the learning resources for this session useful (e.g., notes, handouts, reading, audio-visual materials).	4.45 (n=1979)	4.48 (n=1237)	4.15 (n=183)	4.67 (n=3)	4.48 (n=343)	4.55 (n=213)
Q3. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective -- Complete the Transferable Skills Inventory	4.44 (n=1981)	4.46 (n=1242)	4.21 (n=182)	4.33 (n=3)	4.47 (n=341)	4.47 (n=213)
Q4. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective -- Research Industries, Occupations, Trends	4.44 (n=1971)	4.46 (n=1238)	4.16 (n=179)	4.33 (n=3)	4.47 (n=338)	4.49 (n=213)
Q5. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective -- Analyze Job Postings	4.43 (n=1972)	4.46 (n=1236)	4.12 (n=178)	4.67 (n=3)	4.46 (n=340)	4.45 (n=215)
Q6. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective -- Develop an Initial Draft Master resume	4.40 (n=1974)	4.42 (n=1235)	4.05 (n=179)	4.00 (n=3)	4.46 (n=340)	4.43 (n=217)
Q7. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective -- Understand Special Appointing Authorities for Veterans	4.37 (n=1972)	4.40 (n=1237)	3.98 (n=180)	4.67 (n=3)	4.45 (n=337)	4.42 (n=215)
Q8. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective -- Types of Interviews	4.46 (n=1974)	4.50 (n=1237)	4.04 (n=180)	4.33 (n=3)	4.52 (n=339)	4.46 (n=215)
Q9. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective -- Evaluate Job Offers	4.40 (n=1970)	4.44 (n=1237)	4.02 (n=181)	4.33 (n=3)	4.44 (n=337)	4.44 (n=212)
Q10. I expect to use what I learned in this session in my transition planning.	4.44 (n=1978)	4.48 (n=1240)	4.03 (n=183)	4.00 (n=3)	4.46 (n=338)	4.52 (n=214)
Q11. This session contributed to my confidence in transition planning.	4.41 (n=1978)	4.45 (n=1240)	4.02 (n=179)	4.67 (n=3)	4.44 (n=340)	4.48 (n=216)
Average Q1 - Q11	4.44 (n=1976)	4.47 (n=1238)	4.10 (n=181)	4.33 (n=3)	4.47 (n=340)	4.48 (n=215)

“Average Q1-Q11” is the mean percentage for the response across all 11 content rating items (not weighted by number of responses).

Although the comments do not provide good quantitative estimates of the prevalence of specific problems and issues with TAP workshop,⁷ they do provide some very specific descriptions of problems and issues not addressed by the closed-ended questions. The Avar research team read all of the responses to the one open-ended question and developed a set of general categories into which most of them fell. There was sufficient consistency to provide an impression of which issues/concerns occurred most frequently. The discussion below is based on this qualitative analysis. The comments generally provided detailed suggestions for improvements or examples of specific problems/challenges for TAP workshop participants. The following sections describe the general themes found in the 337 different comments. In some cases a single comment contained more than one of these themes.

Length of the Workshop. While some respondents indicated that the length of workshop was too short and suggested increasing the length of the program to possibly two weeks to allow adequate time for learning and questions, others thought three days was too long and should be reduced to one day, especially for those who have already taken the initiative to find jobs on their own.

Internet Access/Technology. Some respondents commented that having Internet access was outstanding, while others said that the facility needed to have better Wi-Fi to accommodate the class and instructor.

Training content. Some respondents had negative comments about the training material and information, such as too much material, or some aspect of the curriculum being boring, repetitive, or not relevant. For example, one respondent said that “*Information was very dry and boring...Information that was given out was not important to finding a job.*”

Instructor/Trainer/presenter. The respondents had both positive and negative comments about the workshop trainer/presenter. Most of the comments were positive, such as “*Great job by <facilitator’s name> presenting the material in a relevant manner. Very energetic!*” However, one respondent said: “*Find a new person to teach the class.*” And another: “*<The facilitator> spent an hour in the second day of his instruction repeating the same anecdote, verbatim.... He was a poor instructor.*”

Resume/resume writing/cover letters. Even though a few respondents recommended spending less time on resume writing, most of the respondents suggested spending more time to write a target resume and cover letter. Some respondents would like to have one-on-one, hands-on, and individualized guidance on resume writing. Other respondents requested having a workshop trainer who knows how to revise a resume from military to civilian terms.

⁷ A numerical tabulation would not give a good quantitative idea of how prevalent any one opinion or experience was because other respondents might have had the same opinion or experience but not have entered it. They might have omitted it because they gave higher priority to other issues, or because they did not want to take the time to write an extended or even a brief text of their own. A general tendency for the dissatisfied to respond more frequently and at greater length to the opportunities provided by open-ended questions also reduces the accuracy of any estimates of the proportion of respondents holding a particular opinion.

Job search and skills transferring. Some respondents recommended showing more details on how to search jobs, how to apply for government jobs, and how to look for overseas positions. Some respondents recommended that presenters should develop a quick-reference document to summarize the key job websites, rather than spending as much time as they did on various job postings on various sites, many of which were nearly identical. Some respondents requested spending more time on actual applications, or provision of more in-depth information for those who had already had basic job search knowledge. A few respondents requested more programs such as Military-to-Teachers to help find alternatives for future employment. Some respondents recommended strengthening web-based/Internet job searching tools or skills.

Mock interview/interview preparation. Most of the respondents recommended spending more time on mock panel interviews and how to prepare for an interview. Some respondents said that the small group interview sessions didn't need to rotate through everyone.

Spend more time on topics. Besides the above-mentioned topics that some respondents recommended spending more time on, other topics included:

- Human Resource panel
- Salary negotiation
- Information for some respondents were used to the “military mindset” (e.g., they were told what to do or where to go next), and did not know how to deal with the uncertainty of the civilian sector. They would like to have topics addressing that mindset.
- Education
- Social networking
- Overview of the material
- In-depth information
- Aspects of transition planning
- Special information for those who will go to school first after separating before working.

Spend less time on topic. Some respondents indicated that less time should be spent on topics such as the following:

- Activity sheet
- Stressors, time and change management
- Quizzes
- DOL briefing
- How to dress for an interview.

G. Conclusions

Overall, the survey results suggested a high level of satisfaction with the TAP Employment Workshop, with only slight difference in satisfaction levels across questions, service branches, facilities (though there were a few bases, such as Ft. Hood, or workshops where satisfaction levels were slightly lower), or separation status (retirees vs. separatees).

III. OPTIONS FOR FUTURE EXPERIMENTAL AND NON-EXPERIMENTAL EVALUATION OF THE TAP EMPLOYMENT WORKSHOPS

A. Introduction

The main purpose of this section of the report is to discuss potential strategies/options for future evaluation of the Transition Assistance Program (TAP) Employment Workshops. These three-day workshops, which are part of a 5-day TAP workshop held at military bases and other locations within the United States and worldwide, are intended to prepare separating and retiring service members for transition from the military to the civilian sector. TAP Employment Workshops have been in existence for over 20 years (since 1990) and have a particular emphasis on helping service members to prepare for job search, employment, and job retention in the civilian sector. This section of the report examines potential experimental and non-experimental approaches to future evaluation of TAP, with a specific focus on how DOL/VETS can rigorously estimate net impacts of TAP Employment Workshop attendance for separating/retiring service members. Once specific goals and evaluation approaches are determined by DOL/VETS, a detailed and systematic evaluation design effort will be required, including development of a full evaluation design report to identify appropriate/feasible evaluation methods, identify and develop data collection methods/instrumentation, and plan the analytic approach to be employed in the evaluation effort. This section is divided into the following subsections: (a) a brief overview of past impact studies conducted of the TAP Employment Workshops, (b) an assessment of the potential for experimental research designs; (c) exploration of the potential for experimental and non-experimental research designs, (d) discussion of the potential for process/implementation evaluations, and (e) conclusions and recommendations for future evaluation of the TAP Employment Workshops.

B. Background on Previous VETS' Sponsored Evaluations of the TAP Employment Workshop and Customer Satisfaction Surveys

VETS-Sponsored Evaluations of TAP Employment Workshops. VETS provided two evaluation reports, both of which used comparison group methodologies⁸ and – though dated (particularly in light of the redesign of the TAP Employment workshop curriculum) – both indicated separatees were helped in their transition by attending workshops and one of which found positive employment impacts.

A 1995 study, entitled *Transition Assistance Program: Phase III Impact Evaluation*, conducted for the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Veterans' Employment and Training, sought "to determine whether the TAP program made a difference in participants' transition experiences by comparing their outcomes with those of a matched comparison group." (Barton, et al, 1995, p. i). The outcomes examined in this study included satisfaction with transition services, match between job desired and job obtained, job search time and time unemployed, and

⁸ Though it should be noted that in the second study, LISBOA finds that the comparison group is so small (at n=136) that it is not possible to conduct statistically valid comparisons between separatees attending and not attending the TAP workshop.

unemployment costs avoided. In conducting this comparison group study, Barton, et al. drew on data from several sources: (1) data on civilian labor market outcomes came from a telephone survey, (2) records of unemployment benefits and earnings were from State Employment Security Agencies (SESAs), and (3) data on TAP participants was from TAP enrollment records. Data from the Defense Manpower Data Center (DMDC) on all separatees were, along with TAP enrollment records, used to define the sampling frames for the survey and the SESA data collection. The DMDC data were matched to the survey data for analysis of nonresponse, and to the SESA records for analysis of the probability of receiving unemployment benefits and the value of these benefits. The telephone survey and the SESA data focused on the transition and civilian labor market experiences of enlisted male separatees, the largest of the TAP user groups. The survey gathered information on the time devoted to job search, work, and other activities since separation from the military. For the current job and the first job after separation, it recorded each individual's earnings and the number of weeks and hours worked. Other questions addressed veterans' benefits information and job search services obtained at separation, attitude toward these services, and use of veterans' programs. (Barton, et al. 1995, p. iv-v). Key findings from this comparison group study were:

- The survey responses indicated that TAP participants were more satisfied than nonparticipants with the transition services they received and were more likely to say the services were helpful in their adjustment to civilian life. In addition, they were more likely to have received job search instruction, and were more likely to judge the assistance very or somewhat helpful in finding a job. The two groups had similar matches between their current job and both their desired work hours and career goals. Also, the two groups received similar pay.
- The survey evidence suggested that TAP may have a positive effect by helping participants get jobs more quickly, reducing time unemployed by three to seven weeks. Although the analyses did not reveal which particular element of TAP was responsible for these effects, important program elements included time spent in writing resumes and improving interview skills, in discussing how military skills transfer to the civilian sector, in helping participants translate their military skills for civilian understanding, and in helping identify career goals and expectations.
- Estimates derived from the analysis of administrative data from state agencies provided a more mixed picture of the TAP effect. Two adjustment models were used in the analysis effort.⁹ The Adjustment I models found that TAP participants were more likely to claim

⁹ Simple comparisons between TAP and non-TAP separatees on the mean values of labor market outcomes failed to account for the characteristics of the two groups, other than TAP attendance, that may also influence the outcome. Two statistical approaches used controlled for these differences to isolate the TAP effect, as described by Barton, et al.: “The first, referred to as Adjustment I, accounts for differences in measurable characteristics that may influence job search time, such as education level, military pay grade, occupation, ethnicity, and marital status. Although Adjustment I only takes account of measured characteristics, it also adjusts for the Armed Forces Qualification Test (AFQT) score and military success (measured by pay grade relative to the cohort average). Such ability and success characteristics are usually unmeasured in evaluation studies. The second procedure, Adjustment 2, not only accounts for these differences in measurable characteristics, but also uses statistical methods to control for unmeasured

UI benefits, but that there is no difference between participants and nonparticipants in the duration of benefits or in total benefits received. Taken together, the Adjustment 1 models showed that TAP participants used the information provided in the workshop to claim UI benefits, but that they draw benefits for less time because their unemployment spells were shorter, yielding no net effect on average benefit levels.

- The Adjustment 2 models, which controlled for both measured and unmeasured differences between TAP participants and nonparticipants, found that TAP reduced the probability, duration, and amount of UI benefit claims. From this, the authors suggested: "...It is safe to conclude, then, that although simple statistics show that TAP participants claim more unemployment benefits, the program itself does not lead to higher UI benefits and probably reduces them."

Barton, et al. concluded that involvement in TAP workshops has potentially positive effects on reducing weeks of unemployment following separation and increasing earnings of TAP participants: "Among its other benefits, if the estimated three to seven-week decrease in average unemployment found here held for the entire population of separatees, TAP may greatly reduce individual and family stress and increase overall earnings. Furthermore, there is some evidence to suggest that the program pays for itself by limiting the unemployment insurance claims of separatees." (Barton et al., p. v-vii.)

The results of a second evaluation study of the TAP Employment Workshop, conducted by LISBOA, were published in 2002 (LISBOA, 2002). LISBOA, Inc., was hired by VETS "to perform a quantitative assessment of the short-term impacts of TAP operations." The quantitative assessment was designed to obtain survey response data from a nationally representative sample of veterans who left active duty within 14 months of the project's data collection time period. Data collected in the research effort was statistically analyzed and the results were used to assist in the development of recommendations for enhancements to the TAP workshop. The sample for the LISBOA study consisted of 1,089 responses from individuals discharged from active military duty within the United States from February 2000 through February 2001. According to the researchers, the total of 1,089 responses provides a valid, nationally representative sample of all individuals leaving active duty during the specified timeframe. The survey sample consisted of two cohorts: (1) One cohort was comprised of recently discharged military personnel who participated in TAP (N= 953); and (2) the second cohort consisted of recently discharged military personnel who did not participate in TAP (N= 136). The authors of this study cautioned, however, that given the small number of non-participants that no statistically valid comparisons could be made between the TAP participants and non-participants.¹⁰ Key findings from the LISBOA study were:

differences that may be related to TAP participation. That is, Adjustment 2 estimates avoid potential selection bias in which unmeasured characteristics related both to TAP attendance and to the outcome are mistakenly attributed to TAP. Both adjustments control for potential survey response bias."

¹⁰ "The size of TAP participant cohort was sufficiently large enough to constitute a valid nationally representative sample. The size of the TAP non-participant cohort was not sufficiently large to make it a valid nationally representative sample. Therefore, no comparisons were possible between TAP participants and non-participants." (LISBOA, 2002, p. 1)

- Most of the respondents reported attending TAP. Furthermore, most of the overall respondents (TAP participants and non-participants) indicated that they were encouraged to attend a TAP workshop.
- Of the TAP participants who reported using their TAP manuals since leaving the military, the majority reported that the manual was useful.
- A majority of the TAP participants reported using techniques presented in TAP since leaving the military. Most of the TAP participants rated their TAP experience as being helpful in their transition.
- Most of the respondents indicated that they were employed fulltime. Furthermore, a majority of the respondents reported that their current job is not related to their military duty/occupation.
- Most of the respondents reported that they had received unemployment benefits after being discharged from the military. Over one-third of the respondents indicated that they had received unemployment benefits for six months.
- Many of the respondents were enrolled in education or technical training programs. Most of the respondents indicated that they had sought services at their State Employment Service Agencies.
- Most of the TAP participants (84.7 percent) rated their TAP experience as being helpful in their transition. This number indicated that a majority of the participants found the TAP experience to be beneficial.

The report authors conclude that there is a need for a large, statistically representative sample for a comparison group: “The biggest shortcoming of this study is the low number of non-participant responses. In future studies the number of TAP non-participants should be increased in order to reach a representative sample of the population. Therefore, comparisons could be made between TAP participants and non-participants.”

Customer Satisfaction Survey. Currently DoD provides VETS with quarterly results from a customer satisfaction survey administered at the end of the full (5-day) TAP program. The employment workshop questions are one component of a data collection effort covering all transition services delivered. According to the June 2013 telephone interview with VETS officials, DoD consulted with VETS in developing the TAP Employment Workshop questions included in the survey instrument. The current version of the customer satisfaction survey was launched in April 2013 (note: DoD has been conducting customer satisfaction surveys of TAP workshops over the years and the survey instrument has changed and been refined over time). This current survey asks four key questions with regard to customer satisfaction with the TAP Employment Workshop (which could be used in future evaluation or monitoring efforts):

- How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about the DOL Employment Workshop module (on 5 point scale, with 1-Strongly Agree to 5-

Strongly disagree)?

- The facilitators were professional
 - The facilitators were knowledgeable
 - The facilitators engaged the participants
 - The facilitators interacted with the participants
 - I found the learning resources (e.g., notes, handouts, audiovisual materials) for this module to be useful
 - I will use what I learned in this module in my transition planning
 - This module enhanced my confidence in transition planning
- Did the module content adequately cover the following learning objectives (Yes/No)?
 - How to complete the transferable skills inventory
 - How to research industries, occupations, and trends
 - How to analyze job postings
 - How to develop an initial draft master resume
 - How to understand special appointing authorities for veterans
 - Understanding different types of interviews
 - How to evaluate job offers
 - To what extent did this module increase your knowledge of the following learning objectives (On 5 point scale, with 1-Not at all to 5-Very large extent)?
 - How to complete the transferable skills inventory
 - How to research industries, occupations, and trends
 - How to analyze job postings
 - How to develop an initial draft master resume
 - How to understand special appointing authorities for veterans
 - Understanding different types of interviews
 - How to evaluate job offers
 - Was the time allotted for covering the DOL Employment Workshop module too short, appropriate, or too long?

Additionally, the customer satisfaction survey asks customers to complete five questions that are intended to assess the participant's knowledge of topics covered during the TAP workshop (with multiple choice options provided for the TAP participant to choose from):

- Which of the following statements regarding corporate and federal resumes is TRUE?
- What does the STAR technique for telling an effective job performance story stand for?
- Which of the following is important to do when responding to interview questions?
- Is the following statement true or false? The Veterans Employment Opportunities Act of 1998 (VEOA) specifies that agencies must allow preference for eligible veterans to apply for positions announced under merit promotion procedures when an agency is recruiting from its own workforce.
- Job seekers should be aware that job recruiters may be looking at... (1) past increases in salary, (2) your social media networking sites, (3) seniority level of your references, or (4) none of the above.

Potential Outcome and Explanatory Variables for Experimental and Non-Experimental Evaluations of TAP Workshops. Among the potential outcome measures that should be considered and collected for each TAP workshop participant to support experimental and non-experimental evaluations (as discussed in the next section of this report) are the following:

- Employment status following separation (e.g., at 3/6/12/24/36 months after separation);
- Quarterly earnings (e.g., for up to 3 years or longer after separation); and
- Enrollment in education/training and attainment of educational degree/credential gains.

While some impact evaluations compare outcomes for treatment and control group participants (e.g., difference in means for earnings between treatment and control groups), often multivariate techniques (e.g., multiple regression) are used to compare outcomes after adjusting for a set of explanatory, or control, variables (Barnow, 1997, p. 67). There are several important reasons for using explanatory variables in multivariate models, including the following:

- to increase the precision of estimated program effects;
- to control for “confounding factors” in non-experimental designs that would otherwise result in biased estimates of program effects;
- to estimate interactions between individual characteristics (as captured by the explanatory variables) and program effects; and
- to generally improve understanding of the determinants of outcomes for intervention participants. (Barnow, 1997, p. 67)

Among the potential explanatory variables (collected on each TAP attendee) that should be considered for collection and inclusion in experimental/nonexperimental evaluation efforts are the following:

- Demographic variables (e.g., age, race/ethnicity, disability status, etc.)
- Educational attainment and credentials
- Military experience/work history (e.g., years in military, enlisted/officer/warrant officer, rank, occupation within military, skills, etc.)
- Programmatic inputs (e.g., TAP workshop sessions/hours attended, receipt of one-on-one assistance; completion of resume by end of TAP workshop; receipt of other TAP-related assistance; receipt of VA assistance; receipt of other VETS; and receipt of other job readiness and training assistance from the Employment Service, Workforce Investment Act (WIA) and local public workforce system/American Job Centers); and
- Environmental-specific factors (e.g., economic characteristics of the labor market to which the TAP participant is returning).

While DOL, in conjunction with DoD, has made strides in recent years to collect and, in some instances, bring together data on TAP workshop attendance, TAP workshop participant characteristics, TAP customer satisfaction survey data, and TAP outcomes, additional data

integration work would be needed to bring these data sources (particularly employment and earnings outcome data) together to support non-experimental/experimental research studies of TAP. For example, DOL has been working on a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with DoD to obtain Personal Identifying Information (PII) on all transitioning service members, which could be linked with Wagner-Peyser and American Job Center (AJC) data to track the extent to which transitioning service members use Wagner-Peyser/AJC services and employment outcomes for service members registered under the Wagner-Peyser program. However, currently, DOL does not have access to a nationwide registry of wage record data (such as the National Directory of New Hires) that could be matched with PII for transitioning services members to track quarterly employment and earnings. Without such access to a national source of wage record data (e.g., to obtain earnings data at 6, 12, and 24 months after separation), it would be necessary for DOL to obtain wage record data on a state-by-state basis from state employment agencies to support future impact/outcome studies of transitioning service members.

C. Potential Experimental Research Designs for Evaluating TAP

Randomized social science experiments are a type of controlled experiment that happens outside a laboratory environment; they use the same random assignment methods as are used for experiments in the physical and biological sciences. A substantial number of social science experiments have been conducted over the past 50 years. For example, in a study of 193 social experiments started between 1962 and 1996, 293 different treatments were tested. Four-fifths of the studies examined the effects of the treatments on employment and earnings. Similarly, any evaluation of the TAP program would likely examine the treatment effects on employment and earnings.

Randomized experiments have a long history in evaluation aimed at employment and earnings outcomes. Some of these experiments have produced influential results. Experimental methods are used because they have a high degree of credibility as randomization assures that those who experience the policy change (the experimental group) are alike, in all important ways, to those who do not experience it (the control group), except for the difference in treatment/policy itself. Randomized experiment can only be effective if the treatment is significantly different from the services received by the control group. The sample size must also be adequate to assure that differences in outcomes between the treatment and control groups are due to the treatment rather than chance.¹¹

The experimental method has weaknesses as well. A common weakness is that the results of the experiment may not generalize to types of individuals other than those enrolled in the experiment, or to different areas with different economic and programmatic environments, or to policies that differ slightly from those tested in the experiment. In evaluation terminology this is the “external validity” problem. The severity of this problem can be reduced if a large number

¹¹ During the planning phase of experimental studies it is important to analyze “minimal detectable effect” (MDE) to ensure appropriate sample size. The concept of minimum detectable effect (MDE) has been identified by Bloom (1995) and others as a practical way to summarize the statistical power of a particular evaluation design. Orr (1999) describes the MDE as “the smallest true impact that would be found to be statistically significantly different from zero at a specified level of significance with specified power.”

of experiments are conducted in multiple sites, on different populations, and with different policy features. Despite these weaknesses, the strengths of experiments for answering some types of questions are great. Even if they may not be completely generalizable and even if they do not always capture all the relevant effects of the program, they provide more credible evidence than other methods for the effects of the programs in one location and on one population.

1. Types of Experiments

There are two ways to conduct random assignment experiments. The first involves denial of services to a control group in order to test the treatment. The second involves “bumping up” the treatment such that the offer of the normal treatment becomes the control group, while the enhance treatment becomes the treatment for the experiment.

Denial of services becomes more practical when resources are limited and the offer of the treatment is presented as a lottery in which the winners receive the treatment.¹² Even in these cases, however, resistance often develops to the implementation of the experiment. For example, the latest evaluation of the Job Corps involved denial of services – treatment group member were offered Job Corps slots, while controls were not -- and strong objections were made by youths who were denied participation in the Job Corps program during the enrollment period for the experiment.

“Bump ups” of services as an experimental method may meet with less resistance. The treatment group is offered enhanced services, while the control group continues to be offered the traditional services. For example, during the operation of eight Unemployment Insurance Experiments, the control group was offered traditional job search assistance and training services. The treatment groups, on the other hand, were either offered enhanced job search assistance and training, or they were offered additional services such as relocation services, reemployment bonuses, or self-employment assistance. In no case was there an objection by members of the control groups about not being offered enhanced services (Wandner 2010).

2. Applying Experimental Methods to the TAP Program

Given the recent history of experimental evaluations of employment and training initiatives in the United States and the ability of such studies to generate rigorous net impact estimates of intervention effects (e.g., on employment and earnings), it is sensible for VETS to consider using an experimental research design in evaluating the TAP Employment Workshops. Implementing a pure experimental design involves random assignment to treatment (i.e., attendance at the TAP workshop) or control (i.e., no attendance at the TAP workshop) groups is

¹² Such denial of services may be more readily accepted by program operators and policy makers when there is excess demand for the services (e.g., a waiting list), so that in the absence of the experiment some individuals who might qualify for services cannot be served because of a lack of available resources to serve them. In this case (when there is excess demand for services than can be supplied), even with random assignment to treatment and control groups the same or similar numbers of individuals may be served as would be the case if an experiment was not used.

likely problematic because of the necessity of denying some military service members access to the TAP program to carry out the experiment. With all branches mandating participation of all separating/retiring personnel to TAP workshops it would in most likelihood (without a waiver) not be feasible (or ethical) to randomly assign separatees/retirees to a control group, which was excluded from attending the TAP workshop.¹³

The only potentially realistic experimental design option would appear to be a study involving a “bump up” of services. Such a bump up approach would make sense if there was an interest in enhancing the current TAP workshops. Such enhancements could be done by extending the time of a TAP Employment Workshop from three days to, perhaps, four or five days – however, such a bump up design does not make sense if the objective is to evaluate the net impact of the current TAP workshop model (versus the absence of receiving the Employment Workshop).

Several examples of enhancements that might be of interest include the following two approaches. First, extended time for the workshops could be used to conduct more extensive job research, ensure that all attendees complete a resume that has been reviewed and improved, and/or conduct more extensive mock job interviews. Such a change may result in better employment and earnings outcomes for TAP participants. The extension of workshop to five-day duration, however, would result in additional costs for VETS and would not provide estimates of the employment and earnings impacts of TAP workshop attendance (versus not attending the workshop). Another option for enhancement might be introducing the use of laptops into the workshop classrooms for all participants during the TAP workshop. Ensuring that computers were used systematically as part of the curriculum for conducting research and writing resumes might improve workshop results sufficiently to have a significant impact on the treatment group. If the laptops were introduced in phases, initially to some TAP classes and not to others, this would be a bump up approach that did not deny services (new computers) to the control group. By having a phased introduction, the classes with new laptops would be the treatment group, while classes that had not yet introduced the laptops would function as a control group. In the case of introducing laptops to classrooms, a significant cost would be incurred by the military to purchase laptops and to upgrade classrooms to accommodate them.

However, this type of “bump up” design has one major limitation—it would provide no information on the effectiveness of the basic TAP employment workshop or of the enhanced version. Instead, it would only provide information on the increase (or decrease) in benefits of the enhanced option relative to the current program. If there is a desire to estimate the impact of

¹³ If some bases have not yet implemented this mandate (i.e., for all service members to attend TAP Employment Workshop sessions), one possibility would be to conduct an experimental research study with these bases that have not yet fully implemented this mandate. For example, for a group of some or all of these bases, the mandate to enroll all participants into the TAP Workshop could be phased in over a period of six months or a year. During this phase-in period, transitioning service members could be randomly assigned to a control group (e.g., that would attend 2 of the 5 days of the TAP workshop, excluding the 3-day Employment Workshop) or a treatment group (e.g., that would attend all 5 days of the TAP workshop, including the 3-day Employment Workshop). Although this would be one option for testing the net impacts of attending the TAP workshop, it is probably not a feasible one, since it is understood that all branches have mandated that all transitioning service members attend the 5-day TAP workshop.

the current program relative to no program, non-experimental methods would have to be used (discussed below).

D. Non-Experimental Research Design Options for Evaluating TAP

As described in the previous section, the use of randomized controlled trials (RCTs) is only really feasible for evaluating transition assistance programs for a differential impact analysis where the RCT is used to compare the impacts of alternative treatments rather than the impact of the program compared to no treatment. In this section, several non-experimental evaluation impact approaches are explored, and we offer our assessments of the strategies available. Strategies described are before-after studies, propensity score matching, interrupted time series, and regression discontinuity designs.¹⁴

1. Before-After Design

The before-after design, also known as a reflexive design, is one of the simplest and least intrusive approaches available. Unfortunately, this approach rarely provides unbiased estimates of treatment impact, and its use requires very strong assumptions. It is of interest for evaluating the TAP employment workshop because, as described below, the approach can provide useful diagnostic information about the program.

The before-after approach is very simple. The outcome variable of interest is observed prior to the intervention and after the intervention has been introduced, and the before-after difference in the values of the outcome variable is interpreted as the program impact. The key assumption underlying this design is that no factor other than the intervention of interest is affecting the outcome variable. Because all TAP participants are employed prior to enrolling in the TAP employment workshop, the use of this approach is clearly unsuitable for estimating program impact on employment-related outcomes. The reflexive design can be useful, however, for estimating the impact of the workshop on participants' knowledge of information and skills taught in the TAP employment workshop, and thus could serve useful as a diagnostic instrument.

To implement the suggested before-after design, a test would be developed to assess knowledge of the topics covered in the TAP employment workshop, such as obtaining labor market information, identifying suitable job openings, developing appropriate cover letters and resumes, interviewing skills, and negotiating after receiving a job offer. TAP employment workshop participants would be administered the test prior to or at the beginning of the workshop. Information from the test would be useful for facilitators to know which workshop modules require the most attention for a given cohort. Participants would then be given the same test (or a similar test covering the same topics) at the conclusion of the workshop, and the impact of the TAP employment workshop on knowledge for obtaining employment could be estimated by subtracting the pre-workshop score from the post-workshop score. This use of the before-after design is reasonable because there is no other plausible explanation for any gains in

¹⁴ Instrumental variables could potentially be used, but we were unable to identify a suitable instrument.

knowledge of obtaining employment over the short period of the workshop than the workshop itself.

The before-after design has pros and cons. The major limitation of the design is that it would provide no direct evidence on the impact of the workshop on employment outcomes; thus the before-after study should not be undertaken to identify the impact on employment. Another problem with the before-after study is that time would have to be allocated for participants to take the test twice, thus either reducing the time available for the workshop or requiring more time to be spent by participants in TAP-related activities. On the positive side, the approach would be useful if the workshop has a smaller than desired impact on employment to determine if the poor outcomes result from a failure of the participants to learn the material presented, and if so which topics are not covered effectively, or some other cause. In addition, the use of the tests would be useful for facilitators to tailor the workshop to address the topics where participants are weakest. Finally, the use of the pretest would be a key component in implementing a regression discontinuity design, as is described later.

2. Interrupted Time Series

Interrupted time series designs are sometimes an appealing approach to estimating the impact of an intervention when the intervention is observed a number of periods before and after the intervention is introduced. In the simplest case, the outcome of interest is regressed on a time trend variable and a dichotomous (dummy) variable set equal to zero prior to the intervention and one after the intervention takes effect; the model could be slightly generalized to allow for the trend to vary after implementation. In a famous early application of this technique, Campbell and Ross (1968) showed how increased enforcement of the speed limit in Connecticut led to a decline in traffic fatalities. Campbell and Ross (1968) were careful to note that there are a number of threats to interrupted time series estimators. Among the threats noted are history (where other events drive the change in the outcome variable), maturation (where there is an ongoing process of change affecting the outcome), regression (a tendency for high values of the outcome variable to be followed by lower values), and instability (where the value of the outcome variable tends to fluctuate a great deal). To some extent, these threats can often be countered by including more observations before and after the introduction of the intervention and by including other explanatory variables to reduce the presence of uncontrolled maturation or history. St. Clair, Cook, and Hallberg (2013) suggest that including a similar group not affected by the intervention, a comparative interrupted time series or CITS, can also be used to avoid misattributing changes to the intervention of interest.

In theory, an interrupted time series approach could be used to estimate the effects of the TAP approach on employment and earnings. The 2012 TAP Participant Guide notes that the program has been in effect since 1990. One could gather data from years prior to 1990 and after to determine if the presence of the TAP program has led to a decrease in the unemployment rate and an increase in earnings for TAP participants relative to nonveterans. Unfortunately, gathering the data needed would be difficult, and some data would likely be impossible to obtain. The treatment group would consist of all separating veterans in a year. Separating veterans are eligible for unemployment insurance under the UCX program. The analysis would require use

of UCX data on duration of claims for a period from prior to implementation of the TAP workshop, say 1975, to the present. Next, one would need to gather similar data for regular UI claims. Models would then be constructed to determine the impact of the TAP program on claim duration for separating veterans before and after the introduction of TAP. Assuming this data could be obtained, there are several other important data issues that would have to be overcome. First, some separating veterans might move directly to employment and not file a claim; it would be necessary to obtain this information to include as “zero week spells.” Second, TAP has not been a mandatory program until recently; thus, the estimates obtained from the modeling effort described above would provide an estimate of the *availability* of TAP rather than the *use* of TAP. Third, it is likely that the TAP employment workshop and other resources available to veterans and other job seekers has changed over time; one would need to document and code all these changes and incorporate them in the model. Estimating the impact on earnings would be even more challenging; one would have to link earnings data from some source, most likely social security earnings data, for the separating veterans and others.

Although an interrupted time series approach to evaluating TAP is thus conceptually feasible, we are not optimistic that all the required data could be obtained, and even if it could be obtained, there is a strong risk that the impact estimates would be sensitive to variables included, time period covered, and model specification. Thus, we suggest that an interrupted time series be seriously explored only if the other approaches prove even less feasible.

3. Propensity Score Matching

Propensity score matching (PSM) is a commonly used method of developing a comparison group that is similar on characteristics that affect program participation and outcomes of interest. The primary motivation for using PSM is that those receiving the treatment of interest may differ systematically from those not receiving the treatment, so rather than compare all who receive the treatment with all who do not, one needs to restrict the comparison group to those who are as similar as possible to those who receive the treatment.

One way to obtain treatment and comparison groups that are similar is to match them on observed characteristics. As there are likely to be a large number of characteristics that could be matched on and it would difficult or impossible to match exactly on continuous variables, Rosenbaum and Rubin (1985) developed propensity score matching as a means to construct a comparison group that is similar to the treatment group where, instead of attempting match on a large number of characteristics, the match is performed on a single variable, namely the propensity (probability) of participating in the treatment. Although there are many variations on propensity score matching, the basic approach follows the steps described by Caliendo and Kopeinig (2008):

- Using data for treatment group members and those who have not received the treatment, estimate a statistical model that produces an equation predicting the probability that a person with various characteristics will receive the treatment.¹⁵

¹⁵ Typically logistic regression analysis is used where the dependent variable is treatment status.

- Select a matching mechanism to determine which individuals who do not receive the treatment will be assigned to the comparison group.¹⁶
- Check the data to make certain that the treatment and comparison group samples span the same range in their probabilities of receiving the treatment, and eliminate cases where there is no overlap.
- Determine if the quality of the match is adequate, and if it is not, refine the equation for estimating propensity scores until adequate matches are obtained.¹⁷
- Estimate the impact using analysis of variance, regression analysis, or difference-in-difference regression analysis.
- Conduct sensitivity analysis to determine if variations in matching or analysis affect the estimated impacts.

The primary weakness of propensity score matching is that it relies on the strong assumption that all the variables that affect treatment status and the outcome variable are included in the match. Moreover, it is impossible to test whether this assumption is met. There is some disagreement in the research community as to how well results from propensity score matching are similar to the results from RCTs.

None of the studies that have analyzed impact estimates using propensity score matching conclude that the approach is always valid. Barnow (2010) notes that most of the studies find that propensity score matching works best when certain conditions are met:

- It is important to only include observations in the region of common support, where the probabilities of participating are nonzero for both treatment group members and comparison group members,
- Data for the treatment and comparison groups should be drawn from the same data source, or the same questions should be asked of both groups.
- Comparison group members should be drawn from the same geographic area as the treatment group.

¹⁶ Caliendo and Kopeinig (2008) and Smith and Todd (2005) suggest a number of matching strategies. The simplest approach is one-to-one matching, where for each treatment group person, a comparison group person is selected on the basis of having the closest propensity score; a variation on this approach is many-to-one matching. Other approaches include kernel density matching and local linear regression matching where all or most of the nonparticipants are included in the analysis but those who are poor matches are assigned zero or low weight in the analysis. Other refinements to the matching procedure include methods where cases where there are no good match are excluded and selection of observations with or without replacement.

¹⁷ One approach to determine if the groups are similar is to use t tests to determine if the treatment and matched comparison groups have statistically significant differences on each of the explanatory variables.

- It is important to understand and statistically control for the variables used to select people into the treatment group and to control for variables correlated with the outcomes of interest.
- Difference in difference estimators appear to produce less bias than cross section matching in several of the studies, but it is not clear that this is always the case.

Propensity score matching is a possible approach for evaluating the TAP employment workshop, but there are questions concerning how likely the approach is to produce unbiased estimates of the workshop's impact on employment and earnings. Because the TAP workshop is now required of all separating veterans, the comparison group must consist of job seekers who are not separating veterans. One place to identify such a comparison group is among the customers at American Job Centers (formerly One-Stop Career Centers). Data from the management information systems for the Workforce Investment Act and/or the Wagner-Peyser Act could be used to find nonveterans with characteristics that match the separating veterans. Sample size would not be an issue, as there are large numbers of separating veterans and American Job Center users. Because the reporting system for the Workforce Investment Act includes information on the level of services received, it would be possible to compare the outcomes of separating veterans to all American Job Center users, only those who received core services, or any other group defined by services received.¹⁸

The biggest challenge is assessing whether separating veterans are inherently different from other job seekers. Retiring veterans are likely to be least comparable to other job seekers. Retiring veterans, who are typically in their late 30s or 40s, receive a pension that is at least 50 percent of their basic pay in their final three years. To put this in perspective, enlisted personnel of rank E-5 with 20 years of service would draw a pension of over \$18,000 per year, and an O-4 (major in the army or marines) would draw a pension of over \$40,000 per year; having such a large pension could have a significant effect on employment and earnings after leaving the military.

For separating veterans who do not draw a pension, there could still be important differences that could not be controlled for in the analysis. Many veterans have skills that are difficult to match with civilian jobs, and the occupational titles and job descriptions are different, which could make it difficult to communicate with employers; indeed, an important aspect of the TAP employment workshop is helping veterans to translate their qualifications so that employers will understand them. In addition, civilian attitudes toward veterans can be an important factor in how the veteran does in searching for work. Currently, veterans are generally held in high regard, but in the Viet Nam War era, veterans were not so acclaimed. Because civilian attitudes toward veterans cannot be separated from veteran status, there is no way to disentangle it from the TAP employment workshop experience. Thus, while technically feasible, it is difficult to

¹⁸ The Department of Labor is in the process of expanding data available on veterans using Wagner-Peyser services. Data will soon be available identifying TAP workshop participants who receive Wagner-Peyser services. Unfortunately, earnings data for TAP participants who do not receive Wagner-Peyser services must be obtained either by accessing the National Directory of New Hires data maintained by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services or by linking to each state's unemployment insurance wage record base. Although the Department of Labor is attempting to improve access to these data sources, this effort is still in process at this time.

know if propensity score matching can be used to isolate the effects of the TAP employment workshop from other factors that affect post-separation employment and earnings.¹⁹

4. Regression Discontinuity Design

The regression discontinuity design (RDD) is an important non-experimental evaluation design that can be used when treatment status is determined by a well-defined screening variable, referred to as a “forcing variable.” The design was developed by two psychologists, Thistlethwaite and Campbell (1960), and has become popular in recent years with statisticians and economists as well.²⁰ Examples of forcing variables include test scores for admission to a program, firm size for coverage by certain statutes, and age for admission to certain programs. There are two basic types of RDDs. In a “sharp” RDD, treatment status is precisely determined by the forcing variable, and all individuals with a score above the cutoff receive the treatment and all below the cutoff do not receive the treatment. In a “fuzzy” RDD, the probability of receiving the treatment jumps at the cutoff, but not necessarily from zero to 100 percent.

In the early use of the RDD, the general approach used was to estimate a regression model where the slope and intercept was allowed to vary at the cutoff point. The treatment impact is provided by the estimates of β_z and β_{zx} . The more recent econometric literature on RDD stresses that in a range near the cutoff, an RDD is similar to a RCT. That is, close to the cutoff, the characteristics of the treatment and comparison groups are very similar, so an estimate of the treatment impact can be obtained by comparing the values of the dependent variable for the treatment and comparison groups.²¹

There are several reasons why RDD is often considered the best alternative when an RCT cannot be used. One important reason is that, in contrast with propensity score matching, the key underlying assumption can be tested—one can easily verify whether or not the forcing variable is used to assign the treatment. Second, graphical analysis can be used to assess if there was possible manipulation of the score on the forcing variable, and if there is likely to be a treatment impact; formal statistical tests can be undertaken to verify the graphical analysis.²²

There are, however, several drawbacks of the regression discontinuity design. First, the RDD generally only provides the impact near the cutoff point for the forcing variable; this is not a problem if it is likely that the impact is the same for all participants. Second, the RDD

¹⁹ It is important to note that we are not arguing against the use of propensity score matching to analyze how veterans are faring after they leave the armed forces, but that we believe it would be very difficult to use this approach to assess the impact of the TAP employment workshop. Propensity score matching would be useful to identify nonveterans with comparable characteristics so that rather than just comparing overall statistics, such as the unemployment rate for veterans v. the overall unemployment rate, we can compare veterans to a similar population.

²⁰ See Cook (2008) for a history of the use of RDD.

²¹ In the case of a fuzzy RDD, the analysis is more complicated, involving a two-step process. In the first stage, the dummy variable for treatment receipt is regressed on the forcing variable and a dummy variable for whether the person was assigned to receive the treatment. In the second stage, the outcome variable is regressed on the predicted value of the treatment receipt variable and the forcing variable. For more detail, see Jacob, Zhu, Somers, and Bloom (2012).

²² Graphs associated with these issues are a plot of the forcing variable against treatment status, the frequency distribution of the forcing variable, and outcome level graphed against the forcing variable.

approach is much less efficient than RCTs—an RDD generally requires at least 2.75 times as many observations as an RCT to achieve the same amount of precision. Because the TAP program is quite large, sample size is not likely to be an important issue, but finding the impact for a narrow range of participants could be problematic.

If there is sufficient flexibility in who is required to participate in the TAP employment workshop, RDD could be a useful evaluation design. The key requirement is that a test of knowledge of job search skills and knowledge of labor market information would have to be administered to all separating veterans. A cutoff indicating adequate knowledge would be specified, and individuals achieving a higher score would not be required to participate in the TAP employment workshop. For the RDD to be viable, there would have to be a sufficiently large sample of nonusers to generate an adequate comparison group. This would depend on two factors: (1) how high the cutoff is for exempting separating veterans from the TAP employment workshop, and (2) the proportion of exempt separating veterans who elect to take the workshop. Balancing the desire to provide the separating veterans with useful services and the need to generate a sample of people who do not take the workshop so that an evaluation can be performed is not a simple matter. However, as random assignment to a null treatment status is not feasible, we believe that the RDD offers the best possibility of measuring the impact of the TAP workshop relative to no workshop. Thus, if there is interest in this approach, we suggest that the test be developed well in advance of a proposed evaluation and that surveys be used to estimate what proportion of those offered the opportunity to waive participation would exercise that right. In addition, if the test is developed for use in an RDD evaluation, the before-after option could also be implemented to determine if participants are gaining knowledge from the TAP employment workshop; if it is discovered that participants do not increase their knowledge, then rather than implement the RDD, the curriculum could be redesigned to improve learning.

5. Conclusions on Nonexperimental Approaches

In this section we have suggested a number of nonexperimental designs that can be used to evaluate the impact of the TAP employment workshop. The section first discussed use of a simple before-after study. Although before-after studies often do not provide good impact estimates, we believe that in this situation they could provide useful information about the skills and knowledge gained from the workshop. This would not provide direct evidence on the impact of the workshop on employment and earnings, but it would provide information on whether participants are learning the material presented and which topics, if any, have problems. The interrupted time series approach is less likely to be useful for evaluating the workshop. Because the program has been in effect since 1990, an interrupted time series would have to gather data for a number of years prior to that time to include pre- and post-intervention periods. Also, it might be very difficult to gather the data on employment and earnings outcomes for separating veterans over a span of many years and to determine which veterans received and did not receive the TAP workshop. Another weakness in the approach is that services offered to both veterans and nonveterans have changed a great deal over the period of analysis. It would be difficult to obtain and code all this data and conduct a meaningful interrupted time series analysis. Thus, we are not optimistic about the use of an interrupted time series approach. Propensity score matching is more feasible than an interrupted time series, but there are some problems with the

approach. First, efforts to replicate findings from RCTs with propensity score matching have not always succeeded, likely because of an inability to match on all relevant variables. Second, in the specific case of the TAP employment workshop, the veterans would have to be matched to nonveteran job seekers using services at American Job Centers. Our greatest concern with this approach is that it is unlikely that one can control on all the characteristics of veterans and their experiences so that any differences in labor market success can be attributed to the TAP employment workshop rather than unobserved characteristics that differentiate veterans from nonveterans. Finally, a regression discontinuity might prove to be the best nonexperimental option, but additional preliminary analyses would be necessary to see if the approach would work. The literature on well implemented RDDs suggests that the approach can yield unbiased estimates of a treatment impact. However, the Department of Labor would need to assess if it would be ethical to offer veterans with good knowledge of job search skills and the labor market an opportunity to waive the program, and it would be important to assess whether such a design would generate a large enough comparison group to provide enough statistical power to assess the design. Overall, we suggest that the Department of Labor explore the use of a before-after study and a regression discontinuity design as the most promising approaches for learning more about the effectiveness of the TAP employment workshop.

E. Potential Process/Implementation Evaluation Designs for Evaluating TAP

A process or implementation evaluation²³ involves the systematic collection and synthesis of information on the program environment and processes. A recent World Bank publication (Gertler, et.al., 2011) provides a working definition of “process evaluation”:

A process evaluation is an evaluation that tries to establish the level of quality or success of the processes of a program; for example, adequacy of the administrative processes, acceptability of the program benefits, clarity of the information campaign, internal dynamics of implementing organizations, their policy instruments, their service delivery mechanisms, their management practices, and the linkages among these.

Similarly, Holcomb and Nightingale (2003) note the “term implementation analysis is used as an umbrella term referring to a range of studies that address the ways public policies are developed and implemented – from the early stages when legislation is formulated and regulations developed, to the actual delivery of services at the grass roots level, and all administrative, political, and operational stages in between.”

With regard to assessing the TAP Employment Workshop, a process/implementation evaluation could be initiated as a stand-alone study or a component of a comprehensive impact evaluation effort. Such process/implementation evaluations -- which provide contextual information to support analyses of program outcomes, impacts, and costs -- would be complementary to the various types of experimental/non-experimental evaluations of the TAP

²³ Holcomb and Nightingale (2003) observe that “research that describes and explains how programs, policies, and procedures are translated into operation goes by different names: implementation research, process analysis, management research, organizational analysis, case study research, or simply qualitative research.” In this memorandum we primarily use the term “process” or “implementation” research.

Employment Workshops discussed earlier. Additionally, such studies may also provide feedback that can be helpful in identifying differences across bases in the delivery of the TAP workshop curriculum, as well as in efforts to refine the curriculum or its instructional methods across bases.

A first step in planning a process evaluation of the TAP Employment Workshop would be to determine the key evaluation questions that would be a focus of the effort, and then to tailor the types of data collection and analysis activities to address each of the questions. For example, one key question is whether the TAP curriculum is being implemented with fidelity across the hundreds of workshops held each year in a wide variety of workshop locations, and if not, to identify the variability in how the TAP curriculum is being delivered across service branches and bases.

Once the overall purpose and key evaluation questions of such a process study have been determined, then within time and funding constraints, the next step in the planning process is to identify specific types of data collection to be undertaken. Common data collection methods employed in process evaluation, which could be readily applied to assessment of the TAP Employment Workshops include: (1) site visits, (2) focus groups with TAP participants, and (3) customer satisfaction surveys with TAP workshop participants. Each of these major types of data collection activities are briefly discussed below in relation to evaluating the TAP Employment Workshop (with the anticipation that a detailed process/implementation study design would be completed prior to conduct of any such evaluation effort).

1. Site Visits

An overall goal of observational visits is to determine if the TAP Employment Workshop is delivering a curriculum that provides exiting service members the skills, tools, and resources needed to transition into civilian employment. Such visits could be used initially and periodically to determine the extent to which there is fidelity of the implementation of the TAP curriculum at the bases visited, as well as effectiveness of facilitator delivery of the curriculum and engagement of participants during workshops. Such visits could also be used to examine the environmental context within which the TAP program operates, including base/facility characteristics, other services available at the base and within the local area, economic conditions in the local area, and extent to which and how the TAP Employment Workshop is connected to the public workforce system/American Job Centers.

During the planning phase for such site visits, it will be critical to determine the number of workshops to be observed and how workshops will be selected. If the findings from the study are to be used as a gauge of the extent to which there is fidelity in how the curriculum is being implemented, a (possibly stratified) random sample of bases/workshops should be selected. There is no exact number of site visits that can be recommended, with the number to be conducted governed by available budget, the extent of variability in the implementation of the TAP workshop curriculum across workshops, and the extent to which there is a desired to capture diversity of TAP workshop implementation by branch of service, numbers attending the workshop, geographic location, and other characteristics. A good starting point might be to

conduct site visits to 10 to 15 TAP workshops, then gauge the extent of variation/diversity in implementation of the workshops and extent to which workshops are meeting the needs of separating/retiring service members.²⁴

An observational site visit guide(s) should be developed to ensure that site visitors are observing workshops on the same factors/dimensions and using the same scale for their ratings on factors.²⁵ In addition, discussion guides should be developed to guide discussions with contractor and base personnel (see below). With regard to observing TAP workshops, site visit staff will need to be carefully trained on methods (protocols) for conducting such observational visits and so there is consistency/reliability in ratings across observers. An observer (and if resources permit, two- or three- person teams) should be sent to each selected workshop to observe all modules of the three-day workshop, as a TAP participant would view the workshop.²⁶ During the workshop, the team should use the site visit observational guide to systematically rate and record comments about specific details of the workshop and its delivery (with a particular focus on assessing the fidelity with which the new TAP curriculum is being presented at each of the four workshops observed). Following each visit, a brief site visit report should be prepared, along with a completed observational guide with ratings and comments (which could subsequently be entered into a database to support systematic cross-site analysis),

Additionally, during observational visits, semi-structured interviews should be conducted with facilitators to gain their input on their approach to facilitating workshop sessions, time allocated to training modules and fidelity to the facilitator/participant training manual, additional materials/topics covered (not included in the facilitator guide) during workshops, challenges in conducting workshops (e.g., issues with regard to the curriculum, views on the workshop facility/equipment, etc.), and suggestions for improving workshop curriculum or presentation. Additionally, during the site visit, it would be important to also interview other contractor administrators/staff and base military personnel involved in providing transition assistance.

2. Focus Groups with TAP Workshop Participants

As part of the observational visit or separately, focus groups²⁷ could be conducted with TAP workshop participants to obtain their perspectives on the TAP workshop they attended.

²⁴ Based on the small number of site visits conducted under the Avar study (three observational visits), there appears to be strong emphasis on uniform presentation across TAP workshops (i.e., strong adherence/fidelity of workshop facilitators to the TAP workshop curriculum as set forth in the facilitator/participant guides). Also, if regular performance monitoring efforts are underway when the process study is designed, VETS/CEO should have a good idea on the extent of diversity in TAP workshop implementation. The key criterion in determining the number of site visits is to be able to capture diversity of TAP workshop across bases, by size (i.e., number of workshop attendees), branch of service, contractor, etc.

²⁵ An observational site visit guide was developed by the Avar team for use during three observational visits conducted as part of this study, which could be used to structure future visits. Site visit summaries – referred to as “After-Action Reports” were also developed following each of these visits.

²⁶ After an initial round of visits (e.g., to 3 to 5 sites), the site visitors should de-brief on the results of the initial visit and make any needed adjustments to the observational guide or site visit procedures.

²⁷ A focus group is defined as “a small group of people whose response to something (as a new product or a politician's image) is studied to determine the response that can be expected from a larger population.” (Source: www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary)

Focus groups would provide an excellent and relatively low-cost opportunity to collect TAP workshop participant perspectives about the structure, substantive content, delivery, and helpfulness of the three-day workshop. Krueger (2010) notes the importance of conducting focus groups for a variety of evaluation efforts:

...Focus groups are a wonderful method for gathering information for formative and summative evaluations. But don't limit your use of focus groups to the time after a program is implemented or completed. Focus group interviews are also valuable for getting information in the design phases of programs, policies, and even evaluations.

Such focus groups would likely provide further explanations for what might be observed during observational site visits to TAP workshop, as well as what might be found in analyses of customer satisfaction surveys and administrative data on participant outcomes, and other data collection activities. For example, focus groups with TAP workshop participants may help in better understanding how participants react to each workshop module and which are felt to be most/least important or helpful (and why), views on the workshop facility, what exercises/activities were found to be most helpful, whether participants were able to complete their resume, and what participants would change about the workshop.

The steps involved in planning focus groups are relatively similar regardless of the types of individuals included in the group. The first planning step involves determining the scope and purpose of the focus groups, particularly in terms of the study questions each group can effectively address. Once the objectives of each focus group are determined, the next step would involve determining the number and location where each focus group would occur. The number of focus groups to conduct is somewhat subjective, though in all likelihood a good starting point would be to conduct 5 to 7 focus groups (each involving 8 to 12 participants in each group) – and then to determine if additional focus groups would yield additional useful input. A third planning step involves the development of discussion guides to provide structure to focus groups and ensure that critical topics are covered. Krueger (2010) notes the importance of not only defining questions that are to be addressed but also the sequencing of questions:

...The questions used in a focus group interview are carefully sequenced so that they focus more and more specifically on the key topic of the study. That is, the questions progressively direct participants into discussing the topic in greater detail and more depth. In other interview environments the researcher might ask the most important questions first or use an informal, unstructured approach to interviewing. These strategies are not used in focus group interviews.

Once planning for the visits has been completed and agreement has been gained on where each of the focus groups should occur, the activities involved in conducting the focus groups are likely to include the following:

- **Recruitment of Focus Group Participants.** A strategy is needed for identifying and selecting TAP workshop participants for involvement in the focus groups. Selection should be conducted to produce to the extent possible a representative cross-section of workshop participants (i.e., so that focus group attendees are not “cherry-picked”). One potential cost-effective approach is to conduct focus groups at the conclusion of the

observational site visits, and to randomly select 8 to 12 participants from the roster of attendees to be part of a focus group following the TAP workshop. An alternative (more costly and challenging) approach would be to randomly select among military bases holding recent workshops (perhaps using a stratified sample to ensure variability by branch, geographic locality, and other relevant characteristics), and then once the bases are selected, to randomly among participants of recent or past workshops. It might also be useful to consider conducting focus group not only with attendees that have just recently completed workshops, but also with TAP workshop attendees that have already separated from the military and attended workshops 6 months or a year earlier to probe not only their perspectives about the TAP workshop, but also how the workshops might have assisted (or not assisted) them in securing (or not finding) employment. When selecting individuals to attend focus groups it is important to take into consideration likelihood of no-shows (e.g., it may be necessary to select/invite 15-20 workshop attendees to yield a 8 to 12 focus group participants). To help encourage participation in the focus groups among those selected, it may also be necessary to offer an incentive payment, especially to recruit individuals who may have attended workshops in the past and have already separated from the military.

- **Identify an Appropriate Facility for the Focus Group.** It may be possible to conduct the focus group in the conference room where the TAP workshop is held or another nearby conference room on/near the military base. There are also professional focus group facilities (which are located throughout the country), as well as conference rooms at American Job Centers or other public employment agencies that could potentially host focus group sessions.
- **Conduct the Focus Group.** Within a focus group setting, a moderator guides the discussion, making sure to incorporate all of the focus group participants in the discussion. The moderator utilizes a discussion guide, but listens carefully to responses and follows up with questions to further probe participant responses. Krueger (2010) emphasizes the important role that the moderator plays in engaging focus group participants: “The moderator must be perceived as a person who is open to hearing anything. The moderator lays out the ground rules and states that participants may have differing opinions and that there are no wrong answers. All views are welcome, and if at times the group seems to be rushing toward agreement, the moderator might ask if there are opposing views. The focus group offers an honoring environment where individuals feel their views will be respected. The participants are assured that their names will not be used in any reports. The goal is to make people as comfortable as possible so they are willing to say what they think and describe how they feel.” Questions are usually open-ended and intended to generate a variety of viewpoints. Typically, focus group discussions last about 90 to 120 minutes, during which it is possible to cover six to eight major topics. Focus groups provide an ideal opportunity to gauge where views of group members converge or diverge and to probe in considerable detail the perspectives of focus group members. Krueger (2010, p. 381) notes the importance of obtaining a range of perspectives from focus group participants: “Focus groups are distinctive in that the goal is not to reach consensus or to discover a single solution. Other group processes, such as the nominal group process or the Delphi method, are intended to push the group

toward agreement. Although agreement can be a worthy goal, it is not the intent of the focus group. Focus groups are conducted to gather the range of opinions and experiences. The moderator doesn't pressure participants to come to agreement." Focus groups are often video- or audio-taped. In the absence of a video/audio recording, it is essential to keep careful notes of the dialogue throughout the session.

- **Summarize the Results of the Focus Group.** Immediately following each focus group, it is important to draft a summary of the focus group discussion. This synthesis should capture the main points made by participants on each of the subjects covered, including points of consensus and disagreement among focus group members. If available, this synthesis can be supplemented with a video or audiotape of the focus group session.²⁸

3. TAP Workshop Participant Surveys

Customer satisfaction surveys are one method available to determine and track TAP participant engagement in and views of participants toward the workshop. As discussed earlier, DoD conducts such customer satisfaction surveys of TAP workshop participants and shares data with VETS on a quarterly basis. While conducting a customer satisfaction survey at the conclusion of the workshop is useful for gauging participant views about the TAP workshop curriculum and facilitation, it might be useful to consider supplementing this existing survey with a follow-up survey to be administered to separated/retired service members attending TAP workshops at six or 12 months after separation from the military. Such a follow-up survey would provide an opportunity to not only gather former TAP workshop participants' perspectives on the workshop, but also employment/training/education outcomes and how TAP workshop participation may have (or did not) provide assistance to facilitate finding a job in the civilian sector. In developing a follow-up survey, care should be taken to ensure that the survey is not overly burdensome (e.g., can be completed in not more than about 10 to 15 minutes). Often a 5-point Likert scale is used in customer satisfaction surveys, such as is the case with many of the questions included in DOD customer satisfaction survey. The instrument should also include several qualitative open-ended questions that allow for more detailed identification of strengths, weaknesses, and ways in which curriculum or presentation of the TAP workshop modules could be enhanced.

Careful consideration should be given as to how such a follow-up survey at 6- or 12-months after separation should be implemented, including the size of the sample, methods to be employed to achieve a high response rate, and substantive content of the survey instrument. For example, while an Internet-based survey would be relatively low cost and offer the ability for rapid tallying of customer responses, it may not be possible to conduct such a Web-based survey because workshop participants may not have computer access at the time of follow-up or such a survey suffer from low response rates (and potential non-response bias). One alternative would be to have an Internet-based survey designed and made available, but also to conduct such follow-up surveys by telephone or by mail. Further, a follow-up survey, though valuable, could be complicated by DOD's strict Personal Identifying Information (PII) requirements. DOD

²⁸For more detail on focus groups and the step-by-step instructions in planning and conducting focus groups see: Kreuger (2010).

requires that before PII can be collected on service members, a rigorous review of the need for the information and the adequacy of the security measures be undertaken – and, this process typically requires nine to 12 months. Hence, a follow-up survey should be focused on TAP attendees that have separated from the military, and not only explore respondent perspectives on the TAP workshop, but also collect customer input on ways in which the workshop was helpful (or not helpful), employment and earnings outcomes, and suggestions on how workshops might be improved.

4. Conclusions

A process/implementation study would be applicable to periodic efforts to assess and track implementation of the TAP Employment Workshop over time, as well as to identify strengths and weaknesses/challenges of the workshops from varying perspectives (e.g., workshop participants, facilitators and contractor administrators/staff, and base personnel involvement in transition assistance). The strength of such studies is in obtaining contextual information for understanding the environment in which interventions occur, as well as gaining rich qualitative perspectives on the intervention. Though not providing estimates of impacts of attendance at TAP Employment Workshops (on employment and earnings), such studies can be complimentary to impact/cost-benefit studies and help to provide explanation for participant outcomes/impacts. Such information, particularly if collected over time, can help to identify ways in which TAP workshops are exceeding or falling short of expectations from various perspectives and identify potential approaches to improving workshop content, facilitation, facilities, and participant outcomes.

F. Recommendations for Future Evaluation of TAP Employment Workshops

With hundreds of TAP Employment Workshops conducted each year at over 200 bases in the United States and another 50 bases worldwide, it is critical to periodically evaluate the effectiveness of the TAP Employment Workshops regarding their effectiveness in improving employment and earnings of separating veterans. As discussed earlier, VETS has conducted two comparison group studies of the TAP Employment Workshop over the past two decades, and these studies indicated positive effects of TAP workshop participation for employment outcomes. However, these studies are limited in their methodology, sample sizes, and use of long-term employment and earnings outcomes. These earlier studies are also quite dated (i.e., the latest of the two was conducted over a decade ago and had such a small comparison group size, that no statistical comparisons with the treatment group of TAP workshop participants were possible). Additionally, these past studies were conducted on a curriculum that has been substantially revamped and, while many of the job search strategies used a decade ago are still valid, the requirements of the workplace have changed dramatically over the past decade, as have the methods used by service members (and other job seekers) to find employment (e.g., particularly with the advent of social media, expansion of electronic job boards, introduction of new assessment and resume scanning methods by employers, and changes in resume models). Additionally, the opportunities for collecting data to support evaluation efforts has improved in recent years, particularly with better integration of data systems there is the possibility of obtaining long-term employment, earnings, education, involvement in the UCX program, and

other relevant outcome measures for determining short- and long-term effects of TAP workshop participation on separating service members.

The most important recommendation of this paper is for the Department of Labor to intensify its evaluation efforts with regard to determining the impacts of TAP workshops on participants and assessing the fidelity/effectiveness with which the TAP curriculum is being implemented. The best (“gold standard”) approach for DOL would be to initiate an experimental, multi-site, net impact study involving random assignment of separating service members to treatment (i.e., attending the TAP Employment Workshop) and control (not attending the TAP Employment Workshop) groups. However, as discussed earlier in this report, this would likely be infeasible given that attendance at the TAP Employment Workshop has been mandated for all separating/retiring service members.

In the absence of such a pure experimental research design, the next best alternatives would be (1) a “bump up” experimental design, involving random assignment of service members to a bump up (or added intervention on top of the 3-day Employment Workshop); or (2) a non-experimental research design featuring a regression discontinuity design mode. These two approaches are not mutually exclusive. The bump up model, which as discussed, could perhaps involve an added one or two days to the 3-day Employment Workshops (e.g., perhaps involving more extensive resume development and systematic planning of job search activities and practice interviews) or perhaps involve providing all participants with a PC and Internet connection during the workshop and feature extensive use of the Internet during workshops. Such a bump up research design could be mounted for a limited period of time at a limited number of bases. The drawback of such a bump up research design would be that unlike a pure experiment (with the control group being denied participation in the TAP workshop), it would not provide estimates of the net impacts of attending the TAP workshop.

A second recommended approach, which would be able to non-experimentally estimate impacts of attending versus not attending the TAP Employment Workshop, would be a Regression Discontinuity Design (RDD). While other non-experimental models are also discussed in this report, a regression discontinuity might prove to be the best non-experimental option, but additional preliminary analyses would be necessary to see if this approach is feasible. The literature on well-implemented RDDs suggests that the approach could yield unbiased estimates of a treatment impact. However, to implement this research design, VETS/DoD would need to determine if it would be ethical to offer veterans with good knowledge of job search skills and the labor market, a waiver permitting them not to attend the TAP Employment Workshop.²⁹ Before embarking on this approach, it would also be important to assess whether such a design would generate a large enough comparison group to provide enough statistical power for detecting minimal effect of the intervention.

The Department of Labor should also consider use of before-after study to determine if TAP participants gain knowledge and skills to assist them in their job search, though such an

²⁹ The key requirement is that a test of knowledge of job search skills and knowledge of labor market information would have to be administered to all separating veterans. A cutoff indicating adequate knowledge would be specified, and individuals achieving a higher score would not be required to participate in the TAP employment workshop.

approach should not be used as a substitute for other more rigorous evaluation approaches. The before-after approach is very simple: the outcome variable of interest is observed prior to the intervention and after the intervention has been introduced, and the before-after difference in the values of the outcome variable is interpreted as the program impact. The key assumption underlying this design is that no factor other than the intervention of interest is affecting the outcome variable.

Finally, either as part of experiment or non-experimental research designs or independent of them, it is recommended that DOL periodically conduct process/implementation evaluations to assess TAP Employment Workshop implementation. As discussed earlier, such process studies can be complimentary to experimental/non-experimental studies and help to provide explanation for participant outcomes/impacts. Such information, particularly if collected over time, can help to identify ways in which TAP workshops are exceeding or falling short of expectations from various perspectives and identify potential approaches to improving workshop content, facilitation, facilities, and participant outcomes.

ATTACHMENTS

ATTACHMENT I-A: SITE VISIT OBSERVATIONAL GUIDE

Transition Assistance Program
On-Site Employment Workshop Assessment
Observation Guide
April 8, 2013
Draft

Location: _____

Observer(s): _____

Dates: _____

Transition Assistance Program (TAP) On-Site Employment Workshop Assessment Guide

Background on Study

In February 2012, the U.S. Department of Labor contracted with Avar Consulting, Inc., an evaluation research consulting firm located in Bethesda, Maryland, and its subcontractors, George Washington University and Capital Research Corporation, Inc., to conduct an assessment of the U.S. Department of Labor's (DOL) Veterans' Employment and Training Service's Transition Assistance Program (TAP) Employment Workshops. The purpose of this study is to determine if the TAP curriculum is providing exiting service members the skills, tools, and resources needed to transition back into civilian employment. The Avar team is conducting visits to four military bases to observe TAP workshops and provide an assessment of the new TAP curriculum.

Observer Reminders

- Initial contact with the base for the visit must be coordinated with VETS, with VETS making the initial contact with the base. VETS will confirm the date/times of the visit and provide a base contact person (and contact telephone number). VETS will also provide a brief overview of our role as observers and begin the process of gaining clearance for the site visit team. VETS will also indicate to its base contact that we will be observers for all modules of the curriculum and that, if possible, the site visit team would like to conduct about a one-hour interview with the facilitator on the final day to obtain feedback about the new curriculum.
- After notification by VETS of the dates/times for the visit, the site visit team should begin planning for the visit. Within 5 working days of the visit, the senior member of the site visit team should call the base contact person (identified by VETS) to make final arrangements for the visit. In particular, the site visit team should check to make sure that the contact person has all of the information necessary to arrange for clearance to enter the base. Please verify that a chair and table in the rear of the room will be available for you and (if appropriate) your colleague.
- Prior to the workshop, the team should review the facilitator guidebook and other background documentation about the TAP workshop. Each site visitor should take to the workshop (1) a copy of the Facilitator Guide; (2) the Participant Guide; (3) the On-Site Employment Workshop Assessment Guide (this instrument); and (4) the Facilitator Discussion Guide.
- Upon arrival at the base, you will need to go to the entrance gate of the base and complete the clearance process. Make sure to bring a driver's license, along with automobile registration and indication of automobile insurance if the car you are bringing on base is your own (i.e., for a rental car, have the rental agreement). Make sure to arrive at least 45 minutes prior to the start of the TAP session, as it is possible that the clearance process may take some time.
- Once at the workshop, introduce yourself to the facilitator (and, if possible, to the point of contact that you had previously contacted). Provide brief background about the study (see above) and discuss our role as observers. Indicate to the facilitator that you will be observing all modules of the workshop, but not participating in discussions or exercises. Indicate that you will be taking notes during the sessions on a site observational guide. Also indicate that you would like, if possible, to take about an hour at or near the end of the workshop to conduct an

interview with the facilitator(s) to gain feedback about the re-designed curriculum. If this facilitator interview is not possible, schedule a telephone interview within the five days following the workshop to obtain feedback. Some additional general guidance follows with regard to the visit:

- Indicate to workshop facilitator that you are an observer and will not participate in discussion or exercises. Do not provide any feedback or discuss your views about the workshop with the facilitator, workshop attendees, or anyone else while on or off the base during the visit. Please keep interaction with all personnel at the workshop and on the base to an absolute minimum (with the exception of your initial introduction to the facilitator and your facilitator interview).
 - Give the workshop facilitator(s) the option of introducing you (and your reason for being present) to participants at the beginning of the workshop.
 - If you plan to take notes with a laptop during the workshop, ask the facilitator for permission to do so and make certain this does not interfere in anyway with the workshop. Additionally, do not use your computer if you are the only one using a computer during the session or it is noticed by others during the workshop.
 - Thank all officials for their cooperation.
 - Each site visitor should maintain their own ratings and notes on the observational instrument. At the end of the workshop, if there is more than one visitor, the visitors should meet to consolidate notes and discuss ratings. One official completed guide with consensus ratings and notes should be submitted by each team to the Co-Principal Investigators within 3 working days of the visit, as well a copy of each of the “draft” observer guides. Additionally, an “after-action report” of about 3-5 pages, must be submitted in draft form to the Co-Principal Investigators within 3 working days of the end of the workshop. The team will respond to comments provided by the Co-Principal Investigators and finalize this after-action report for submission to ETA by the 5 working day after the workshop. Additionally, the team will prepare and submit a summary of the one-hour interview with the workshop facilitator.
- To the extent possible, observations are evaluated based upon a point value system (1 to 5) with 1 being the lowest ranking.

Overall Ranking of TAP Employment Workshop Assessment (Note: Complete at End of the Workshop)

1. Facility appropriateness:	Low					High
<u>Adequate space</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	
<u>Adequate seating</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	
<u>Participants able to hear facilitator</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	
<u>Participants able to see PowerPoint Slides/Videos</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	
<u>Comfortable learning environment</u> (e.g., lighting, temperature)	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	
2. <u>Adequacy of computer availability for participants:</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	
a. Computers are available for (circle one):						
Each participant			Some participants			No participants
b. There is an Internet connection available for the Facilitator:				Yes	No	
c. TAP participants have access to the Internet at the TAP Workshop:				Yes	No	
3. Overall, to what extent did the TAP facilitator ...						
a. Fully present the seven modules included in the facilitator guide	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	
b. Follow the sequence of modules in the guide	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	
c. Allocate time allotted for each module as set forth in the guide?	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	
d. Demonstrate knowledge of each module's content	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	
e. Balance lecture and participant interaction	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	
h. Provide participants with sufficient opportunity to ask questions	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	
f. Provide appropriate/effective responses to participant questions	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	
4. Overall, to what extent did the TAP curriculum provide...						
a. <u>Sufficient interactive opportunities for participants?</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	
b. <u>Appropriate balance of lectures, small group instruction, and exercises?</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	
c. <u>Sufficient discussion of soft-skills</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	
d. <u>Adequate discussion of support networks</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	
e. <u>Understanding of how to identify transferable skills?</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	
f. <u>Understanding of how to identify/research career possibilities?</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	
g. <u>Knowledge of how to plan an effective job search?</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	
h. <u>Sufficient instruction on how to write an effective resume?</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	
i. <u>Sufficient time for participants to complete their resumes?</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	
j. <u>Ability to translate military experiences into civilian terms?</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	
k. <u>Ability to conduct an effective job interview</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	
l. <u>Skills, tools, resources needed for service members to find a civilian job?</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	

5. To what extent did participants appear to...					
b. <u>Understand purpose/usefulness of completing their Individual Transition Plan (ITP)?</u>	1	2	3	4	5
c. <u>Conclude workshop with a completed resume?</u>	1	2	3	4	5
e. <u>Conclude workshop with a cohesive job search plan?</u>	1	2	3	4	5
<u>Overall Assessment of TAP Workshop</u>	1	2	3	4	5

Number of Attendees:

Signed up to Attend _____

Unduplicated Count of Attendees for All Days of Workshop: _____

Attendees each day: Day 1: _____ Day 2: _____ Day 3: _____

Characteristics of attendees (if available, including # of separatees/retirees, service branch, commissioned officers v. warrant officers and enlisted):

Summary Comments on TAP Workshop (Fidelity to Facilitator/Participant Guide Book; Strengths/Weakness/Areas for Curriculum Improvement):

Section 1: Transition Planning (5 hours) Day - 1 2 3 Start Time: _____ End Time: _____

	Learning Objectives	Not Covered	Covered Inadequately	Covered Adequately
1.1	Individual Transition Plan – Career Path Employment			
1.2	Manage Change			
1.3	Develop a Job Search Plan: Personal Assets			
	1.3.1 – Create a Career Catalogue			
	1.3.2 – Complete Master Application			
	1.3.3 – Analyze Your Skills			
	1.3.4 – Complete Transferable Skills Inventory			
	1.3.5 – Identify Personal Factors for Customized Job Search Plan			
1.4	Update ITP			
Comments:				

	Activities/Exercises	Utilized? (Y/N)	Minutes	Comment/Notes
1.1	Transition Quiz (p-3) ³⁰			
1.2	Activity: Identify Support Systems (p-10)			
1.2	Change Management Plan (p-13)			
1.3.2	Activity: Master Application (p-15-22)			
1.3.3	Activity: Master Skills Inventory (p-23)			
1.3.3	Exercise: Identify More of Your Skills (p-26)			
1.3.4	Activity: Transferable Skills Inventory (p-28-32)			
1.3.5	CLAMS Inventory (p-34)			
1.3.5	Work Preferences (p-37-39)			
1.3.5	Activity: Work Values Inventory (p-40)			

³⁰ Page numbers are from the Participant Guide. Those items italicized in the activities/exercise listing are activities identified in the Facilitator Guide but not specifically referred to in the Participant Guide as an “activity” or “exercise”. [nothing Italicized above]

Facilitator:	Low				High
Knowledgeable about module content	1	2	3	4	5
Quality/effectiveness of presentation/delivery	1	2	3	4	5
Time allocation/ability to complete module topics	1	2	3	4	5
Ability to balance lecture with participant interaction/ exercises	1	2	3	4	5
Provides appropriate/effective responses to questions	1	2	3	4	5
<i>Comments:</i>					

Participants:					
Appear actively engaged in module	1	2	3	4	5
Appear to understand key points made during module	1	2	3	4	5
Have opportunity to interact and ask questions	1	2	3	4	5
Appear to have favorable reaction to module	1	2	3	4	5
<i>Comments:</i>					

Exercises					
Extent of engagement of participants in exercises	1	2	3	4	5
Usefulness in terms of reinforcing key module topics	1	2	3	4	5
<i>Comments:</i>					

Overall Module Assessment	1	2	3	4	5

Overall/Additional Comments (e.g., module content, addition/substitution of content, facilitator delivery, participant reception, effectiveness):

Section 2: Career Exploration and Validation (2.5 hours) Day - 1 2 3 Start Time: ____ End Time: ____

	Learning Objectives	Not Covered	Covered Inadequately	Covered Adequately
2.1	Research Industries, Occupations, Trends			
2.2	Job Search Assistance Resources			
2.3	Essential Tools			
2.4	Target Employers			
2.5	Update ITP			
Comments:				

	Activities/Exercises	Utilized (Y/N)	Minutes	Comment/Notes
2.1	Activity: Two Websites for Employment Data (p-45)			
2.3	Checklist of Essential Tools (p-51-52)			
2.4	<i>Facilitator demonstrates Internet-based job boards (e.g., H2H.jobs) (p-54)</i>			
2.4	Facilitator shows video-Bad Call/Good Call (p.58)			
2.4	<i>Facilitator demonstrates accessing a LinkedIn Group -- e.g., Hire VETS, Hire Heroes, Veterans Hired, Veterans to Work, US Military Veterans, etc. (p-66)</i>			
2.4	Exercise: Draft Your Professional Introduction/Elevator Speech (p-76-77)			

Facilitator:	Low				High
Knowledgeable about module content	1	2	3	4	5
Quality/effectiveness of presentation/delivery	1	2	3	4	5
Time allocation/ability to complete module topics	1	2	3	4	5
Ability to balance lecture with participant interaction/ exercises	1	2	3	4	5
Provides appropriate/effective responses to questions	1	2	3	4	5
<i>Comments:</i>					

Participants:					
Appear actively engaged in module	1	2	3	4	5
Appear to understand key points made during module	1	2	3	4	5
Have opportunity to interact and ask questions	1	2	3	4	5
Appear to have favorable reaction to module	1	2	3	4	5
<i>Comments:</i>					

Exercises					
Extent of engagement of participants in exercises	1	2	3	4	5
Usefulness in terms of reinforcing key module topics	1	2	3	4	5
<i>Comments:</i>					

Overall Module Assessment	1	2	3	4	5

Overall/Additional Comments (e.g., module content, addition/substitution of content, facilitator delivery, participant reception, effectiveness):

Section 3: Job Search Plan (2.5 hours) Day - 1 2 3 Start Time: ____ End Time: ____

	Learning Objectives	Not Covered	Covered Inadequately	Covered Adequately
3.1	Set Goals			
3.2	Schedule			
3.3	Job Search Schedule and Networking Methods			
3.4	Analyze Job Postings			
3.5	Complete Application Forms			
3.6	Update ITP			

	Activities/Exercises	Utilized (Y/N)	Minutes	Comment/Notes
3.1	Activity: Draft a Short-Term and Long-Term Goal (p-82)			
3.2	<i>Facilitator discusses sample schedule (p-83)</i>			
3.3	Activity: Identify Network Contacts (p-87)			
3.3	<i>Facilitator demonstrates use of LinkedIn (p-90)</i>			
3.3	<i>Facilitator demonstrates use of Facebook and Facebook applications (p-90)</i>			
3.3	<i>Facilitator demonstrates use of Twitter (p-92)</i>			

Facilitator:	Low				High
Knowledgeable about module content	1	2	3	4	5
Quality/effectiveness of presentation/delivery	1	2	3	4	5
Time allocation/ability to complete module topics	1	2	3	4	5
Ability to balance lecture with participant interaction/ exercises	1	2	3	4	5
Provides appropriate/effective responses to questions	1	2	3	4	5
<i>Comments:</i>					

Participants:					
Appear actively engaged in module	1	2	3	4	5
Appear to understand key points made during module	1	2	3	4	5
Have opportunity to interact and ask questions	1	2	3	4	5
Appear to have favorable reaction to module	1	2	3	4	5
<i>Comments:</i>					

Exercises					
Extent of engagement of participants in exercises	1	2	3	4	5
Usefulness in terms of reinforcing key module topics	1	2	3	4	5
<i>Comments:</i>					

Overall Module Assessment	1	2	3	4	5

Overall/Additional Comments (e.g., module content, addition/substitution of content, facilitator delivery, participant reception, effectiveness):

Section 4: Build an Effective Resume (4.5 hours) Day - 1 2 3 Start Time: ____ End Time: ____

	Learning Objectives	Not Covered	Covered Inadequately	Covered Adequately
4.1	Understand Resume Reader			
4.2	Target Resumes and Master Electronic Resume			
4.3	Sections of a Resume			
	4.3.1-Contact Information			
	4.3.2-Career/Job Objective Statement			
	4.3.3-Summary Section			
	4.3.4-Areas of Expertise			
	4.3.5-Experience			
	4.3.6-Education and Training			
	4.3.7-Prepare References			
4.4	Resume Types			
4.5	Resume Formatting			
4.6	Resume Review			
4.7	Cover Letter			
4.8	Salary History			
4.9	Update ITP			
Comments:				

	Activities/Exercises	Utilized (Y/N)	Minutes	Comment/Notes
4.0	Resume Quiz (p-98)			
4.1	<i>Facilitator engages participants in facilitated discussion of key resume points, e.g., work history, career history, geography (p-101)</i>			
4.2	<i>Facilitator demonstrates what a Master Electronic Resume looks like as opposed to a Targeted Resume (p-104)</i>			
4.2	<i>Facilitator reviews Targeted Resume Comparison Chart (p-115-116)</i>			
4.2	Activity: Resume Style Comparison (p-116)			
4.3.2	Exercise: Write Targeted Objective Statement (p-119)			
4.3.3	Exercise: Write a Summary (p-121)			
4.3.4	Exercise: Draft Areas of Expertise (p-123)			

4.3.5	Activity: Draft Accomplishment Statements (p-127-128)			
4.3.5	Exercise: Example Accomplishment Strategies—Highlight the Result (p-129)			
4.3.5	Activity: Write Three Accomplishment Statements Using STAR (p-129-130)			
4.3.5	Activity: Resume Lab—Draft Master Electronic Resume (p-134)			
4.3.5	Exercise: Build Keywords into Targeted Resumes (p-134)			
4.3.5	Activity: Analyze Job Posting for Keyword Integration (p-135)			
4.3.7	Exercise: Brainstorm Potential References (p-139)			

Facilitator:	Low				High
Knowledgeable about module content	1	2	3	4	5
Quality/effectiveness of presentation/delivery	1	2	3	4	5
Time allocation/ability to complete module topics	1	2	3	4	5
Ability to balance lecture with participant interaction/ exercises	1	2	3	4	5
Provides appropriate/effective responses to questions	1	2	3	4	5

Comments:

Participants:					
Appear actively engaged in module	1	2	3	4	5
Appear to understand key points made during module	1	2	3	4	5
Have opportunity to interact and ask questions	1	2	3	4	5
Appear to have favorable reaction to module	1	2	3	4	5

Comments:

Exercises					
Extent of engagement of participants in exercises	1	2	3	4	5
Usefulness in terms of reinforcing key module topics	1	2	3	4	5

Comments:

Overall Module Assessment	1	2	3	4	5
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Overall/Additional Comments (e.g., module content, addition/substitution of content, facilitator delivery, participant reception, effectiveness):

Section 5: Federal Hiring, Federal Resumes and Federal Programs (1 hour)

Day - 1 2 3 Start Time: ____ End Time: ____

	Learning Objectives	Not Covered	Covered Inadequately	Covered Adequately
5.1	Federal Hiring Reform			
5.2	Job Classifications within the Federal Government			
5.3	Competitive Services			
5.4	Veterans' Preferences			
5.5	Excepted Service			
5.6	Special Hiring Authorities for Veterans			
5.7	Veterans Employment Initiative			
5.8	Finding Jobs			
5.9	Understanding the Vacancy Announcement			
5.10	Application Procedures			
5.11	Federal Interviewing			
5.12	Getting the Offer			
Comments:				

	Activities/Exercises	Utilized (Y/N)	Minutes	Comment/Notes
5.2	Facilitator reviews Education and Experience Requirements Table (p-158)			
5.4	Facilitator shows DOL Veterans' Preference Advisor website (p-160)			
5.7	Facilitator tours FedshireVets.gov website (p-168)			
5.8	Facilitator tours USAJOBS.gov website (p-170)			
5.9	Facilitator shows/goes over Example (Federal Vacancy) Announcement (p-173-174)			
5.10	Facilitator demonstrates USAJOBS.gov resume builder and tutorial (p-181)			

Facilitator:	Low				High
Knowledgeable about module content	1	2	3	4	5
Quality/effectiveness of presentation/delivery	1	2	3	4	5
Time allocation/ability to complete module topics	1	2	3	4	5
Ability to balance lecture with participant interaction/ exercises	1	2	3	4	5
Provides appropriate/effective responses to questions	1	2	3	4	5
<i>Comments:</i>					

Participants:					
Appear actively engaged in module	1	2	3	4	5
Appear to understand key points made during module	1	2	3	4	5
Have opportunity to interact and ask questions	1	2	3	4	5
Appear to have favorable reaction to module	1	2	3	4	5
<i>Comments:</i>					

Exercises					
Extent of engagement of participants in exercises	1	2	3	4	5
Usefulness in terms of reinforcing key module topics	1	2	3	4	5
<i>Comments:</i>					

Overall Module Assessment	1	2	3	4	5

Overall/Additional Comments (e.g., module content, addition/substitution of content, facilitator delivery, participant reception, effectiveness):

Section 6: Skilled Interview (4 hours) Day - 1 2 3 Start Time: ____ End Time: ____

	Learning Objectives	Not Covered	Covered Inadequately	Covered Adequately
6.1	Summary of the Hire Process			
6.2	Types of Interviews			
6.3	Interview Stages			
	6.3.1-Introductory Stage			
	6.3.2-Employer Questions			
	6.3.3-Answer Questions			
	6.3.4-Candidate Questions			
	6.3.5-Closing Stage			
6.4	Prepare for the Actual Interview			
	6.4.1-Communication in the Workplace			
	6.4.2-Listening Skills			
	6.4.3-Employment Tests			
	6.4.4-Finding Information about a Potential Employer			
	6.4.5-Interpret Body Language			
	6.4.6 First Impressions – Dress for Interview			
6.5	Follow-up after the Interview			
6.6	Update ITP			
Comments:				

	Activities/Exercises	Utilized (Y/N)	Minutes	Comment/Notes
6.3.1	<i>Facilitator asks for volunteer to demonstrate paying a sincere compliment (p-190)</i>			
6.3.3	Exercise: Practice Answering Questions (194-198)			
6.3.3	Exercise: Negative to Positive Reframing (p-199)			
6.3.5	Activity: Mock Interview (p-202)			
6.4.2	Exercise: Listening Self-Assessment (p-203)			

Facilitator:	Low				High
<u>Knowledgeable about module content</u>	1	2	3	4	5
<u>Quality/effectiveness of presentation/delivery</u>	1	2	3	4	5
<u>Time allocation/ability to complete module topics</u>	1	2	3	4	5
<u>Ability to balance lecture with participant interaction/ exercises</u>	1	2	3	4	5
<u>Provides appropriate/effective responses to questions</u>	1	2	3	4	5

Comments:

Participants:					
<u>Appear actively engaged in module</u>	1	2	3	4	5
<u>Appear to understand key points made during module</u>	1	2	3	4	5
<u>Have opportunity to interact and ask questions</u>	1	2	3	4	5
<u>Appear to have favorable reaction to module</u>	1	2	3	4	5

Comments:

Exercises					
<u>Extent of engagement of participants in exercises</u>	1	2	3	4	5
<u>Usefulness in terms of reinforcing key module topics</u>	1	2	3	4	5

Comments:

Overall Module Assessment	1	2	3	4	5

Overall/Additional Comments (e.g., module content, addition/substitution of content, facilitator delivery, participant reception, effectiveness):

Section 7: Interview Post-Analysis (0.5 hours) Day - 1 2 3 Start Time: ____ End Time: ____

	Learning Objectives	Not Covered	Covered Inadequately	Covered Adequately
7.1	Evaluate the Interview-Continuous Improvement			
7.2	Evaluate Job Offers			
7.3	Negotiate Job Offers			
7.4	Communicate Your Decision to the Employer			
7.5	Update ITP			
Comments:				

	Activities/Exercises	Utilized (Y/N)	Minutes	Comment/Notes
7.3.1	Exercise: Find Median Salary Information			

Facilitator:	Low				High
Knowledgeable about module content	1	2	3	4	5
Quality/effectiveness of presentation/delivery	1	2	3	4	5
Time allocation/ability to complete module topics	1	2	3	4	5
Ability to balance lecture with participant interaction/ exercises	1	2	3	4	5
Provides appropriate/effective responses to questions	1	2	3	4	5
<i>Comments:</i>					

Participants:					
Appear actively engaged in module	1	2	3	4	5
Appear to understand key points made during module	1	2	3	4	5
Have opportunity to interact and ask questions	1	2	3	4	5
Appear to have favorable reaction to module	1	2	3	4	5
<i>Comments:</i>					

Exercises

Extent of engagement of participants in exercises	1	2	3	4	5
Usefulness in terms of reinforcing key module topics	1	2	3	4	5

Comments:

Overall Module Assessment

Overall/Additional Comments (e.g., module content, addition/substitution of content, facilitator delivery, participant reception, effectiveness):

Use of Appendices During TAP Workshop:

	Appendix	Reviewed/ Utilized During Class? (Y/N)	During Which Section?	Comment/Notes
A	Intermediate Experience			
B	Advanced Experience			
C	Curriculum Vitae			
D	Sample Accomplishment Statements			
E	Wordsmithing Exercise			
F	Letter of Explanation Sample			
G	Mock Interview Observer Sheet			
H	Gold Card			
I	Master Application Worksheet			
J	Skills Inventory			
K	Draft Resume Template			

ATTACHMENT I-B: FACILITATOR DISCUSSION GUIDE

Transition Assistance Program (TAP) Facilitator Discussion Guide

Introduction

In February 2012, the U.S. Department of Labor contracted with Avar Consulting, Inc., an evaluation research consulting firm located in Bethesda, Maryland, and its subcontractors, George Washington University and Capital Research Corporation, Inc., to conduct an evaluation of the U.S. Department of Labor's (DOL) Veterans' Employment and Training Service's Transition Assistance Program (TAP) Employment Workshops. The purpose of this study is to determine if the TAP curriculum is providing exiting service members the skills, tools, and resources needed to transition back into civilian employment. The Avar team is conducting visits to four military bases to observe TAP workshops and provide an assessment of the new TAP curriculum.

As part of our observations of the TAP workshops, DOL has asked us to take about one hour near the end of each of our visits to interview the facilitator, or facilitators, to gain their feedback on the TAP curriculum and workshop structure. We would like your feedback on the curriculum, including perceptions about its strengths, weaknesses, and ways in which the curriculum or structure of the workshops might be improved. Our aim is to learn from your experiences. The views you express may be shared with DOL, but we will not identify or connect the statements/observations you make with your name or this particular base/workshop in our discussions with DOL or in any reports that we may publish.

Privacy Statement: Before beginning the interview, I (we) want to thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview. I (we) know that you are busy and we will try to be as focused as possible. We understand that your participation in this discussion is voluntary and you may not be able to address all of our questions. In addition, before we start, I want to let you know that although we take notes during these interviews, information is never repeated with the name of the respondent. When we write our reports and discuss our findings, information from all interviews is compiled and presented so that no one person can be identified.

Do you have any questions before we begin? [Respond to questions.]

Interviewee Name(s) _____

Interviewee Organization and Contact Information (note: request a business card)

How long have you been involved in facilitating TAP workshops (years/months)?

1. On this base, what is the average (mean) expected size of a TAP session? How much does this vary (i.e., minimum/maximum workshop attendance)? Has there been any change in the size of the TAP workshops since the new curriculum was introduced?
2. Is your base able to schedule sufficient sessions to meet the demand? What is the average wait time between receipt of the DD Form 2648 and actual program attendance? Is this a problem?

3. Are the facilities you use for the workshop adequate to meet the needs for the TAP program? If not, what improvements are needed?

4. Are you provided with adequate training materials/supplies for TAP workshops (e.g., chalkboards, presentation materials, audio-visual equipment)? If not, what is missing?

5. Prior to the introduction of the new TAP curriculum, were you provided training on the substantive content and instructional methods for the new TAP curriculum and workshop? If yes, on a scale of 1 (very poor) to 5 (excellent), how would you rate the training you received?

Please describe any overall problems with the training and improvements that should be made.

6. Overall, please rate the Facilitator Guide on a 1 (very poor) to 5 (excellent) scale: _____

Please describe any overall problems with the Facilitator Guide and improvements that should be made.

7. Overall, please rate the Participant Guide on a 1 (very poor) to 5 (excellent) scale: _____:

Please describe any overall problems with the Participant Guide and improvements that should be made.

8. Please rate the TAP participant exercises/activities on a 1 (very poor) to 5 (excellent) scale: _____:

Please describe any problems with the exercises/activities.

Are there exercises/activities that should be deleted from the curriculum?

Are there exercises/activities that should be added?

9. Please rate the TAP Workshop PowerPoint slides on a 1 (very poor) to 5 (excellent) scale: _____

Please describe any problems with the PowerPoint slides and improvements that should be made.

10. Is there sufficient time allotted to cover all the material in the TAP Facilitator Guide? If not, are there specific sections of the curriculum where you have experienced difficulty in covering all the material in the Guide? How have you addressed this challenge?

11. How would you rate the utility of various sections of the curriculum on a 1 (no utility) to 5 (very valuable) scale:

- ___ Section 1: Transition Planning
- ___ Section 2: Career Exploration and Validation
- ___ Section 3: Job Search Plan
- ___ Section 4: Build an Effective Resume
- ___ Section 5: Federal Hiring, Federal Resumes and Federal Programs
- ___ Section 6: Skilled Interview
- ___ Section 7: Interview Post Analysis

Please explain your response for any section rated 3 or lower.

12. Overall, on a scale of 1 (very poor) to 5 (excellent) please rate the extent to which the TAP workshop curriculum provides separating service members with...

- ___ Appropriate balance of lectures, small group instruction, and exercises
- ___ Sufficient discussion of soft-skills
- ___ Adequate discussion of support networks
- ___ Understanding of how to identify/utilize transferable skills
- ___ Understanding of how to identify/research career possibilities
- ___ Knowledge of how to plan an effective job search
- ___ Sufficient instruction on how to write an effective resume
- ___ Sufficient time for participants to complete their resumes
- ___ Sufficient instruction/preparation for conducting an effective job interview

Please explain your response for any section rated 3 or lower.

13. What proportion of TAP workshop participants emerge from the TAP workshop with a completed resume (i.e., ready to be sent to a prospective employer)? *[If appropriate]* Of those who do not have a completed resume, why is this the case?

14. To what extent do workshop participants appear engaged and seem to understand key points made during each TAP workshop section/module? Are there certain areas of the curriculum that participants seem more/less engaged? Please discuss.

15. If you had the opportunity to redesign the TAP workshop, which features/topics would you:

- Eliminate
- Reduce
- Expand/Enhance

16. Are there any critical topics or modules not included in TAP that should be added? If so, please explain.
17. Does the curriculum provide sufficient interactive opportunities for the recipient to engage in the learning process? Please discuss.
18. Overall, does the curriculum deliver the skills, tools, and resources needed for the service member to get a civilian job?
19. Overall, does the curriculum provide the facilitator the information and materials needed to facilitate an effective employment workshop?
20. When the TAP participant leaves the workshop, what are the most important skills he/she should take away from the workshop? In your opinion, are those skills addressed during this workshop?
21. Service members usually participate in TAP workshops where they are stationed, but many service members plan to locate somewhere else when they leave the military. Do you think the TAP workshop enables participants to find a job wherever they choose to live? Is sufficient material presented about American Job Centers and how separating service members can obtain workforce services in the localities to which they are returning?
22. Please provide additional comments on any other aspects of TAP workshops on which you would like to provide feedback.

ATTACHMENT I-C: AFTER-ACTION REPORTS

AFTER-ACTION REPORT
*****DRAFT-NOT FOR DISSEMINATION*****

LOCATION: Langley Air Force Base (AFB) – Hampton, Virginia

DATES OF VISIT: May 14-16, 2013

SITE OBSERVERS: David Balducchi, Avar Consulting, Inc.
Carolyn O’Brien, Capital Research Corporation, Inc.

This after-action report summarizes key findings from the site visit to the Langley AFB in Hampton, Virginia to observe the implementation of the newly-revised Transition Assistance Program (TAP) Employment Workshop. This visit was conducted under a U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) contracted study with Avar Consulting, Inc. to assess the new curriculum being implemented at the TAP Employment Workshops.

The overall purpose of this study is to determine if the redesigned DOL Employment Workshop is providing exiting service members the skills, tools, and resources needed to transition back into civilian employment. As part of this study, the Avar research team is conducting visits to three military bases to observe workshops and provide an assessment of the implementation of the new curriculum.³¹ An important aim of these visits is to provide DOL with feedback on the fidelity of the implementation of the curriculum.

The findings provided in this report are based on observations by a two-person team, David Balducchi and Carolyn O’Brien, who attended a session of the new curriculum at the Langley AFB in Hampton, Virginia. An approximately 60-minute in-person interview was conducted with the facilitator after the workshop’s second day. On Day 1, seven other observers were present in the classroom during the session; they attended various sessions during the next two days. On Day 3, a program manager from the Virginia Employment Commission (VEC) conducted a short visit to see how the workshop was being presented.³² No formal interviews or discussions were conducted by the site visit team with workshop participants.

³¹ This round of visits follows earlier visits to 11 military bases that had been conducted in 2012 to assess the implementation of an earlier version of the curriculum.

³² The observers were: Quadira Dantro (Department of Labor/Veterans’ Employment and Training Service); Patrick Hecker (Department of Labor/Veterans’ Employment and Training Service); Robert Sanders (Department of Veterans Affairs); Florida Taylor (U.S. Air Force); Sarah Corey (U.S. Air Force); Patricia Robey (U.S. Air Force); Cheri Sanders (Department of Defense); and Tony E. Cropper (Virginia Employment Commission).

WORKSHOP ATTENDANCE

- **Unduplicated Count of Attendees for All Days of Workshop:** 28
- **Attendees Each Day:** Day 1: 27 Day 2: 28 Day 3: 25
- **General Characteristics of Attendees:**
 - At the start of the workshop, there were 11 retirees (10 Air Force and 1 Navy) and 15 separatees (14 Air Force and 1 Navy) in attendance. One spouse (male) also participated in the workshop. Twenty-two attendees were men and five were women. The age of the participants in the group varied; the youngest appeared to be in their mid-20's, while the oldest seemed to be in their mid-40's. Participants were a mixed group of enlisted members, non-commissioned officers, and commissioned officers. Ten of the attendees reported that they have more than 90 days left before they leave the service.
 - During the Day 1 opening "icebreaker," participants indicated that they intended to relocate to 13 different states after they left military service. Three stated that they intended to further their education; two reportedly had jobs already lined up for the post-service period.
 - Langley AFB workshops are held two to three times a month, with between 30 and 35 participants registered for each workshop. Participants are required to sign-in at the beginning of each session.

OVERVIEW OF FACILITY/EQUIPMENT

- **Facility Set-up/Appropriateness:**
 - The workshop was conducted in a cramped activity room (Room 121) with limited open space at the Bateman Library on the base. The room can accommodate 36 participants at 3 long tables that seat 12 per table. Tent cards placed in front of each participant displayed first names only. A large fan positioned near a door provided some air circulation, but the room was very hot, stuffy, and uncomfortable. (On Days 2 and 3, one participant brought in another fan to circulate air in the back of the room, along with a power cord so that multiple participants could power their laptops.)
 - Chairs were placed along the walls for observers. Both doors were kept open in hopes of improving air circulation, but this allowed for occasional distracting noises from the hallway. There was a flip chart that was used, but no white board.
 - The Employment Workshop was conducted on three consecutive days from 0800 to 1600.³³ A 10-minute break was provided to participants every hour, with an hour lunch period (per workshop protocols). Snacks were allowed in the room, and vending machines were located in the library's lobby. A food court, housed in the base's Commissary, was a short walk from the library. Bathrooms required key entry and there was only one key. The site team was told by installation staff that efforts to secure another workshop venue were underway.

³³ The TAP is a five-day workshop. Other sessions are held on the day before and the day after the three-day Employment Workshop. On the first day, Airman and Family Readiness Staff discuss stress management, budgeting, and financial planning. Representatives from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) provide a half-day presentation on veterans' benefits on the last day. During the session observed by the site visit team, participants indicated that some of the material on stress management presented on Day 1 of the Employment Workshop had already been covered the previous day by the Airman and Family Readiness team.

- **Access to Computers.** Participants were not required to make use of computers during the workshop, but participants were encouraged to bring their own laptops to the workshop; base-provided laptops were also available for those who requested them. Approximately 60 percent of the participants used laptops at various times during the workshop to work on their resumes or to view websites discussed during class. In-class Internet connection was available, and was used on occasion by the facilitator and some participants.
- **PowerPoint Slides/Audiovisuals/Demonstration of Websites – Technical Aspects.** An overhead projector allowed for slides to be shown on the wall in the front of the room. During the site visit, there were operational problems with the computer equipment used for uploading, displaying, and advancing slides, making it difficult for the facilitator to move easily from one slide to the next.

FIDELITY TO THE TAP WORKSHOP CURRICULUM

Throughout the three-day workshop, the facilitator demonstrated strict compliance in the delivery of all sections of the curriculum, including the exercises and activities, as set forth in the Facilitator Guide (FG). The site visit team learned that any modifications to the workshop curriculum must be approved by Inverness Technologies (the firm hired to conduct the workshop) management to ensure universal implementation across sites.³⁴ However, facilitators are encouraged to use pertinent examples and anecdotes – based upon their professional experiences – to augment and illustrate the workshop content.

- **Coverage of Curriculum Content.** Although the FG clearly states (FG, p. 1) that the “examples and suggestions for facilitating learning... [do] not restrict the facilitator’s ability to customize the material to best fit a particular group of participants,” this facilitator followed very closely both the instructional content and the sequence of topics and major sections as presented in the FG. The site visit team observed that all of the learning objectives highlighted at the beginning of each instructional module were addressed for all seven sections of the curriculum, with the facilitator touching on virtually every specific point addressed in the FG. For example, all topics in *Section 4: Build an Effective Resume*, a lengthy module with many interconnecting components, were covered so that all participants were trained on how to prepare a resume; the site team observed that perhaps 50 percent of the participants may have substantially completed their resumes by the end of Day 3.
- **Ability to Meet Suggested Timeframes.** The team observed the presentation of Section 1 and part of Section 2 on Day 1, the rest of Section 2, Section 3, and part of Section 4 on Day 2, and the remainder of Section 4 and Sections 5 through 7 on Day 3. The facilitator was able to present all sections of the workshop within the three-day timeframe, matching almost exactly the 20¾ hours allocated for instructional time in the FG. She did, however, move quickly and made a concerted effort to keep the class focused and on task to cover all of the material. The FG (FG, p. 1) notes that “times for major blocks are somewhat flexible” and, in keeping with that guidance, the facilitator did adjust the time devoted to selected sections, based on her past experiences presenting this instructional material. For example, although five hours is allocated for *Section 1: Transition Planning*, the facilitator spent a little less than four hours on this topic, in part because

³⁴ Inverness Technologies provides training services to government and private organizations. In January 2013, Inverness began administering the DOL Employment Workshop.

some of the material had already been covered in the previous day's presentations led by the Airman and Family Readiness team. However, she devoted an additional 1.5 hours beyond the suggested 2.5 hours to *Section 2: Career Exploration and Validation*, which enabled her to expand and carry to the second day the instructional and activity time for the Professional Introduction (the "30-second elevator speech"). This allowed the attendees to participate in this important interactive exercise in the morning when their energy levels were high.

- **Completion of suggested exercises and activities.** All required exercises and activities (over 30) were conducted during the workshop, although the facilitator did introduce occasional adjustments and enhancements to better meet the needs of the class. For example, with approval of Inverness management, the facilitator expanded the icebreaker conducted on Day 1 so that she could collect additional information about workshop participants that could be used to guide the focus and emphasis of subsequent instruction and activities. The revised format asked participants to share their career field of interest, relocation destination, and expectations for the workshop. In addition, on Day 2 the facilitator added a new exercise not included in the FG that required each participant to analyze a job posting they had brought to class using criteria provided in the Participant Guide (PG) (PG, p. 93).
- **Use of the Facilitator Notes and Comments in the FG.** This version of the FG provides suggestions, examples, and additional guidance in the right-hand margin of each page to aid the facilitator in presenting and illustrating the instructional material. Although, as noted above, the presentation may be customized to meet the needs of the participants, the majority of these suggestions were implemented in accordance with the FG instructions, with a few exceptions when the facilitator made modifications based on her experience. For example, in Section 1 (FG, p. 10), a suggestion is made to introduce a fictional Transitional Service Member (TSM) character who is making the transition from military to civilian employment, asking the group to provide a name and then to use this fictional character to illustrate many of the situations and scenarios discussed in the workshop. The site team learned that that in prior workshops, use of the TSM character (mentioned frequently throughout the FG notes) resulted in loss of facilitator credibility with participants, who could not identify with this imaginary person. As a result, the TSM scenario was not used in this workshop. The FG's new facilitator notes provide a helpful cross-walk to the PG page formatting, which was often used by the facilitator to keep the participants on track during the presentation. The site team also observed that the facilitator had tabbed many pages in the FG, and had made extensive marginal comments and notes of her own to augment the suggestions in the printed notes.
- **Use of PowerPoint slides and videos.** All the provided slides and videos were shown and discussed during the workshop in a manner that complies with the FG.
 - There are about 50 slides and they were all shown, including slide demonstrations of several websites (e.g., www.bls.gov and www.careeronestop.org).
 - No additional slides were developed and shown.
 - The facilitator sought and received approval to discuss <http://www.wordle.net>, to showcase how "Word Clouds" could support identification of key words.
 - Consistent with the FG, two videos were shown (i.e., "Bad Call/Good Call" and "Wordsmithing").
 - **Demonstration of suggested websites.** All the websites mentioned in the FG were described and discussed during the workshop. As suggested in the FG (FG, p. 44), the facilitator demonstrated navigation of the BLS and Career OneStop websites. Some other websites mentioned in the PG (e.g., www.mynextmove.org/vets/) were described but not demonstrated live. However, participants with laptops could access any of the

websites discussed during the workshop (FG, Section 2 (p. 45). The American Job Center service locator website was discussed, but not extensively. Social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter, MeetUp, and Pinterest were all discussed, but more emphasis was placed on LinkedIn. As a homework activity, participants were asked to explore LinkedIn; a show of hands the next day revealed that only a few did.

PARTICIPANT RESPONSES TO WORKSHOP

Overall, the participants appeared engaged and interested throughout the workshop, participating in the exercises and activities, responding to questions and offering feedback based on their own experiences. The mixture of older retirees and younger separates seemed to contribute to a positive learning environment as the more experienced in the group were able to share their knowledge with the younger participants. Participants appeared eager to read, refer to, and retain the new PG. The site team observed participant comments that were favorable, saying, “This is a great book with a lot of useful information,” and “it’s something we can keep.” Although attendance at the workshop is mandatory, some attendees left the sessions early and missed some instructional components. By 3:00 PM on the Day 3, only 12 participants remained in the classroom.

FACILITATOR PRESENTATION

At the Langley AFB, there was one facilitator employed by a contractor (Inverness Technologies) who conducted the three-day Employment Workshop. Since January 2013, the facilitator has conducted fifteen prior workshops using the new curriculum. Based upon site team observations, the facilitator conducted the training with a high degree of fidelity to objectives, content, and format of the FG. The facilitator possesses an understanding of the subject matter, and delivered it in a professional manner. She also did an excellent job keeping the participants engaged by providing anecdotes and experiences shared in other workshops and by encouraging continued participation and interaction among the attendees.

Despite difficult surroundings, the facilitator never lost control of the classroom and managed to competently cover all of the required material. Questions by participants were answered or in rare cases (e.g. federal hiring requirements) were deferred with recommendation to consult with appropriate officials. Moreover, the site team understands the facilitator conducted a self-study of the employment services offered through the Virginia Employment Commission, but feels additional information may be helpful to participants.

AFTER-ACTION REPORT
*****DRAFT-NOT FOR DISSEMINATION*****

LOCATION Camp Lejeune – Jacksonville, North Carolina

DATES OF VISIT: June 4 - 6, 2013

SITE OBSERVERS: David Balducchi, Avar Consulting, Inc.
 Stephen Wandner, Avar Consulting, Inc.

This after-action report summarizes key findings from the site visit to the Camp Lejeune in Jacksonville, North Carolina to observe the implementation of the revised Transition Assistance Program (TAP) Employment Workshop. This visit was conducted under a U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) contracted study with Avar Consulting, Inc. to assess the new curriculum being implemented by the DOL Veterans' Employment and Training Service's (VETS) TAP.

The overall purpose of this study is to determine if the redesigned DOL Employment Workshop is providing exiting service members the skills, tools, and resources needed to transition back into civilian employment. As part of this study, the Avar research team is conducting visits to a few military bases to observe workshops and provide an initial assessment of the early implementation of the new curriculum.³⁵ The objectives of these visits are to provide DOL with feedback on the fidelity of the implementation of the curriculum, determine whether and how the curriculum is customized to meet the needs of participants, and assess training techniques, engagement of and takeaways for the participants.

The findings provided in this report are based on observations by a two-person team, David Balducchi and Stephen Wandner, who attended a session of the new curriculum at Camp Lejeune. An approximately 60 minute in-person interview was conducted with the facilitator after the workshop's second day. On Day 1 and Day 2, an additional observer was present in the classroom during part of the session, but she also attended sporadically the other five TAP workshops that were underway at Camp Lejeune during the first two days. She stayed in the site team's session all of Day 3.³⁶ Also, on Day 3, another facilitator joined the principal facilitator to help with the curriculum.

It should be noted that no formal interviews or discussions were conducted by the site visit team with workshop participants. The findings and views expressed in this summary are preliminary and intended to reflect initial views of the team.

³⁵ This round of visits follows up on earlier visits that had been conducted in 2012 to assess the implementation of an earlier version of the curriculum.

³⁶ The other observer was Evon Digregorio, Director for North Carolina, USDOL VETS.

WORKSHOP ATTENDANCE

- **Registered to Attend Workshop:** 25; two participants dropped out before the workshop began.
- **Unduplicated Count of Attendees for All Days of Workshop:** 23
- **Attendees Each Day:** Day 1: 23 Day 2: 22 Day 3: 23
- **General Characteristics of Attendees:**
 - On Day 1, there were no retirees and 23 separatees (22 Marines and 1 Navy) in attendance. Twenty-two attendees were men and one woman. All but one of the participants was dressed in casual civilian clothes.
 - About half of the participants indicated that they intended to return home while the other half planned to relocate after they left military service. Participants included two officers, and the all others were enlisted personnel. Most of the participants had a high school degree or some post-secondary course work. One participant had an associate degree. One participant was a physicist with a bachelor's degree, and another was a psychologist with an advanced degree.
 - Camp Lejeune workshops are held every week, except on weeks that include holidays. About 200 participants attend each week, generally in about 6 different workshops. (During the week of the Avar team visit, 6 workshops were being held, but the Avar team observed only one workshop.) In 2012, separations from Camp Lejeune peaked, and attendees reached 300 and they were placed in up to 9 or 10 workshops each week.

OVERVIEW OF FACILITY/EQUIPMENT

- **Facility Set-up/Appropriateness:**
 - The workshop was held the Lejeune Education Center (a former junior high school) on the base. At full capacity, the room can accommodate 36 participants at 12 tables that seat 3 per table. Because the room accommodates 36 students and only 23 were present, the site visit observers were able to sit at tables located at the front of the classroom.
 - Participants were asked to make their own tent cards displaying first names only and place them in front of them. Lighting and air conditioning were adequate.
 - There was a white board that was used rather than a flip chart. Flip charts were not available.
 - A 10-minute break was provided to participants every hour, with an hour lunch period (per workshop protocols). Because the class ran from 7:30AM to 3:30PM, lunch was from 11AM to 12 Noon. Snacks were allowed in the room, and vending machines and a snack bar were available in the building. Bathrooms were located close by the classroom, just down the hall.
- **Access to Computers.** There were enough electrical outlets and power cords to support about a dozen laptops so that the classroom could not accommodate a class full of laptops. Participants were encouraged to bring their own laptops to the workshop; about 6 participants brought laptops. An additional 6 participants brought tablets instead of laptops, and most of the rest had smart phones that they could use to access the web. Some participants shared the use of the laptops for some exercises.
- **PowerPoint Slides/Audiovisuals/Demonstration of Websites – Technical Aspects.** An overhead projector allowed for slides to be shown on the wall in the front of the room. During the site visit, there were no technical problems with the computer equipment used for uploading,

displaying and advancing slides. On the third day of class, the classroom lost access to Wi-Fi, and, as a result, one exercise could not be conducted.

FIDELITY TO THE TAP WORKSHOP CURRICULUM

Throughout the three-day workshop, there was strict compliance in the delivery of all sections of the curriculum, including the exercises and activities, as set forth in the Facilitator Guide (FG). The site visit team learned that any modifications to the curriculum must be approved by GBX Consultants, Inc. (a private firm hired to conduct TAP workshops throughout the United States) to ensure universal implementation across sites.³⁷ However, facilitators are encouraged to use pertinent examples and anecdotes – based upon their professional experiences – to augment and illustrate the workshop content. They also can add their own exercises. However, they are not allowed to add new slides to the slide presentation.

- **Coverage of Curriculum Content and Ability to Meet Suggested Timeframes.** The team observed the presentation of Section 1 and most of Section 2 on Day 1, continued presentation of Section 2 and Sections 3 and 4 on Day 2, and continued presentation of Sections 4 and 5 through 7 on Day 3. The workshop was conducted on three consecutive days from 0730 to 1530 each day.³⁸ Although the FG (page 1) includes guidance allowing the facilitator to “customize the material to best fit a particular group of participants,” this facilitator followed very closely the content, but not necessarily the sequence of the presentation of sections and topics as set forth in the FG because, based on her experience, she believed that some part of the text were not presented in logical sequence. She was able to cover all sections of the workshop within the three-day timeframe, although she spent more than the estimated time on some sections and less on others, as is anticipated and allowed per the guidance provided in the FG. The workshop hosts provided an agenda for topics to be covered over the entire five-day workshop, including middle three-day period during which the Employment Workshop is conducted.
- **Completion/success of Suggested Exercises and Activities.** Almost all of exercises and activities included in the PG/FG were conducted during the workshop and the facilitator added 3 additional exercises not included in the PG. Below are several highlights related to the exercises conducted as part of the TAP workshop:

³⁷ GBX Consultants, Inc. provides training services to government and private organizations. In January 2013, GBX began administering the DOL Employment Workshop. GBX operates under three different names, one of which is Inverness Technologies. Inverness operates primarily in the southern United States, while it works in North Carolina and to the north as GBX.

³⁸ The Transition Readiness Seminar is a five-day workshop (Agenda attached). The site visit team learned that a variety of other sessions are held on the day before and the day after the three-day DOL Employment Workshop. On the first day, sessions are conducted on Department of Veterans’ Affairs benefits and also on the MOS crosswalk to civilian jobs and on preparing a budget for civilian life. On the fifth day, the session on preparing budgets is completed; a second session on VA budgets is conducted, as well as sessions on interviewing for jobs and a session of VSO, DMO, IPAC, and M4L. Participants are also broken into two tracks – one for those looking for jobs and the other pursuing education. Those in the education track only participate in two days of the USDOL Employment Workshop. However, the site team understood that Employment Workshop material is covered in the other track so that those participants comply with the Checklist requirement.

- **Icebreaker Activity (FG, p. 4).** The icebreaker activity presented during this workshop expanded on the “Expectations Icebreaker” suggested in the FG with the approval of GBX/Inverness management. The revised format enabled participants to share their career field of interest, relocation destination, and expectations for the workshop. Based upon site team observation, everyone actively participated.
 - **Resume Quiz (FG, p. 98).** The Resume Quiz was both informative and allowed for healthy facilitator-participant interaction.
 - **Added Exercises.** The facilitator added three exercises: 1) a mock fact-finding telephone call exercise not included in the FG that met with enthusiasm by participants; 2) a Jung personality test similar to tests administered by employers; 3) a group exercise asking participants what they would do to prepare a week before, three days before, and the day before the interview. For example, as part of the third added exercise, participants broke into three groups and selected a representative to present each group’s findings. In addition, a video produced by the Office of Personnel Management, “How to Apply and Find Federal Jobs,” was played that explained how to use USAJOBS.gov. Finally, the facilitator added two additional interview types – the “demonstration and observation interview” and “Skype interviews” (FG, p. 210).
 - **Professional Introduction.** Each participant had a chance to give an “elevator talk” three times and be the employer three times during a 15-minute exercise.
 - **Bicycle Chain Exercise.** Key workshop activities observed by the site visit team included an exercise conducted on the morning of Day 2, when the facilitator led an interactive “Bicycle Chain” exercise (suggested in the FG, p. 78) that enabled participants to develop and share professional introductions (aka “elevator pitch”) multiple times with different partners. This exercise, similar to “speed dating,” appeared to provide a good opportunity for the participants to practice the STAR method live and was well received by the participants.
 - **Analyzing Job Posting Exercise.** On Day 2, the facilitator conducted a useful exercise that required each participant to analyze a job posting they had brought to class using criteria provided in the PG (p. 93). The exercise was a creative method for enhancing the instructional component as presented, reinforcing prior training (e.g., key words), and introducing the content of upcoming sessions.
- **Use of the Facilitator Notes and Comments in the FG.** The training techniques included in the FG were interactive, and reinforced the training experience. The facilitator notes seem to provide consistent and valuable insights. However, the facilitator for this workshop elected to teach directly from the PG, and did not use the FG.
 - Despite the fact she did not use the FG, the site team observed that the facilitator notes and suggestions were consistently used in compliance with the FG instructions, with the exception of adding exercises, including practicing the Professional Introduction and a homework assignment of taking the Jung personality test.
 - Although the facilitator did not use the FG, the facilitator had studied the FG and was able to make use of its notes without making use of the FG during the workshop.
 - **Use of PowerPoint Slides and Videos.** All slides and websites listed in the PG were either discussed or mentioned during the workshop in a manner that complies with the FG. In addition, all of the videos provided were shown during the workshop.
 - There are 60 slides and they were all shown, including slide demonstrations of several websites (i.e., www.bls.gov, and www.careeronestop.org).
 - No slides were shown that were not part of standard curriculum, in accordance with direction by GBX, Inc. to the facilitators.

- Consistent with the FG, two videos are shown (i.e., Bad Call/Good Call and Wordsmithing). The site team observed that participants appeared engaged with the videos. An additional video was shown about how to search for federal employment through USAJOB.gov (explained above).
- **Demonstration of Suggested Websites.** As suggested in the FG (Section 2.1 (44)), the facilitator demonstrated navigation of the BLS and Career OneStop websites. Most of the other websites mentioned in the PG (e.g., www.mynextmove.org/vets/) were described but not demonstrated live. However, participants with laptops, tablets, or smartphones could access any of the websites discussed during the workshop.
 - **FG, Section 2, p. 45, One-Stop Locator.** Through the careeronstop.org portal the service locator to assist participants in finding workforce offices was discussed. The facilitator asked participants to call out zip codes, and she demonstrated how to search for local offices (i.e., American Job Centers) in three different states.
 - **FG, Section 2, LinkedIn.** The facilitator went to her own LinkedIn account and walked the class through it in its entirety, explaining the functions of each section of her account, why it looked like it does, and how their account might look different, including her lesser reference to Marine connections, since she was discharged from the Marine long before the TAP workshop.
 - **FG, Section 3, pp. 91-94, Job Search via Social Media.** The explanation of social media sites complied with the FG, but more emphasis was placed on LinkedIn than other social media. As a homework activity, participants were asked to explore LinkedIn; through a show of hands only a few did.
- **Additional Comments on Workshop Structure/Content.**
 - **Multiple TAP Workshops Held Each Week at Camp Lejeune.** As a result of high rates of separation from the Marines, multiple TAP workshops were conducted each week during much of 2012, and participation peaked at about 300 per week and up to 10 workshops conducted each week.
 - **Transition Readiness Seminar Checklist.** Camp Lejeune’s Marine and Family Readiness Center (MFRC) created a Transition Readiness Seminar Checklist that was implemented in January 2013. It is used to certify each of 11 items the participant is required to complete before separating from the military. The items cover areas including the USDOL Employment Workshop, education pathways, financial/budget analysis, and Veterans’ Administration benefits. The USDOL items consist of completion of 1) a resume, 2) an Individual Transition Plan, and 3) a Gap Analysis (comparison of current vs. needed job skills). This Checklist tends to assure that tasks are completed. The facilitator certifies that resume is completed on third day of the USDOL workshop. The Checklist acts as an incentive for participants in the Employment Workshop to complete their assignments. As a result, by a show of hands at the beginning of the workshop, more than half of the participants indicated that they had already started to draft resumes.
 - **Employment Versus Educational Pathways on Day 3 of the TAP Workshop.** Camp Lejeune has split curriculum on the third day of the USDOL HCCC to divide participants looking for jobs from those going back to school. An “Education Pathway” track is created on third day of the HCCC, and those participants leave the USDOL workshop. As a result, on the third day the number of TAP workshops held at the base was collapsed from six to three, and two facilitators worked with each of the three classes for participants on the employment track.

- **Introduction to State/Local Workforce Services (FG, pp. 45-46).** The explanation of public job finding services at Job Centers complied with the FG. It appeared that the subject matter was new to many participants.³⁹ The facilitator reminded participants several times that quality no-cost job finding services were available – with special services provided to veterans. The facilitator went through the functions of the state workforce agencies and what they could do for the participants, especially discussing the role of the LVERs and DVOPs. She encouraged participants to take advantage of LVER/DVOP assistance, as well as other workforce services available through American Job Centers in Jacksonville and in other localities across the United States. She explained and demonstrated how to find the public workforce office (i.e., American Job Center) in any locality.
- **FG (pp. 121-157), Resume Lab.** To both explain the components of a resume, and to provide ad hoc individualized advice or review, the facilitator creatively moved around the section. First, a component of the resume would be discussed (e.g. objective statement.) Then, participants were instructed to begin preparing/writing that component of their resumes. The facilitator walked throughout the classroom and provided individual guidance; then the class would restart to discuss and summarize before moving on to the next component. The facilitator reviewed resumes throughout the workshop. On the third day, two facilitators worked with participants individually to review and improve their resumes.⁴⁰
- **Federal Hiring (FG, pp. 166-204).** About a dozen participants expressed interest in seeking federal government employment. While the facilitator’s explanation complied with the FG, it was abbreviated. The facilitator discussed a specialized federal government hiring workshop available at Camp Lejeune for those considering careers in the federal civilian sector. The address, names of instructors, and telephone numbers were provided.
- **Salary Negotiations (FG, pp. 256-261).** The discussion of salary negotiation techniques was limited. While the discussion with participants was helpful, the FG does not contain negotiation technique exercises. The facilitator did provide participants with MFRC contact information if they required specific advice on negotiating salary offers.
- **Key Features of TAP Workshop.** The Avar team observed several features of the TAP workshop that appeared to have direct relevance to improving job search and employment prospects for TA workshop participants.
 - All participants were trained to conduct professional introductions, and they had an opportunity to do so through a highly-effective mock “elevator pitch” exercise.
 - All participants were trained to conduct job interviews, and they had an opportunity to prepare and conduct interviews through a mock interview exercise with other workshop participants.
 - All participants were trained on how to prepare a resume, and the site team observed that nearly all of the participants substantially completed their resumes, largely because of enforcement of completion of the resume, and review of staff of the resume before certification on the Checklist.

³⁹ Explanation of the Workforce Investment Act is included in the PG (p. 47), but it was not explained in the workshop, and there is no companion PG explanation of public employment services under the Wagner-Peyser Act. However, the availability of American Job Center services was discussed.

⁴⁰ The FG (144) states, “If possible, it would be good to have additional resume experts available both at the end of day 2 and the morning of day 3.”

- All participants were advised on how to locate the local workforce office nearest their relocation destination and the services and priority they were likely to be offered when they arrived.

PARTICIPANT RESPONSES TO WORKSHOP

- **PG.** Each participant had a copy of the PG,⁴¹ which is a velo-bound, compact and portable document, with pages printed on each site. Participants appeared eager to read, refer to, and retain the new PG. The site team overheard participant comments that were favorable about the guide.
- **Mock Interviews.** Participants appeared to be highly involved in the interviews whether taking the roles of interviewee, employer, or observer/assessor.
- **Resume Completion.** All participants appeared to have completed resumes by the end of the workshop. The high rate of completion was clearly related to the completion requirement (discuss earlier), and the ability to have their resumes individually reviewed and refined on Day 3 because two facilitators were present.

FACILITATOR PRESENTATION

At Camp Lejeune, there was one facilitator employed by the contractor (GBX/Inverness Technologies) who conducted the first two days of the three-day Employment Workshop by herself and the third day with the assistance of a second facilitator. Since January 2013, the facilitator had conducted workshops nearly weekly using the new curriculum. Based upon site team observations, the facilitator accomplished the training with a high degree of fidelity to objectives, content, and format of the PG. The facilitator possesses a deep understanding of the subject matter, and delivered it in a professional manner. With a background in psychology, she provided a fresh perspective to the training curriculum. She also did an excellent job keeping the participants engaged by providing anecdotes and personal experiences and by encouraging continued participation and interaction among the attendees. The facilitator never lost control of the classroom and managed to competently cover all of the required material. Questions by participants were answered well.

⁴¹ The PG's front cover identifies it as a USDOL product, but the booklet did not contain either an issue date or contact information.

AFTER-ACTION REPORT
*****DRAFT-NOT FOR DISSEMINATION*****

LOCATION: Ft. Bragg, Fayetteville, North Carolina

DATES OF VISIT: June 25-27, 2013

SITE OBSERVERS: Joyce Kaiser, Avar Consulting, Inc.
Carolyn O'Brien, Capital Research Corporation, Inc.

This after-action report summarizes key findings from the site visit to the Ft. Bragg Army Base in Fayetteville, North Carolina to observe the implementation of the newly-revised Transition Assistance Program (TAP) Employment Workshop. This visit was conducted under a U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) contracted study with Avar Consulting, Inc. to assess the new curriculum being implemented at the TAP Employment Workshops.

The overall purpose of this study is to determine if the redesigned DOL Employment Workshop is providing exiting service members the skills, tools, and resources needed to transition back into civilian employment. As part of this study, the Avar research team is conducting visits to three military bases to observe workshops and provide an assessment of the implementation of the new curriculum.⁴² An important aim of these visits is to provide DOL with feedback on the fidelity of the implementation of the curriculum.

The findings provided in this report are based on observations by a two-person team, Joyce Kaiser and Carolyn O'Brien, who attended a session of the new curriculum at the Ft. Bragg Army Base near Fayetteville, North Carolina. An approximately 60-minute in-person interview was conducted with the facilitator during the lunch break on Day Two. No other observers were present in this classroom during the sessions; observers did attend other sessions being conducted in the building during the same time period.⁴³ No formal interviews or discussions were conducted by the site visit team with workshop participants.

⁴² This round of visits follows earlier visits to 11 military bases that had been conducted in 2012 to assess the implementation of an earlier version of the curriculum.

⁴³ The observers were: Cheri Sanders (DoD); Evon Digregorio,(DOL VETS, NC State Office); Robert Sanders, (DoD); Claire Duong, (DoD)

WORKSHOP ATTENDANCE

- **Number Signed Up for the Workshop:** 45
- **Unduplicated Count of Attendees for All Days of Workshop:** 37
- **Attendees Each Day:** Day 1: 37 Day 2: 37 Day 3: 36
- **General Characteristics of Attendees:**
 - No retirees attended this workshop. One spouse participated in the workshop. On Day One, there were 34 men and 3 women in attendance. Female attendance did not vary over the three days. The age of the participants in the group varied, ranging from mid 20's to late 40's.⁴⁴ Participants were all enlisted personnel. Eleven of the attendees reported that they have less than 90 days left before they leave the service.
 - During the Day One opening "icebreaker," 21 participants indicated that they intended to relocate to different states after they left military service; 17 stated that they intended to further their education; and 6 reported they had jobs already lined up for the post-service period.⁴⁵
 - Workshops are held 15 to 20 times a month,⁴⁶ with between 40 and 50 participants registered for each workshop. Participants are required to sign-in at the beginning of each session.

OVERVIEW OF FACILITY/EQUIPMENT

- **Facility Set-up/Appropriateness:**
 - The workshop was conducted in a moderately large room. The room can accommodate 48 participants at 8 long tables that seat 6 per table. Participants were asked to prepare their own name cards from supplied card stock. A medium sized fan positioned near a door provided some air circulation, but the room was very hot, stuffy, and uncomfortable. On Day Two the fan was moved from the back to the front of the room and on Day Three it disappeared.
 - Observers were asked to sit at the back table. If the numbers of participants had reached program capacity, there was enough open space to set up a table for observers.
 - There was a screen for videos/slides. A flip chart and white board were available.
 - The Employment Workshop was conducted on three consecutive days from 0800 to 1600.⁴⁷ A 10-minute break was provided to participants every hour, with an hour lunch period (per workshop protocols). Because of the heat in the room and

⁴⁴ Individuals may leave the military and reenlist at a later date. Generally, their total service will not exceed 20 years but that service could be over more than 20 years.

⁴⁵ Several participants indicated that they would be going back to family farms or family businesses.

⁴⁶ This site offers 5 workshops every week with the exception of weeks including holidays.

⁴⁷ TAP is a five-day workshop. Other sessions are held on the day before and the day after the three-day Employment Workshop. On the first day, Army Career and Alumni Program (ACAP) staff discuss budgeting and financial planning. Representatives from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) provide a half-day presentation on veterans' benefits on the last day.

its effect on some participants, additional breaks were allowed from time to time. Snacks and beverages were not allowed in the room because of the presence of laptops at each seat. Vending machines were located immediately outside the classrooms and a snack bar was also adjacent to the classroom area. More ample food choices were available at the Base cafeteria across the street from the training venues.

- **Access to Computers.** A laptop computer was provided at each seat. Normally participants would have been required to make use of computers to access various websites referenced in the manual during the workshop. Unfortunately, Internet service was not available during the first two days of the workshop when the majority of Internet usage takes place. Internet service was restored briefly on Day 3. Most of the computer work on Day 3 did not require Internet access and the laptops were used primarily to draft resumes and cover letters.
- **PowerPoint Slides/Audiovisuals/Demonstration of Websites – Technical Aspects.** An overhead projector allowed for slides to be shown on a screen in the front of the room. Websites were not accessed during the first two days of the workshop as explained above.

FIDELITY TO THE TAP WORKSHOP CURRICULUM

The facilitator carefully followed the Facilitator’s Guide. There were occasions when she had to explain what was available on the Internet rather than demonstrate how to utilize certain websites due to lack of Internet access. The facilitator mentioned that no modifications are made to the workshop curriculum at the local level to ensure that there is universal implementation across sites. The site visitors were advised that facilitators are encouraged to use pertinent examples and anecdotes based upon their professional experiences to augment and illustrate the workshop content.

- **Coverage of Curriculum Content.** This facilitator followed both the instructional content and the sequence of topics and major sections as presented in the FG but she did not always structure the examples as suggested in the manual. For example, she did not use the Transitioning Service Member (TSM) example as part of her program delivery but covered all the material associated with the TSM. The learning objectives highlighted at the beginning of each instructional module were addressed for all seven sections of the curriculum, with the facilitator touching on virtually every specific point addressed in the FG, unless the points were dependent on information gathered from the Internet. For example, most topics in *Section 4: Build an Effective Resume*, were covered but the section relating to analyzing job postings could not be covered as the material was to be gathered from research conducted on-line. Fortunately this activity did not seriously affect the participants’ ability to craft a resume. If a participant attends this workshop for the full 3 days, the participant will have a draft resume at the conclusion of the program.

- **Ability to Meet Suggested Timeframes.** Circumstances prevented the facilitator from meeting the suggested timeframes.
 - Any material derived from Internet research could not be obtained. For example, any activity related to social media could not be presented using the Internet. Websites with job posting could not be accessed. This resulted in changes to timeframes on the first two days.
 - Due to severe weather and reported fires in the building, instruction on Day Two was curtailed.

The facilitator did, however, move quickly and made a concerted effort to keep the class focused and on task to cover all of the material. The FG (FG, p. 1) notes that “times for major blocks are somewhat flexible” which enabled her (and the other facilitators) to adjust for lack of Internet connectivity and a shortened Day 2. Internet connectivity problems on Day 1 did result in more time being available for some modules such as the Professional Introduction (the “30-second elevator speech”). Participants prepared their speech, shared with tablemates, shared with others in the class, and finally, shared their Professional Introduction with members of other workshop sections. The final element of this exercise closely resembled a job fair or networking event. It was noisy and crowded but the site visitors sensed that the participants were highly energized and engaged during the exercise. This final portion of the exercise also allowed participants from the enlisted personnel workshop to practice on older, more experience individuals enrolled in the workshop provided for higher ranking personnel. This segment of the exercise was scheduled immediately after lunch, a good time to get participants up and moving.

- **Completion of suggested exercises and activities.** Most of the exercises and activities were conducted during the workshop unless they were Internet dependent. Some changes and enhancement were made. Rather than breaking into groups during the ice breaker phase, individuals were asked to state their names, tell where they would be going once out of the service, and what plans they had for civilian life.
- **Use of the Facilitator Notes and Comments in the FG:** The Ft. Bragg TAP instructors have made a significant change to their instructional manual. Rather than using the FG as presented, they have incorporated the contents of the FG into the participant guide (PG). The instructions currently listed on the right side of the FG pages have been cut and pasted into the PG in the appropriate sections. This allows the facilitators to easily see what the participants are seeing during all discussions. The change has not resulted in any change to the instructional material. This facilitator (and the rest of the Ft. Bragg team) has also abandoned the use of the fictional Transitional Service Member (TSM) character that is making the transition from military to civilian employment. When asked why, the site visitors were told that using a make believe character did not appeal to the participants (or the facilitators).

- **Use of PowerPoint slides and videos.** All the provided slides were shown and discussed. Two videos were included in the original curricula (Good Call/Bad Call and Wordsmithing) and two additional videos have been added to the curriculum: Federal Hiring Process and Who Stole My Cheese. The facilitators think that the Federal Hiring Process video presents a more comprehensive explanation of the process. There were no slide demonstrations of websites due to technical problems.
- **Demonstration of suggested websites.** Most of the websites mentioned in the FG were described and discussed during the workshop but none were accessed as the Internet was only available for about one hour on Day 3.

PARTICIPANT RESPONSES TO WORKSHOP

Overall, the participants appeared engaged and interested throughout the workshop, participating in the exercises and activities, responding to questions. There was little in the way of sharing experiences relating to job search topics since the majority of the participants were younger and had little experience. The opportunities for sharing were also limited because of the quantity of material to be cover. The participants did exhibit substantial computer knowledge and the ability to utilize resources on the Internet.

Attendance at the workshop is mandatory and there was very little attrition, although some attendees left the sessions early and missed some instructional components.

FACILITATOR PRESENTATION

The facilitator did very well considering the obstacles she needed to overcome. As was mentioned earlier, she had military experience, experience with the TAP as a result of working with ACAP several years ago, and professional credentials in education (PhD). Her mastery of the material allowed her to adjust to the lack of Internet access, a shortened training day, less than ideal conditions in the classroom (i.e., too hot, poor acoustics, marginal teaching aids) and the presence of two observers. She also did an excellent job keeping the participants engaged by encouraging continued participation and interaction among the attendees. Her focus on the development of a resume by the end of the program is worthy of note. She provided one-on-one assistance to those in the classroom who were having difficulty. She encouraged participants to return to future TAP sessions as observers if they needed help with any of the material presented. Participant questions were addressed utilizing the material in the FG. In some cases, the material/answers presented in the FG are a bit dogmatic which stifles dialog but she did not stray from the material. She was warm and friendly and maintained a sense of humor throughout the program.

She has been with GBX Consulting, Inc. since December, 2012 and received TAP facilitator training in January, 2013. Since receiving the training, she has conducted 3 to 4 workshop sessions per month. The only weeks that she has not held a workshop were weeks that include

holidays. Based upon site team observations, the facilitator conducted the training with a high degree of fidelity (when possible) to objectives, content, and format of the FG.

ATTACHMENT II-A: DESCRIPTIVE TABLES OF CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONDENTS TO THE TAP WORKSHOP CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEY

Table A.1. Characteristics of TAP Workshop Customer Satisfaction Survey Respondents: Number and Percentage of TAP Workshop Participants by Branch of Services

Branch	Frequency	Percentage
Air Force	1265	62.3
Marines	351	17.3
Navy	221	10.9
Army	189	9.3
Coast Guard	3	0.1
Total	2029	100.0

Table A.2. Characteristics of TAP Workshop Customer Satisfaction Survey Respondents: Number and Percentage of TAP Workshop Participants by Separation Type

Type of Respondent	Frequency	Percentage
Separatee	1211	59.9
Retiree	811	40.1
Total	2022	100.0

Missing Responses: 7

Table A.3. Characteristics of TAP Workshop Customer Satisfaction Survey Respondents: Number and Percentage of TAP Workshop Participants by Spouse Status

Spouse of Separating/Retiring TAP Attendee	Frequency	Percentage
No	2016	99.4
Yes (Spouse)	13	0.6
Total	2029	100.0

Table A.4. Characteristics of TAP Workshop Customer Satisfaction Survey Respondents : Number and Percentage of TAP Workshop Participants by Length of Service

Years of Service	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
1	27	1.3	1.3
2	48	2.4	3.7
3	101	5.0	8.7
4	286	14.2	22.9
5	157	7.8	30.7
6	163	8.1	38.8
7	76	3.8	42.6
8	113	5.6	48.2
9	73	3.6	51.8
10	72	3.6	55.4
11	33	1.6	57.0
12	45	2.2	59.2
13	23	1.1	60.4
14	31	1.5	61.9
15	8	.4	62.3
16	9	.4	62.7
17	5	.2	63.0
18	20	1.0	64.0
19	57	2.8	66.8
20	199	9.9	76.7
21	87	4.3	81.0
22	76	3.8	84.8
23	63	3.1	87.9
24	81	4.0	91.9
25	39	1.9	93.8
26	45	2.2	96.1
27	16	.8	96.9
28	16	.8	97.7
29	15	.7	98.4
30+	32	1.6	100.0
Total	2016	100.0	

Missing Responses: 13

Table A.5. Characteristics of TAP Workshop Customer Satisfaction Survey Respondents: Number and Percentage of TAP Workshop Participants by Rank

Rank	Frequency	Percentage
E1	14	0.7
E2	28	1.4
E3	108	5.4
E4	506	25.1
E5	406	20.1
E6	220	10.9
E7	292	14.5
E8	108	5.4
E9	43	2.1
W3	8	0.4
W4	4	0.2
O1	1	0.0
O2	23	1.1
O3	83	4.1
O4	91	4.5
O5	58	2.9
O6	23	1.1
Total	2016	100.0

Missing Responses: 13

Table A.6 – Characteristics of TAP Workshop Customer Satisfaction Survey Respondents – Month in Which Individual Started TAP Workshop

Month TAP Workshop Started	Frequency	Percentage
Jul 2012	72	3.5
Aug 2012	214	10.5
Sep 2012	157	7.7
Oct 2012	243	12.0
Nov 2012	283	13.9
Dec 2012	294	14.5
Jan 2013	454	22.4
Feb 2013	312	15.4
Total	2029	100.0

Table A.7. Characteristics of TAP Workshop Customer Satisfaction Survey Respondents: Number and Percentage of TAP Workshop Participants by Facility

Facility	Frequency	Percentage
Miramar MCAS	327	16.1
Norfolk Naval Station	148	7.3
Eglin AFB	142	7.0
Ft. Sill	93	4.6
Nellis AFB	86	4.2
Hill AFB	84	4.1
Offutt AFB	82	4.0
JB Charleston	74	3.6
Barksdale AFB	69	3.4
Jacksonville NAS	57	2.8
Holloman AFB	50	2.5
Malmstrom AFB	50	2.5
Ft. Hood	47	2.3
Kadena AB	44	2.2
Beale AFB	38	1.9
Goodfellow AFB	38	1.9
Shaw AFB	36	1.8
JB Andrews	35	1.7
Grand Forks AFB	30	1.5
Patrick AFB	29	1.4
Yokota AB	28	1.4
Kirtland AFB	25	1.2
Randolph AFB	19	0.9
Robins AFB	18	0.9
USAF Academy	18	0.9
RafLakenheath	17	0.8
AvianoAb	16	0.8

Table A.7. Characteristics of TAP Workshop Customer Satisfaction Survey Respondents: Number and Percentage of TAP Workshop Participants by Facility

Facility	Frequency	Percentage
Fairchild AFB	16	0.8
Hurlburt AFB	16	0.8
Scott AFB	16	0.8
Aberdeen Proving Ground	14	0.7
Sheppard AFB	14	0.7
Ft. Knox	13	0.6
Macdill AFB	13	0.6
Misawa AB	12	0.6
Quantico, MCB	12	0.6
Whiteman AFB	12	0.6
McConnell AFB	11	0.5
RafMildenhall	11	0.5
Buckley AFB	10	0.5
Seymour-Johnson AFB	10	0.5
Altus AFB	9	0.4
Ft. Drum	9	0.4
Los Angeles AFB	9	0.4
Peterson AFB	9	0.4
JBMcGuire/Dix/Lakehurst	8	0.4
Wright Patterson AFB	8	0.4
Luke AFB	7	0.3
Minot AFB	7	0.3
San Diego Naval Base	7	0.3
Tyndall AFB	7	0.3
Columbus AFB	6	0.3
Ft. Rucker	6	0.3
Tinker AFB	6	0.3

Table A.7. Characteristics of TAP Workshop Customer Satisfaction Survey Respondents: Number and Percentage of TAP Workshop Participants by Facility

Facility	Frequency	Percentage
Maxwell AFB	5	0.2
OsanAb	4	0.2
Kitsap (Bangor/Bremerton) Naval Base	3	0.1
San Diego, MCRD	3	0.1
Barstow MCLB	2	0.1
Lackland AFB	2	0.1
Okinawa MCB	2	0.1
RafAlconbury	2	0.1
Ramstein AB	2	0.1
Yuma, MCAS	2	0.1
Anacostia (Naval Support Activity Washington)	1	0.0
Bamberg	1	0.0
Camp Lejeune MCB	1	0.0
Coronado Naval Base	1	0.0
Dover AFB	1	0.0
Fort Worth Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base	1	0.0
Ft. Carson	1	0.0
Ft. Eustis (JBLE)	1	0.0
Ft. Hamilton	1	0.0
Ft. Irwin	1	0.0
Ft. Leavenworth	1	0.0
Ft. Polk	1	0.0
Gulfport NCBC	1	0.0
Henderson Hall, Hqbn	1	0.0
Keesler AFB	1	0.0
Little Rock AFB	1	0.0
Mid-South (Millington) Naval Support Activity	1	0.0

Table A.7. Characteristics of TAP Workshop Customer Satisfaction Survey Respondents: Number and Percentage of TAP Workshop Participants by Facility

Facility	Frequency	Percentage
New River MCAS	1	0.0
Nlb Arlington	1	0.0
Pensacola Naval Air Station	1	0.0
Pentagon	1	0.0
Travis AFB	1	0.0
USCG HQ, Washington	1	0.0
Ventura County Naval Base	1	0.0
Total	2029	100.0

Table A.8. Characteristics of TAP Workshop Customer Satisfaction Survey Respondents: Number and Percentage of Participants by Facility and TAP Workshop Session

Facility	Session Start Date	Count
Aberdeen Proving Ground	30-Jul-12	13
	30-Aug-12	1
Altus AFB	10-Dec-12	6
	11-Feb-13	3
Anacostia (Naval Support Activity Washington)	11-Feb-13	1
Aviano AB	14-Jan-13	9
	11-Feb-13	6
	13-Feb-13	1
Bamberg	14-Jan-13	1
Barksdale AFB	29-Oct-12	13
	5-Nov-12	12
	26-Nov-12	3
	3-Dec-12	10
	17-Dec-12	4
	7-Jan-13	6
	28-Jan-13	7
	4-Feb-13	14
Barstow MCLB	22-Oct-12	2
Beale AFB	5-Nov-12	5
	3-Dec-12	5
	6-Dec-12	1
	7-Jan-13	12
	28-Jan-13	8
	11-Feb-13	7
Buckley AFB	5-Nov-12	6
	3-Dec-12	4
Camp Lejeune MCB	20-Aug-12	1
Columbus AFB	5-Nov-12	2

Table A.8. Characteristics of TAP Workshop Customer Satisfaction Survey Respondents: Number and Percentage of Participants by Facility and TAP Workshop Session

Facility	Session Start Date	Count
	7-Jan-13	4
Coronado Naval Base	1-Oct-12	1
Dover AFB	4-Feb-13	1
Eglin AFB	2-Oct-12	1
	5-Nov-12	9
	26-Nov-12	19
	10-Dec-12	22
	7-Jan-13	20
	14-Jan-13	16
	28-Jan-13	17
	4-Feb-13	20
	11-Feb-13	16
Fairchild AFB	25-Feb-13	2
	7-Jan-13	8
Fairchild AFB	4-Feb-13	8
	Fort Worth Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base	3-Dec-12
Ft. Carson	5-Nov-12	1
Ft. Drum	30-Jul-12	8
	30-Aug-12	1
Ft. Eustis (JBLE)	23-Oct-12	1
Ft. Hamilton	27-Aug-12	1
Ft. Hood	25-Aug-12	2
	26-Aug-12	16
	27-Aug-12	11
	28-Aug-12	17
	30-Aug-12	1
Ft. Irwin	7-Jan-13	1
Ft. Knox	23-Oct-12	6

Table A.8. Characteristics of TAP Workshop Customer Satisfaction Survey Respondents: Number and Percentage of Participants by Facility and TAP Workshop Session

Facility	Session Start Date	Count
	24-Oct-12	3
	25-Oct-12	4
Ft. Leavenworth	11-Feb-13	1
Ft. Polk	17-Dec-12	1
Ft. Rucker	14-Jan-13	6
Ft. Sill	16-Jul-12	1
	20-Jul-12	1
	23-Jul-12	11
	30-Jul-12	34
	31-Jul-12	2
	6-Aug-12	12
	13-Aug-12	10
	20-Aug-12	15
	27-Aug-12	7
Goodfellow AFB	28-Jul-12	1
	22-Oct-12	11
	26-Nov-12	10
	30-Nov-12	1
	10-Dec-12	5
	28-Jan-13	10
Grand Forks AFB	11-Dec-12	7
	12-Dec-12	1
	7-Jan-13	9
	11-Feb-13	13
Gulfport NCBC	10-Dec-12	1
Henderson Hall, HQBN	27-Aug-12	1
Hill AFB	29-Oct-12	6
	5-Nov-12	17

Table A.8. Characteristics of TAP Workshop Customer Satisfaction Survey Respondents: Number and Percentage of Participants by Facility and TAP Workshop Session

Facility	Session Start Date	Count
	3-Dec-12	18
	7-Jan-13	9
	28-Jan-13	19
	11-Feb-13	14
	28-Feb-13	1
Holloman AFB	26-Nov-12	5
	10-Dec-12	10
	14-Jan-13	17
	11-Feb-13	18
Hurlburt AFB	15-Oct-12	4
	3-Dec-12	2
	17-Dec-12	6
	7-Jan-13	1
	28-Jan-13	2
	11-Feb-13	1
Jacksonville NAS	20-Aug-12	14
	27-Aug-12	4
	10-Sep-12	12
	24-Sep-12	1
	15-Oct-12	11
	22-Oct-12	14
	11-Feb-13	1
JB Andrews	7-Jan-13	1
	14-Jan-13	14
	28-Jan-13	3
	1-Feb-13	1
	4-Feb-13	10
	8-Feb-13	1

Table A.8. Characteristics of TAP Workshop Customer Satisfaction Survey Respondents: Number and Percentage of Participants by Facility and TAP Workshop Session

Facility	Session Start Date	Count
	11-Feb-13	5
JB Charleston	5-Nov-12	7
	9-Nov-12	1
	3-Dec-12	4
	17-Dec-12	17
	7-Jan-13	7
	14-Jan-13	19
	4-Feb-13	6
	11-Feb-13	13
JB McGuire/Dix/Lakehurst	3-Dec-12	5
	7-Jan-13	1
	4-Feb-13	2
Kadena AB	12-Nov-12	2
	13-Nov-12	29
	15-Nov-12	1
	11-Dec-12	11
	12-Dec-12	1
Keesler AFB	26-Nov-12	1
Kirtland AFB	7-Jan-13	18
	4-Feb-13	7
Kitsap (Bangor/Bremerton) Naval Base	7-Jan-13	1
	11-Feb-13	2
Lackland AFB	13-Nov-12	1
	7-Jan-13	1
Little Rock AFB	13-Nov-12	1
Los Angeles AFB	15-Oct-12	3
	5-Nov-12	6
Luke AFB	17-Dec-12	4

Table A.8. Characteristics of TAP Workshop Customer Satisfaction Survey Respondents: Number and Percentage of Participants by Facility and TAP Workshop Session

Facility	Session Start Date	Count
	28-Jan-13	3
MacDill AFB	26-Nov-12	4
	10-Dec-12	2
	14-Jan-13	6
	11-Feb-13	1
Malmstrom AFB	24-Sep-12	1
	15-Oct-12	7
	5-Nov-12	1
	10-Dec-12	14
	11-Dec-12	1
	14-Jan-13	18
	11-Feb-13	8
Maxwell AFB	5-Nov-12	2
	10-Dec-12	3
McConnell AFB	13-Nov-12	6
	14-Jan-13	1
	28-Jan-13	2
	11-Feb-13	2
Mid-South (Millington) Naval Support Activity	4-Feb-13	1
Minot AFB	5-Nov-12	7
Miramar MCAS	27-Aug-12	25
	29-Aug-12	1
	10-Sep-12	34
	14-Sep-12	1
	17-Sep-12	31
	23-Sep-12	1
	24-Sep-12	25
	25-Sep-12	1

Table A.8. Characteristics of TAP Workshop Customer Satisfaction Survey Respondents: Number and Percentage of Participants by Facility and TAP Workshop Session

Facility	Session Start Date	Count
	1-Oct-12	40
	22-Oct-12	36
	29-Oct-12	25
	4-Nov-12	1
	5-Nov-12	27
	6-Nov-12	1
	26-Nov-12	24
	10-Dec-12	32
	13-Dec-12	1
	17-Dec-12	21
Misawa AB	4-Jan-13	6
	7-Jan-13	3
	4-Feb-13	3
Nellis AFB	15-Oct-12	18
	26-Nov-12	16
	10-Dec-12	14
	7-Jan-13	16
	28-Jan-13	16
	11-Feb-13	6
New River MCAS	27-Aug-12	1
NLB Arlington	11-Feb-13	1
Norfolk Naval Station	13-Aug-12	23
	20-Aug-12	14
	27-Aug-12	31
	10-Sep-12	13
	17-Sep-12	16
	24-Sep-12	18
	1-Oct-12	12

Table A.8. Characteristics of TAP Workshop Customer Satisfaction Survey Respondents: Number and Percentage of Participants by Facility and TAP Workshop Session

Facility	Session Start Date	Count
	15-Oct-12	18
	22-Oct-12	2
	28-Feb-13	1
Offutt AFB	29-Oct-12	1
	7-Jan-13	23
	28-Jan-13	30
	29-Jan-13	2
	1-Feb-13	2
	11-Feb-13	19
	12-Feb-13	1
	25-Feb-13	4
Okinawa MCB	13-Nov-12	2
Osan AB	15-Oct-12	1
	3-Dec-12	2
	14-Feb-13	1
Patrick AFB	5-Nov-12	7
	6-Nov-12	1
	7-Jan-13	13
	4-Feb-13	8
Pensacola Naval Air Station	14-Jan-13	1
Pentagon	28-Jan-13	1
Peterson AFB	26-Nov-12	9
Quantico MCB	27-Aug-12	1
	19-Oct-12	1
	5-Nov-12	2
	26-Nov-12	1
	3-Dec-12	2
	7-Jan-13	2

Table A.8. Characteristics of TAP Workshop Customer Satisfaction Survey Respondents: Number and Percentage of Participants by Facility and TAP Workshop Session

Facility	Session Start Date	Count
	28-Jan-13	1
	11-Feb-13	1
	25-Feb-13	1
RAF Alconbury	28-Jan-13	2
RAF Lakenheath	10-Dec-12	9
	7-Jan-13	4
	13-Jan-13	1
	4-Feb-13	3
RAF Mildenhall	14-Jan-13	8
	11-Feb-13	3
Ramstein AB	11-Feb-13	2
Randolph AFB	13-Aug-12	4
	10-Dec-12	5
	11-Feb-13	10
Robins AFB	3-Dec-12	1
	11-Feb-13	16
	12-Feb-13	1
San Diego Naval Base	10-Sep-12	1
	17-Sep-12	1
	5-Nov-12	2
	17-Dec-12	3
San Diego MCRD	29-Oct-12	1
	5-Nov-12	2
Scott AFB	26-Nov-12	5
	10-Dec-12	11
Seymour-Johnson AFB	3-Dec-12	1
	28-Jan-13	9
Shaw AFB	5-Nov-12	11

Table A.8. Characteristics of TAP Workshop Customer Satisfaction Survey Respondents: Number and Percentage of Participants by Facility and TAP Workshop Session

Facility	Session Start Date	Count
	17-Dec-12	9
	14-Jan-13	10
	11-Feb-13	6
Sheppard AFB	3-Dec-12	1
	28-Jan-13	8
	29-Jan-13	2
	31-Jan-13	2
	1-Feb-13	1
Tinker AFB	25-Feb-13	6
Travis AFB	5-Nov-12	1
Tyndall AFB	12-Nov-12	1
	26-Nov-12	2
	14-Jan-13	1
	4-Feb-13	3
USAF Academy	5-Nov-12	4
	10-Dec-12	2
	14-Jan-13	8
	11-Feb-13	4
USCG HQ, Washington	11-Feb-13	1
Ventura County Naval Base	15-Oct-12	1
Whiteman AFB	5-Nov-12	1
	3-Dec-12	1
	7-Jan-13	2
	4-Feb-13	8
Wright Patterson AFB	26-Nov-12	4
	7-Jan-13	1
	14-Jan-13	2
	11-Feb-13	1

Table A.8. Characteristics of TAP Workshop Customer Satisfaction Survey Respondents: Number and Percentage of Participants by Facility and TAP Workshop Session

Facility	Session Start Date	Count
Yokota AB	14-Dec-12	4
	17-Dec-12	9
	14-Jan-13	3
	11-Feb-13	12
Yuma MCAS	2-Jul-12	1
	24-Sep-12	1

Table A.9. Characteristics of TAP Workshop Customer Satisfaction Survey Respondents: Number and Percentage of TAP Participants by Number of Days Between Time of Workshop and Expected Date of Separation

Days Between TAP Workshop and Separation Date	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
After Separation	18	0.9	0.9
0 - 30 Days Before	203	10.1	11.0
31 - 60 Days	218	10.8	21.8
61 - 90 Days	222	11.0	32.8
91 - 120 Days	197	9.8	42.6
121 - 365 Days	974	48.3	90.9
366-730 Days	132	6.5	97.4
More than 730 Days	52	2.6	100.0
Total	2016	100.0	

Missing Responses: 13

**ATTACHMENT II-B: DESCRIPTIVE TABLES OF RESPONSES TO KEY QUESTIONS
ON THE TAP WORKSHOP CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEY**

Table B.1. Responses to TAP Workshop Customer Satisfaction Survey Questions: Distribution of Responses and Mean Scores by Question

TAP Workshop Survey Question	N=	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean Score
Q1. The instructors were professional and knowledgeable.	1991	0.8%	0.5%	4.7%	27.8%	66.2%	4.58
Q2. I found the learning resources for this session useful (e.g., notes, handouts, reading, audio-visual materials).	1979	1.4%	1.1%	6.1%	33.7%	57.8%	4.45
Q3. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective --Complete the Transferable Skills Inventory	1981	0.8%	0.9%	6.6%	37.2%	54.6%	4.44
Q4. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective --Research Industries, Occupations, Trends	1971	0.8%	1.1%	6.4%	37.1%	54.6%	4.44
Q5. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective --Analyze Job Postings	1972	0.9%	1.0%	6.3%	37.7%	54.0%	4.43
Q6. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective --Develop an Initial Draft Master Resume	1974	1.1%	1.4%	7.9%	35.8%	53.8%	4.40
Q7. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective --Understand Special Appointing Authorities for Veterans	1972	1.0%	1.5%	8.5%	37.4%	51.5%	4.37
Q8. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective --Types of Interviews	1974	1.0%	0.6%	6.2%	36.2%	56.1%	4.46
Q9. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective -- Evaluate Job Offers	1970	1.0%	1.1%	7.1%	38.3%	52.5%	4.40
Q10. I expect to use what I learned in this session in my transition planning.	1978	1.7%	1.5%	6.2%	32.9%	57.8%	4.44
Q11. This session contributed to my confidence in transition planning.	1978	1.8%	1.2%	6.9%	34.3%	55.8%	4.41
Average Q1 - Q11	1976	1.1%	1.1%	6.6%	35.3%	55.9%	4.44

“Average Q1-Q11” is the mean percentage for the response across all 11 content rating items (not weighted by number of responses).

Table B.2. Responses to TAP Workshop Customer Satisfaction Survey Questions: Mean Question Scores by Branch

TAP Workshop Survey Question	All Branches (N=2029)	Branch of Service				
		Air Force (N= 1265)	Army (N= 189)	Coast Guard (N= 3)	Marines (N= 351)	Navy (N= 221)
Q1. The instructors were professional and knowledgeable.	4.58 (n=1991)	4.62 (n=1244)	4.32 (n=183)	3.67 (n=3)	4.56 (n=344)	4.62 (n=217)
Q2. I found the learning resources for this session useful (e.g., notes, handouts, reading, audio-visual materials).	4.45 (n=1979)	4.48 (n=1237)	4.15 (n=183)	4.67 (n=3)	4.48 (n=343)	4.55 (n=213)
Q3. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective -- Complete the Transferable Skills Inventory	4.44 (n=1981)	4.46 (n=1242)	4.21 (n=182)	4.33 (n=3)	4.47 (n=341)	4.47 (n=213)
Q4. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective -- Research Industries, Occupations, Trends	4.44 (n=1971)	4.46 (n=1238)	4.16 (n=179)	4.33 (n=3)	4.47 (n=338)	4.49 (n=213)
Q5. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective -- Analyze Job Postings	4.43 (n=1972)	4.46 (n=1236)	4.12 (n=178)	4.67 (n=3)	4.46 (n=340)	4.45 (n=215)
Q6. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective -- Develop an Initial Draft Master Resume	4.40 (n=1974)	4.42 (n=1235)	4.05 (n=179)	4.00 (n=3)	4.46 (n=340)	4.43 (n=217)
Q7. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective -- Understand Special Appointing Authorities for Veterans	4.37 (n=1972)	4.40 (n=1237)	3.98 (n=180)	4.67 (n=3)	4.45 (n=337)	4.42 (n=215)
Q8. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective -- Types of Interviews	4.46 (n=1974)	4.50 (n=1237)	4.04 (n=180)	4.33 (n=3)	4.52 (n=339)	4.46 (n=215)
Q9. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective -- Evaluate Job Offers	4.40 (n=1970)	4.44 (n=1237)	4.02 (n=181)	4.33 (n=3)	4.44 (n=337)	4.44 (n=212)
Q10. I expect to use what I learned in this session in my transition planning.	4.44 (n=1978)	4.48 (n=1240)	4.03 (n=183)	4.00 (n=3)	4.46 (n=338)	4.52 (n=214)
Q11. This session contributed to my confidence in transition planning.	4.41 (n=1978)	4.45 (n=1240)	4.02 (n=179)	4.67 (n=3)	4.44 (n=340)	4.48 (n=216)
Average Q1 - Q11	4.44 (n=1976)	4.47 (n=1238)	4.10 (n=181)	4.33 (n=3)	4.47 (n=340)	4.48 (n=215)

“Average Q1-Q11” is the mean percentage for the response across all 11 content rating items (not weighted by number of responses).

Table B.3. Responses to TAP Workshop Customer Satisfaction Survey Questions: Distribution of Responses and Mean Scores by Question and Branch

Branch	Questions	N=	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean Score
Air Force	Q1. The instructors were professional and knowledgeable.	1244	0.6%	0.6%	3.5%	26.8%	68.6%	4.62
	Q2. I found the learning resources for this session useful (e.g., notes, handouts, reading, audio-visual materials).	1237	1.4%	1.0%	5.4%	33.0%	59.3%	4.48
	Q3. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective --Complete the Transferable Skills Inventory	1242	0.6%	1.0%	6.0%	36.6%	55.8%	4.46
	Q4. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective --Research Industries, Occupations, Trends	1238	0.6%	1.3%	5.8%	35.9%	56.3%	4.46
	Q5. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective --Analyze Job Postings	1236	0.8%	0.9%	5.6%	36.9%	55.8%	4.46
	Q6. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective --Develop an Initial Draft Master Resume	1235	1.0%	1.7%	7.0%	34.3%	56.0%	4.42
	Q7. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective --Understand Special Appointing Authorities for Veterans	1237	0.7%	1.4%	8.0%	37.3%	52.5%	4.40
	Q8. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective --Types of Interviews	1237	0.6%	0.6%	5.2%	34.8%	58.8%	4.50
	Q9. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective --Evaluate Job Offers	1237	0.6%	1.1%	6.4%	37.0%	54.9%	4.44
	Q10. I expect to use what I learned in this session in my transition planning.	1240	1.3%	1.5%	5.8%	30.9%	60.5%	4.48
	Q11. This session contributed to my confidence in transition planning.	1240	1.5%	1.4%	6.1%	32.9%	58.1%	4.45
Army	Q1. The instructors were professional and knowledgeable.	183	3.8%	0.5%	11.5%	29.5%	54.6%	4.32
	Q2. I found the learning resources for this session useful (e.g., notes, handouts, reading, audio-visual materials).	183	4.4%	1.6%	14.8%	35.0%	44.3%	4.15
	Q3. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective --Complete the Transferable Skills Inventory	182	3.3%	1.1%	11.0%	41.2%	43.4%	4.21
	Q4. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective --Research Industries, Occupations, Trends	179	3.4%	1.7%	12.8%	41.3%	40.8%	4.16
	Q5. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective --Analyze Job Postings	178	3.4%	3.4%	10.7%	44.4%	38.2%	4.12
	Q6. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective --Develop an Initial Draft Master resume	179	5.0%	3.4%	14.0%	38.0%	39.7%	4.05
	Q7. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective --Understand Special Appointing Authorities for Veterans	180	5.0%	3.9%	16.1%	40.0%	35.0%	3.98

Table B.3. Responses to TAP Workshop Customer Satisfaction Survey Questions: Distribution of Responses and Mean Scores by Question and Branch

Branch	Questions	N=	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean Score
	Q8. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective --Types of Interviews	180	5.0%	1.7%	16.1%	40.0%	37.2%	4.04
	Q9. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective --Evaluate Job Offers	181	5.5%	2.8%	14.4%	40.9%	36.5%	4.02
	Q10. I expect to use what I learned in this session in my transition planning.	183	6.6%	3.8%	10.9%	38.8%	39.9%	4.03
	Q11. This session contributed to my confidence in transition planning.	179	6.7%	1.7%	14.5%	39.1%	38.0%	4.02
Coast Guard	Q1. The instructors were professional and knowledgeable.	3	0.0%	33.3%	0.0%	33.3%	33.3%	3.67
	Q2. I found the learning resources for this session useful (e.g., notes, handouts, reading, audio-visual materials).	3	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	33.3%	66.7%	4.67
	Q3. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective --Complete the Transferable Skills Inventory	3	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	66.7%	33.3%	4.33
	Q4. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective --Research Industries, Occupations, Trends	3	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	66.7%	33.3%	4.33
	Q5. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective --Analyze Job Postings	3	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	33.3%	66.7%	4.67
	Q6. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective --Develop an Initial Draft Master Resume	3	0.0%	0.0%	33.3%	33.3%	33.3%	4.00
	Q7. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective --Understand Special Appointing Authorities for Veterans	3	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	33.3%	66.7%	4.67
	Q8. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective --Types of Interviews	3	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	66.7%	33.3%	4.33
	Q9. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective --Evaluate Job Offers	3	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	66.7%	33.3%	4.33
	Q10. I expect to use what I learned in this session in my transition planning.	3	0.0%	0.0%	33.3%	33.3%	33.3%	4.00
	Q11. This session contributed to my confidence in transition planning.	3	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	33.3%	66.7%	4.67
Marines	Q1. The instructors were professional and knowledgeable.	344	0.0%	0.3%	5.8%	30.8%	63.1%	4.56
	Q2. I found the learning resources for this session useful (e.g., notes, handouts, reading, audio-visual materials).	343	0.3%	1.5%	5.8%	34.7%	57.7%	4.48
	Q3. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective --Complete the Transferable Skills Inventory	341	0.0%	0.3%	7.9%	35.5%	56.3%	4.47

Table B.3. Responses to TAP Workshop Customer Satisfaction Survey Questions: Distribution of Responses and Mean Scores by Question and Branch

Branch	Questions	N=	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean Score
	Q4. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective --Research Industries, Occupations, Trends	338	0.0%	0.3%	7.4%	37.3%	55.0%	4.47
	Q5. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective --Analyze Job Postings	340	0.3%	0.3%	7.6%	35.6%	56.2%	4.46
	Q6. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective --Develop an Initial Draft Master Resume	340	0.0%	0.0%	8.2%	37.1%	54.7%	4.46
	Q7. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective --Understand Special Appointing Authorities for Veterans	337	0.3%	1.2%	7.7%	34.7%	56.1%	4.45
	Q8. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective --Types of Interviews	339	0.0%	0.0%	6.2%	35.1%	58.7%	4.52
	Q9. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective --Evaluate Job Offers	337	0.3%	0.6%	7.1%	38.6%	53.4%	4.44
	Q10. I expect to use what I learned in this session in my transition planning.	338	1.2%	0.6%	5.3%	36.4%	56.5%	4.46
	Q11. This session contributed to my confidence in transition planning.	340	0.9%	0.9%	7.4%	34.7%	56.2%	4.44
Navy	Q1. The instructors were professional and knowledgeable.	217	0.5%	0.0%	4.1%	27.6%	67.7%	4.62
	Q2. I found the learning resources for this session useful (e.g., notes, handouts, reading, audio-visual materials).	213	0.5%	0.5%	3.3%	35.2%	60.6%	4.55
	Q3. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective --Complete the Transferable Skills Inventory	213	0.9%	0.5%	4.2%	39.4%	54.9%	4.47
	Q4. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective --Research Industries, Occupations, Trends	213	0.9%	0.5%	3.3%	39.4%	55.9%	4.49
	Q5. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective --Analyze Job Postings	215	0.5%	0.9%	5.1%	40.5%	53.0%	4.45
	Q6. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective --Develop an Initial Draft Master Resume	217	0.5%	0.5%	6.9%	40.1%	52.1%	4.43
	Q7. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective --Understand Special Appointing Authorities for Veterans	215	0.5%	0.9%	6.5%	40.0%	52.1%	4.42
	Q8. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective --Types of Interviews	215	0.9%	0.0%	4.2%	42.3%	52.6%	4.46
	Q9. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective --Evaluate Job Offers	212	0.5%	0.5%	4.7%	42.9%	51.4%	4.44

Table B.3. Responses to TAP Workshop Customer Satisfaction Survey Questions: Distribution of Responses and Mean Scores by Question and Branch

Branch	Questions	N=	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean Score
	Q10. I expect to use what I learned in this session in my transition planning.	214	0.5%	0.5%	5.1%	34.1%	59.8%	4.52
	Q11. This session contributed to my confidence in transition planning.	216	0.9%	0.5%	4.6%	37.5%	56.5%	4.48

Table B.4. Responses to TAP Workshop Customer Satisfaction Survey Questions: Mean Scores by Question, Facilities with More Than 25 TAP Workshop Participants, Ranked by Overall Mean Score

Facility	N=	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10	Q11	Avg. Q1-Q11
Shaw AFB	36	4.89	4.78	4.86	4.83	4.80	4.86	4.86	4.79	4.77	4.78	4.72	4.81
Kadena AB	44	4.82	4.68	4.63	4.57	4.58	4.59	4.52	4.60	4.49	4.67	4.67	4.62
Holloman AFB	50	4.74	4.62	4.56	4.51	4.55	4.50	4.60	4.62	4.57	4.53	4.53	4.58
JB Charleston	74	4.51	4.55	4.58	4.53	4.50	4.55	4.48	4.53	4.58	4.51	4.53	4.53
Grand Forks AFB	30	4.63	4.50	4.50	4.50	4.60	4.55	4.50	4.53	4.50	4.47	4.53	4.53
Barksdale AFB	69	4.60	4.52	4.54	4.48	4.51	4.53	4.46	4.58	4.49	4.51	4.51	4.52
Jacksonville NAS	57	4.60	4.64	4.55	4.46	4.50	4.46	4.46	4.51	4.47	4.54	4.53	4.52
Miramar MCAS	327	4.58	4.50	4.50	4.49	4.49	4.48	4.47	4.55	4.46	4.48	4.45	4.49
JB Andrews	35	4.56	4.55	4.50	4.36	4.47	4.56	4.41	4.39	4.41	4.52	4.47	4.47
Norfolk Naval Station	148	4.63	4.50	4.43	4.48	4.43	4.42	4.41	4.43	4.44	4.51	4.47	4.47
Nellis AFB	86	4.57	4.52	4.43	4.40	4.46	4.37	4.39	4.49	4.42	4.54	4.45	4.46
Offutt AFB	82	4.68	4.44	4.51	4.49	4.44	4.43	4.37	4.47	4.36	4.44	4.41	4.46
Hill AFB	84	4.60	4.43	4.38	4.42	4.42	4.43	4.37	4.52	4.39	4.57	4.42	4.45
Goodfellow AFB	38	4.57	4.43	4.49	4.47	4.31	4.49	4.39	4.49	4.49	4.35	4.46	4.45
Yokota AB	28	4.61	4.50	4.46	4.39	4.36	4.32	4.25	4.48	4.39	4.43	4.39	4.42
Ft. Sill	93	4.54	4.37	4.45	4.38	4.34	4.29	4.24	4.36	4.30	4.34	4.36	4.36
Eglin AFB	142	4.45	4.33	4.30	4.34	4.38	4.27	4.31	4.36	4.30	4.28	4.25	4.33
Malmstrom AFB	50	4.57	4.24	4.31	4.31	4.35	4.23	4.19	4.42	4.40	4.27	4.27	4.32
Patrick AFB	29	4.41	4.00	4.15	4.18	4.14	4.26	4.18	4.29	4.07	4.21	4.21	4.19
Beale AFB	38	4.38	3.97	4.05	3.97	3.84	3.94	4.27	4.32	4.14	4.03	4.05	4.09
Ft. Hood	47	3.50	3.36	3.40	3.37	3.26	3.17	3.16	3.14	3.23	2.89	2.88	3.21
Total - All Facilities	2029	4.58	4.45	4.44	4.44	4.43	4.40	4.37	4.46	4.40	4.44	4.41	4.44

Table B.5. Responses to TAP Workshop Customer Satisfaction Survey Questions: Percentage of Respondents Agreeing or Strongly Agreeing with Each Statement, by Question, Facilities with More Than 25 TAP Workshop Participants, Ranked by Average Percentage

Facility	N=	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10	Q11	Avg. Q1-Q11
Grand Forks AFB	30	100.0%	100.0%	96.7%	96.7%	100.0%	96.6%	96.7%	96.7%	100.0%	96.7%	100.0%	98.2%
Shaw AFB	36	97.2%	94.4%	97.1%	97.1%	97.1%	97.1%	97.1%	97.1%	100.0%	97.2%	94.4%	96.9%
JB Charleston	74	94.5%	97.3%	98.6%	97.3%	97.2%	97.3%	94.5%	97.3%	98.6%	93.2%	94.5%	96.4%
Holloman AFB	50	98.0%	92.0%	96.0%	98.0%	95.9%	92.0%	98.0%	98.0%	98.0%	93.9%	95.9%	96.0%
Kadena AB	44	100.0%	97.7%	97.7%	95.5%	95.3%	92.7%	92.9%	93.0%	88.4%	97.7%	97.7%	95.3%
Norfolk Naval Station	148	96.5%	95.7%	94.3%	95.0%	93.7%	93.8%	93.0%	95.8%	95.0%	94.4%	94.4%	94.7%
Hill AFB	84	97.6%	92.9%	92.9%	94.0%	95.2%	94.0%	94.0%	97.6%	91.6%	96.4%	91.7%	94.4%
Offutt AFB	82	97.5%	91.4%	97.5%	96.3%	93.8%	92.6%	91.4%	95.1%	92.6%	92.6%	91.4%	93.8%
Jacksonville NAS	57	91.2%	94.6%	94.6%	94.6%	94.6%	91.2%	91.2%	94.5%	94.7%	92.9%	94.7%	93.5%
Barksdale AFB	69	92.5%	94.0%	95.5%	90.9%	94.0%	93.9%	94.0%	95.5%	92.5%	91.0%	91.0%	93.2%
Miramar MCAS	327	94.4%	92.5%	92.4%	92.7%	92.1%	91.8%	91.1%	94.3%	92.3%	93.3%	91.1%	92.5%
JB Andrews	35	91.2%	93.9%	94.1%	87.9%	94.1%	94.1%	91.2%	84.8%	88.2%	93.9%	94.1%	91.6%
Goodfellow AFB	38	94.6%	91.4%	94.6%	94.4%	86.1%	91.9%	91.7%	91.9%	91.9%	86.5%	91.9%	91.5%
Nellis AFB	86	94.0%	92.7%	91.6%	91.7%	91.5%	88.0%	89.0%	91.7%	91.6%	92.9%	90.4%	91.4%
Yokota AB	28	96.4%	92.9%	92.9%	89.3%	89.3%	85.7%	82.1%	96.3%	92.9%	85.7%	89.3%	90.3%
Eglin AFB	142	92.2%	89.9%	87.2%	88.6%	90.7%	85.7%	88.5%	90.5%	87.8%	85.8%	85.7%	88.4%
Ft. Sill	93	91.2%	86.8%	92.3%	88.6%	89.9%	84.4%	82.0%	87.8%	85.4%	86.7%	87.6%	87.5%
Malmstrom AFB	50	95.9%	84.0%	81.6%	81.6%	87.5%	81.3%	75.0%	89.6%	87.5%	85.4%	81.3%	84.6%
Patrick AFB	29	88.9%	74.1%	81.5%	75.0%	78.6%	88.9%	82.1%	85.7%	75.0%	89.3%	85.7%	82.3%
Beale AFB	38	91.9%	75.7%	75.7%	78.4%	70.3%	72.2%	89.2%	91.9%	77.8%	77.1%	75.7%	79.6%
Ft. Hood	47	56.8%	50.0%	53.5%	53.5%	51.2%	47.6%	48.8%	45.5%	54.5%	40.0%	37.2%	49.0%
Total - All Facilities	2029	93.6%	90.7%	91.4%	90.9%	90.9%	89.4%	89.3%	92.2%	90.5%	90.1%	89.4%	90.8%

Table B.6. Responses to TAP Workshop Customer Satisfaction Survey Questions: Mean Scores by Question, Retirees and Separatees

TAP Workshop Survey Question	Retirees (N = 811)	Separatees (N = 1211)
Q1. The instructors were professional and knowledgeable.	4.63	4.55
Q2. I found the learning resources for this session useful (e.g., notes, handouts, reading, audio-visual materials).	4.47	4.45
Q3. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective --Complete the Transferable Skills Inventory	4.44	4.44
Q4. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective --Research Industries, Occupations, Trends	4.44	4.44
Q5. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective --Analyze Job Postings	4.44	4.43
Q6. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective --Develop an Initial Draft Master resume	4.38	4.41
Q7. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective --Understand Special Appointing Authorities for Veterans	4.35	4.38
Q8. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective --Types of Interviews	4.47	4.45
Q9. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective --Evaluate Job Offers	4.39	4.42
Q10. I expect to use what I learned in this session in my transition planning.	4.48	4.41
Q11. This session contributed to my confidence in transition planning.	4.43	4.40
Average Q1 - Q11	4.45	4.43

Missing Responses: 7

Table B.7. Responses to TAP Workshop Customer Satisfaction Survey Questions: Percentage of Retirees and Separatees Agreeing or Strongly Agreeing with Each Statement, by Question

TAP Workshop Survey Question	Retirees (N=811)		Separatees (N=1211)	
	Valid N	Percentage	Valid N	Percentage
Q1. The instructors were professional and knowledgeable.	800	95.1%	1184	93.2%
Q2. I found the learning resources for this session useful (e.g., notes, handouts, reading, audio-visual materials).	799	92.5%	1173	90.7%
Q3. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective -- Complete the Transferable Skills Inventory	798	92.9%	1176	91.2%
Q4. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective -- Research Industries, Occupations, Trends	795	92.3%	1169	91.4%
Q5. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective -- Analyze Job Postings	798	92.6%	1168	91.2%
Q6. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective -- Develop an Initial Draft Master Resume	797	89.1%	1171	89.8%
Q7. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective -- Understand Special Appointing Authorities for Veterans	799	88.5%	1166	89.3%
Q8. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective -- Types of Interviews	801	93.8%	1167	91.3%
Q9. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective -- Evaluate Job Offers	796	90.8%	1167	91.0%
Q10. I expect to use what I learned in this session in my transition planning.	800	91.5%	1171	90.2%
Q11. This session contributed to my confidence in transition planning.	798	91.4%	1173	89.2%
Average Q1 - Q11	798	91.9%	1171	90.8%

Missing Responses for Separation Type: 7

Table B.8. Responses to TAP Workshop Customer Satisfaction Survey Questions: Mean Scores by Question by Time Between Workshop and Expected Date of Separation

TAP Workshop Survey Question	1-90 Days (N= 640)	91-180 Days (N= 548)	181+ Days (N= 813)
Q1. The instructors were professional and knowledgeable.	4.56	4.59	4.59
Q2. I found the learning resources for this session useful (e.g., notes, handouts, reading, audio-visual materials).	4.43	4.46	4.47
Q3. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective --Complete the Transferable Skills Inventory	4.44	4.45	4.44
Q4. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective --Research Industries, Occupations, Trends	4.44	4.43	4.44
Q5. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective --Analyze Job Postings	4.41	4.44	4.43
Q6. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective --Develop an Initial Draft Master Resume	4.41	4.42	4.37
Q7. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective --Understand Special Appointing Authorities for Veterans	4.37	4.39	4.36
Q8. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective --Types of Interviews	4.45	4.47	4.46
Q9. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective --Evaluate Job Offers	4.41	4.43	4.39
Q10. I expect to use what I learned in this session in my transition planning.	4.38	4.46	4.47
Q11. This session contributed to my confidence in transition planning.	4.39	4.42	4.42
Average Q1 - Q11	4.43	4.45	4.44

Table B.9. Responses to TAP Workshop Customer Satisfaction Survey Questions: Percentage of Respondents Agreeing or Strongly Agreeing with Each Statement, by Question, by Time Between Workshop and Expected Date of Separation

TAP Workshop Survey Question	1-90 Days (N= 640)	91-180 Days (N= 548)	181+ Days (N= 813)
Q1. The instructors were professional and knowledgeable.	93.2%	94.2%	94.4%
Q2. I found the learning resources for this session useful (e.g., notes, handouts, reading, audio-visual materials).	89.9%	91.2%	92.8%
Q3. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective --Complete the Transferable Skills Inventory	91.2%	91.5%	92.6%
Q4. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective --Research Industries, Occupations, Trends	91.8%	91.5%	92.0%
Q5. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective --Analyze Job Postings	90.5%	92.3%	92.2%
Q6. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective --Develop an Initial Draft Master Resume	90.2%	90.0%	88.7%
Q7. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective --Understand Special Appointing Authorities for Veterans	88.8%	90.4%	88.1%
Q8. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective --Types of Interviews	91.1%	93.1%	92.7%
Q9. The session content adequately covered the following learning objective --Evaluate Job Offers	90.1%	91.7%	91.1%
Q10. I expect to use what I learned in this session in my transition planning.	88.6%	90.4%	92.4%
Q11. This session contributed to my confidence in transition planning.	88.8%	90.0%	91.3%
Average Q1 - Q11	90.4%	91.5%	91.7%

**ATTACHMENT II-C: DESCRIPTIVE TABLES OF RESPONSES TO CONTENT
KNOWLEDGE QUESTIONS ON THE TAP WORKSHOP CUSTOMER SATISFACTION
SURVEY**

Table C.1. Responses to TAP Workshop Customer Satisfaction Survey Questions: Total Responses and Response Distribution by Knowledge Question

TAP Workshop Survey Question	N=	A	B	C	D
<p>Q12. The STAR technique for telling an effective story stands for what?</p> <p>A. Situation, Time, Action, Results B. Situation, Task, Action, Results C. Scenario, Task, Action, Reaction D. Situation, Task, Aim, Results</p>	1956	17.7%	72.4%	5.9%	3.9%
<p>Q13. Which of the following is true with regards to corporate and federal resumes?</p> <p>A. The information contained in a corporate and federal resume is identical. B. A federal resume should be written to the vacancy announcement and a corporate resume should be written to the job description. C. A corporate resume will include social security number and citizenship status. D. A federal resume is typically shorter and less detailed.</p>	1946	9.6%	83.1%	3.7%	3.6%
<p>Q14. When responding to interview questions, it is important to:</p> <p>A. Volunteer additional information you are not asked for. B. Respond with lengthy answers. C. Try to relate each response to the position you are applying to. D. All of the above.</p>	1938	6.7%	3.3%	75.0%	15.1%

Table C.1. Responses to TAP Workshop Customer Satisfaction Survey Questions: Total Responses and Response Distribution by Knowledge Question

Branch	Questions	N=	A	B	C	D
Air Force	Q12. The STAR technique for telling an effective story stands for what?	1224	16.1%	75.3%	5.1%	3.4%
	Q13. Which of the following is true with regards to corporate and federal resumes?	1219	7.5%	86.8%	2.3%	3.4%
	Q14. When responding to interview questions, it is important to:	1217	5.4%	2.2%	78.4%	14.0%
Army	Q12. The STAR technique for telling an effective story stands for what?	176	16.5%	65.3%	11.4%	6.8%
	Q13. Which of the following is true with regards to corporate and federal resumes?	175	8.0%	83.4%	5.7%	2.9%
	Q14. When responding to interview questions, it is important to:	175	4.6%	4.0%	71.4%	20.0%
Coast Guard	Q12. The STAR technique for telling an effective story stands for what?	3	33.3%	66.7%	0.0%	0.0%
	Q13. Which of the following is true with regards to corporate and federal resumes?	3	66.7%	33.3%	0.0%	0.0%
	Q14. When responding to interview questions, it is important to:	3	33.3%	0.0%	66.7%	0.0%
Marines	Q12. The STAR technique for telling an effective story stands for what?	337	18.7%	70.3%	7.1%	3.9%
	Q13. Which of the following is true with regards to corporate and federal resumes?	335	17.0%	70.4%	7.8%	4.8%
	Q14. When responding to interview questions, it is important to:	333	12.0%	7.5%	63.1%	17.4%
Navy	Q12. The STAR technique for telling an effective story stands for what?	216	26.4%	65.3%	3.7%	4.6%
	Q13. Which of the following is true with regards to corporate and federal resumes?	214	9.8%	82.2%	3.7%	4.2%
	Q14. When responding to interview questions, it is important to:	210	6.7%	2.4%	77.1%	13.8%

ATTACHMENT III-A: REFERENCES

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**ATTACHMENT VI-A: MEMORANDUM ON OPTIONS FOR IMPROVING
MONITORING OF THE TAP EMPLOYMENT WORKSHOP**

MEMORANDUM

TO: Tim Winter, COTR, VETS
Quadira Dantro, Deputy Director of National Programs, VETS
Jonathon Simonetta, DOL/CEO

FROM: Joyce Kaiser, Consultant, Avar Consulting

DATE: June 30, 2013

CONTRACT: Contract DOL-J129532879, An Evaluation of the VETS Transition Assistance Program (TAP) Employment Workshops

SUBJECT: Options for Monitoring of the TAP Employment Workshops

The purpose of this memorandum is to explore options for enhancing ongoing tracking and monitoring of the TAP Employment workshops. During a March 12, 2013 meeting, VETS officials expressed an interest in developing a plan for future monitoring of the TAP employment workshop. Following the March 12th meeting, VETS e-mailed a list of key questions that it was interested in addressing during the remaining period of the evaluation contract, several of which focused on monitoring the TAP Employment Workshop:

- How is TAP being monitored as the new TAP program is implemented?
- What mechanisms does DOL have, or plan to develop, for monitoring the quality of TAP sessions?
- In monitoring the quality of TAP sessions or measuring the impact of TAP training, what information will DOL need from DoD, and how are the agencies coordinating to ensure that DOL has this information?
- How does DOL ensure that the workshop requirements, such as facilities and class size, are being met?⁴⁸

A telephone interview was conducted with VETS officials on June 5, 2013 to obtain additional input on previous, current, and planned monitoring (and evaluation) efforts related to the TAP Employment Workshops. VETS provided a sample monitoring report⁴⁹ and a copy of a monitoring tool under development, as well as a copy of the current customer satisfaction survey being used by DoD to obtain participant feedback following attendance at the TAP workshop.

It should be noted that this memorandum addresses the role of DOL/VETS in monitoring the TAP Employment Workshop and not monitoring done by DoD or the contractor engaged to deliver the workshops.

⁴⁸ These future performance monitoring/evaluation-related questions were identified in a March 12th email from Quadira Dantro, Deputy Director of National Programs, VETS.

⁴⁹ This report was dated June 3, 2013 and was representative of the type of report that VETS is attempting to improve.

TAP Employment Workshop Monitoring

Program monitoring is the essential first step in assessing the value of any training activity. The objective of monitoring is to make sure that the program is being presented in a setting conducive to learning, that the facilitator/trainer is delivering the material as developed, and that the participants are engaged in the process. Since the inception of the TAP Employment Workshops in 1990, some monitoring has taken place; however VETS reports that there has been no uniform structure in place in regard to reporting and that it has been virtually impossible to compare program delivery across the country. In addition to the difficulty with reporting, the program itself was not uniformly delivered in the past. Over the years, some facilitators had all but abandoned the guidance furnished by DOL while others carefully followed every instruction in the DOL guides. The difference in delivery was apparent during the initial site visits carried out by AVAR consultants and subcontractors in early 2012. Since the modification of the TAP Employment Workshop and the revision to both the facilitators' and participants' guides in mid-2012, there has been more focus on uniform program delivery, but monitoring reporting has still lacked structure, thus making it difficult to identify weaknesses in the program components and to compare program delivery across the 200 or more service delivery sites.⁵⁰ To compound the problem, there are now 275 facilitators, most of whom have been in place for less than one year, so early monitoring of performance by these staff is critical. VETS staff are aware of the shortcomings in the monitoring effort and have made this a priority.

As of the writing of this memorandum, VETS has developed a monitoring reporting tool utilizing Microsoft Excel software.⁵¹ VETS has developed a draft memorandum announcing that this Excel monitoring tool will be used by site visit observation staff to guide monitoring of the Employment Workshops. The monitoring guide includes two series of questions. The first series asks about adequacy of space, seating, acoustics, comfort, accessibility, and equipment. The second series of questions is devoted to program delivery:

- Was the facilitator prepared?
- Did the workshop start on schedule?
- Did participants feel welcome?
- Was there a friendly and informal atmosphere?
- Were activities directed toward the objectives?
- Did the facilitator maintain control of the workshop?
- Was the facilitator flexible when schedule changes were needed?
- Did the facilitator avoid playing the role of expert?
- Were attendees encouraged to participate?
- Was there a balance of lecture with participant interaction?
- Was participants' expertise utilized?
- Did the facilitator make an effort to get to know each participant?
- Did the facilitator maintain group focus on the teaching topic?
- Did the facilitator ensure group interaction to promote learning process?
- Did the facilitator demonstrate knowledge of curriculum content?

⁵⁰ VETS reported that there were about 200 domestic workshop sites and 50 at U.S. military bases abroad.

⁵¹ This form is referred to as the "VETS' Transition Assistance Program DOL Employment Workshop Assessment Form (which is provided to site observers in an Excel spreadsheet).

Each of these questions is awarded a score of 0-4 points based on the degree to which the observer agrees or disagrees. Both the facility and facilitator sections request narrative information to support scores other than “agree” (i.e., an award of 3 points). The narratives will be used to document best practices and to determine whether corrective actions are necessary. VETS’ plan is that every TAP Employment Workshop site will be monitored using this standardized assessment form at least once per year.⁵² Each monitoring visit will be for a single day.

The Excel spreadsheet on which site monitors will enter their ratings could be uploaded to analysis software (such as SAS or SPSS), so that over time a monitoring database with individual workshop scores (on each question) could be created for analysis purposes. This uploading could be (preferably) done in an automated manner directly from each Excel spreadsheet completed by site observers; alternatively, the ratings from the spreadsheets could be entered into a database or manually entered by VETS staff into a database file (e.g., an Excel file could be created with each row on the spreadsheet recording ratings on all assessment questions for a monitored workshop, and then this data file could be uploaded to a software such as SAS/SPSS for analysis). Another alternative is to create an Internet-based application (e.g., using a SQL database) into which site monitors would enter ratings on each indicator during their monitoring visits or shortly thereafter. This Internet-based application could be programmed with a series of reports that would provide real-time tallies of rating results for each indicator (e.g., means or frequency distributions for each rating question across all workshops monitored, as well as broken down by service branch, base, etc.). If VETS plans to periodically generate specific reports based on the monitoring, use of a database application such as SQL would simplify the process.

VETS management also asked about potential improvements to the monitoring program. At this point, the new monitoring tool has not been fully implemented, nor has any database management program been initiated to capture information, so it is too early to determine whether the new assessment form is adequate. It appears that monitoring results will be more readily available to a wide audience due to reporting on a spreadsheet. As discussed above, if monitoring data was uploaded to a database system (or directly entered by site monitors into a database via the Internet), the ability to conduct statistical analyses on each of the monitoring questions would be enhanced. Performance reports could then be shared with other agencies, the service delivery contractor, military bases, and USDOL officials. In regard to optional improvements that might be made, there are few additions that might assist in validating the monitoring scores awarded to the sites:

- Visit sites on different days (of the 3-day Employment Workshop) and compare the scores with other sites visited on those same days.
- Compare scores across sites without regard to the day visited. While it is possible that there will be no difference in the scores, it might show that the facilitators

⁵² Monitoring visits made in the U.S. are done by national or regional federal staff from VETS. Programs overseas are monitored by the service delivery contractor. National Guard sites are not monitored.

improve or are less effective as time goes on. The ability of the facilitator to hold the attention of the participants on Day Three of the workshop is worthy of review.

- Conduct periodic, enhanced monitoring reviews where the reviewer tracks whether the material is being delivered as presented in the manual. This would involve more detailed observation of the fidelity with which each module of the curriculum is presented. It may be that this kind of review will suggest new material that could be incorporated into revisions of the program, thus keeping the program fresh. Single day monitoring visits will not allow this. This kind of review can be scheduled randomly or as a result of either negative or positive feedback. This kind of review should be conducted over 3 days (i.e., to observe all modules of the TAP Employment Workshop) and may benefit from the presence of two reviewers.
- Because monitoring of overseas TAP employment workshops is done by the contractor engaged to deliver the workshop, it may be useful to include some overseas visits to ensure that the material is being presented in accordance with the workshop guide and to rate the quality of facility and facilitator utilizing the monitoring assessment form.

To ensure that facilities and class size requirements are being met, the implementation of a standardized monitoring program and the ability to share findings quickly is important. DOL/VETS cannot control class size or facilities, but the reports, widely circulated, can shine a light on sites that fail to comply with established standards without the bother of issuing accusatory memos.

Finally, it is our understanding that DOL/VETS and DoD are working on methods to provide program feedback from the Customer Satisfaction Surveys in a more timely way.