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Dr. Aiken has been extensively teaching at the San Francisco Bay Area – Silicon Valley and Online Campuses since 2003, both civilian and military students, and has become a recognized expert in this important sector of higher education of working adults.

He poses a wealth of industry experience in development and senior management in Electronics Design and Information Technology (including at Cisco and VMware) and specializes in consulting multinational organizations on their communication and collaboration challenges.

Dave started his career focused on electronics hardware and software design and verification services, and included hands on engineering and program management in the U.S., as well as Japan and South Korea opening field sales and support offices.

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The article by an outstanding American educationalist and practitioner in the fields of Business Administration and IT focuses on a vital issue of adult education: integrating military students and war veterans into a course of business education and their future civilian life. Devoted to an essential practical topic, the article has a theoretical relevance for education as well as for cognitive science, because it approaches the process of teaching as the formation of (1) professional concepts, (2) interpretational frames and (3) personal attitudes. All of these are essential to assure the formation of an effective manager and an inspirational leader. The author's approach and experience is of great interest and importance in Ukraine where the military conflict has raised the issue of adapting the demobilized soldiers to peaceful life and work.

Стаття видатного американського освітянина та практика в галузі бізнес-адміністрування й інформаційних технологій зосереджена на життєво важливій проблемі освіти для дорослих: залучення студентів-військових та ветеранів війн до курсу освіти для бізнесу та їх майбутнього цивільного життя. Присвячена важливій практичній проблемі, стаття має теоретичну значущість як для педагогічних наук, так

і для когнітивістики, оскільки процес викладання розглядається в ній як формування (1) професійних уявлень (концептів), (2) інтерпретаційних фреймів та (3) особистісних ставлень. Все це необхідне для забезпечення формування ефективного менеджера та лідера. Авторський підхід і практичний досвід являють значний інтерес та значущість для України, де внаслідок військового конфлікту виникла проблема адаптації демобілізованих військових до мирного життя та праці.

MILITARY STUDENTS' TRANSITION TO UNDERSTANDING CIVILIAN BUSINESS CONCEPTS

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The American higher education system is being asked to train millions of recently discharged veterans who served overseas. These students come to our schools with specific needs as they try to break into the workforce. Some come already employed, others are looking to learn a skill to help them land a job, and others may come with personal or emotional issues. Regardless, this is an excellent self-improvement opportunity for our veterans, and with some additional understanding of their situation, we can maximize their success in their careers and personal lives.

To first recognize how we can help our military students, we must understand where they are coming from and why are they here in our classrooms. Many of the returning veterans joined the military right out of high school and had little additional education other than maybe some community college courses. We must realize these students are going through a difficult transition from military to civilian life. Some need to go to school to learn the basics required to get a job, and some are working and need a degree to advance in their career, which is our most common type of student, working adults. Some may still be serving in the military in a reserve capacity.

We also have to understand what our students want to learn. In the School of Business, most students want to learn how business works, and how they can best contribute at their workplace. They also want to learn how communication works in business. This knowledge can include improving writing skills and using technologies such as instant messages and virtual meetings. Students with military backgrounds often have to be persuaded to hold two-way discussions rather than one-way taking orders from a superior; it's OK in business to question your leadership, and often it is encouraged! Veteran students excel at working in teams,

as this is drilled into them from the moment they join the military. Harnessing this ability to work together in a supportive, collaborative method will help them transition to working on teams in the business world and give them an advantage because of their experience.

Other than teamwork, what else do veterans bring to the classroom? They have a keen sense of hierarchy having experienced rank and privileged in the military, a skill transferrable to business. In the service, there is no option not to follow or question a direct order, and this can inhibit critical thinking. Encourage veteran students to ask why more, and not to accept what they read or hear on face value. Urge them to seek out secondary sources for more information, and how to judge the quality of these sources. Most veterans enter the classroom with a highly respectful attitude toward authority, and we are often called sir, no matter how many times we ask them not to!

What are some of the problems experienced by faculty with veteran students? In our local classroom, some students travel long distances to get to class. Sometimes they have to work early the next day and leave class early. These constraints can be a challenge to make sure students learn all the material, participate in group activities, and in general lesson planning. Depending on their financial package, some veteran students are only required to meet a low threshold for a grade, often one that borderlines on academic probation. Students do not read the textbook or required readings and videos, do not prepare to participate in class, and turn in late assignments, or sometimes no assignment at all. It can be challenging to get an adult student to enter learning mode, and even harder when that student is coming from a stressful environment or experiencing personal issues. Joining the military straight out of high school, many students never learned how to learn, and we have to direct them to extra help in reading, writing, math, and every day communicating with instructors and classmates.

When are our students most motivated? Our experience has been that all students, veterans and civilians alike, are motivated when they can apply the course materials directly to their current work. Anything that we can do to adjust assignments, so that they can be relevant to their work is a substantial positive and motivator. We've also seen that students come alive when the course topics and objectives remind them of something they experienced in the service. If we take those opportunities to relate real experiences to the class lessons, student performance increases and their morale explodes.

So as instructors, what can we do to encourage our veteran students' success?

- Create opportunities for veterans to relate their personal experiences to business concepts. Build on these experiences that can be directly applied to business scenarios. For example, students stationed overseas are experienced and sensitive to cultural issues and differences, which can be applied rather seamlessly to situations in international business.
- Allow veteran students to share their service experiences and treat these experiences with respect. At some point, we may need to steer the discussion back to business concepts from the military experiences.
- Make sure students are aware of student code of conduct and the concept of plagiarism and doing their own work. Compare their student obligations to the Military code of conduct and behavior will usually improve.
- Respect their opinions and viewpoints, even though they may be different than your own. Encourage them to respect the views of their nonveteran classmates too.
- If you feel these opinions are extreme, take them aside to discuss, listen, and explain. Think of it this way, they were willing to take a bullet for you and to save your freedom, the least you can do is listen respectfully to their points of view.
- This business course is the first time that many of the students have been asked to go beyond a simple Google search to find credible information. Helping them to determine valid sources from random musings of third-party business guru and paid content websites is part of students learning the process of critical thinking.
- Be aware of stressors and triggers for PTSD and overreactions in the classroom.
- As with all students, if you treat veteran students fairly, they will usually reciprocate. Peer pressure will often help if they don't behave in the classroom, but bad behavior can also escalate if students realize they can get away with it. Know who your campus counselors are in case help is needed.
- Avoid stereotypes; not all veterans are in the reserves, are in law enforcement or work in prisons, or are unemployed by choice.

Finally, support their work efforts and application of coursework to their short-term job and career goals. Help them get that job or promotion or succeed on that project.