

The Certification Outlook

Connecting you to credentialing resources

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Certification Spotlight

Dr. Eric Wright, PhD, veteran Sailor and Guardsman

Credentials are one of the primary tools transitioning Service members can use to validate their military experience. This is particularly true for certain civilian occupations that do not have a direct military equivalent, such as project management. With experience teaching, training and working in the project management sector, veteran Sailor and Guardsman Dr. Eric Wright uses his wealth of industry knowledge and perspective to run Vets2PM, which helps transitioning Service members and recently discharged veterans start their civilian project management careers.



Dr. Eric Wright, PhD,
Veteran Sailor and Guardsman

How long were you in the military?

I was in the military for eight years. I was in the Navy just shy of six years, and then I was in the National Guard for another two years.

How did the skills you developed in the military lead you to focus on a career in project management?

In my opinion, many Service members develop strong project management skills in the military. We're skilled in decision making and situational awareness and analysis.

When I got out of the Navy, I had a lot of great, specific skills, but I didn't know how to articulate them for a civilian hiring manager. After many years, I learned to talk about the things I did in the military, like running nuclear submarines, using project management terminology, which made my experience more tangible for a civilian audience and helped me get hired.

Upon transition, you pursued project management credentials from the Project Management Institute. Why did you choose PMI?

Theirs are the most in-demand, highly recognized project management credentials in the industry, and

they have a long history of establishing the standards of exceptional professional project management. I hold the PMI-ACP, CAPM and PMP credentials, which demonstrate my expertise and experience and give me the credibility to present at events around the country.

Certification changed my life, and now I use certification to run a company that impacts thousands of lives a year.

In your opinion, how has credentialing changed since you started earning certifications? Where do you see credentialing in five years' time?

I think there have been two main changes. First, technology has evolved. When I took my first certification exam, we filled in bubbles on a Scantron. Now, everything is computer-based and more efficient and convenient. Second, there's a focus now on behavioral psychology as part of exams. We test people on how they might react or behave in certain professional scenarios, which is really exciting.

Certification is here to stay — the evidence is simple. At big Fortune 100 companies, credentialing is an essential metric for assessing capabilities and potential.

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How did you come to start your own business — Vets2PM — which helps Service members find civilian careers in project management?

I noticed that there were a lot of project manager roles in the civilian workforce going unfilled, even though the military has a huge talent pool. Service members didn't know how to communicate their skills to a civilian hiring manager, and civilian hiring managers didn't know to go looking for Service members. That's how Vets2PM came to be.

At Vets2PM, we coach veterans on how to present their military experience to civilian hiring managers. We help them develop their resumés and LinkedIn profiles and get them started on the path to earning a credential from PMI.

How did your work on Vets2PM develop into Vet Stone and VPMMA?

As Vets2PM grew, I knew I needed to develop software to translate military project experience into language civilians would understand — that's where Vet Stone comes in. It's a free technology-based tool that helps Service members convey the value of their military experiences as they prepare to transition into civilian careers.

VPMMA, a non-profit organization, is a digital platform through which seasoned project managers from major corporations — like Boeing and Microsoft — act as mentors to aspiring project managers.

What's your take on the Entrepreneurship and Small Business certification for veterans that's available from Pearson VUE?

I haven't taken the ESB certification yet, but I've looked at the curriculum, and it is exactly what veterans need. It provides them with a sort of academic foundation for working in the civilian business world.

What are some of the benefits you see of running your own business?

Empowerment. Every day, I ask myself: "Who am I? What do I do? Who do I do it for? What value does that give them?" I feel empowered knowing that I work to deliver true value to my customers and to veterans every day. And I benefit from the flexibility: I get to do stuff that's important to me and to my family while still delivering value to my customers. A service-type attitude brings me a lot of fulfillment, enrichment and enjoyment executing whatever I decide to do.

What would you tell companies that want to help veterans but don't know where to start?

Military veterans are highly educated and have a lot of experience leading people and projects and managing complex processes. I think companies hiring veterans should provide some brief training on key differences between HR in the civilian workforce versus the military, for example. Veterans simply need some additional context on the civilian environment, and they're sure to succeed.

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– Eric Wright

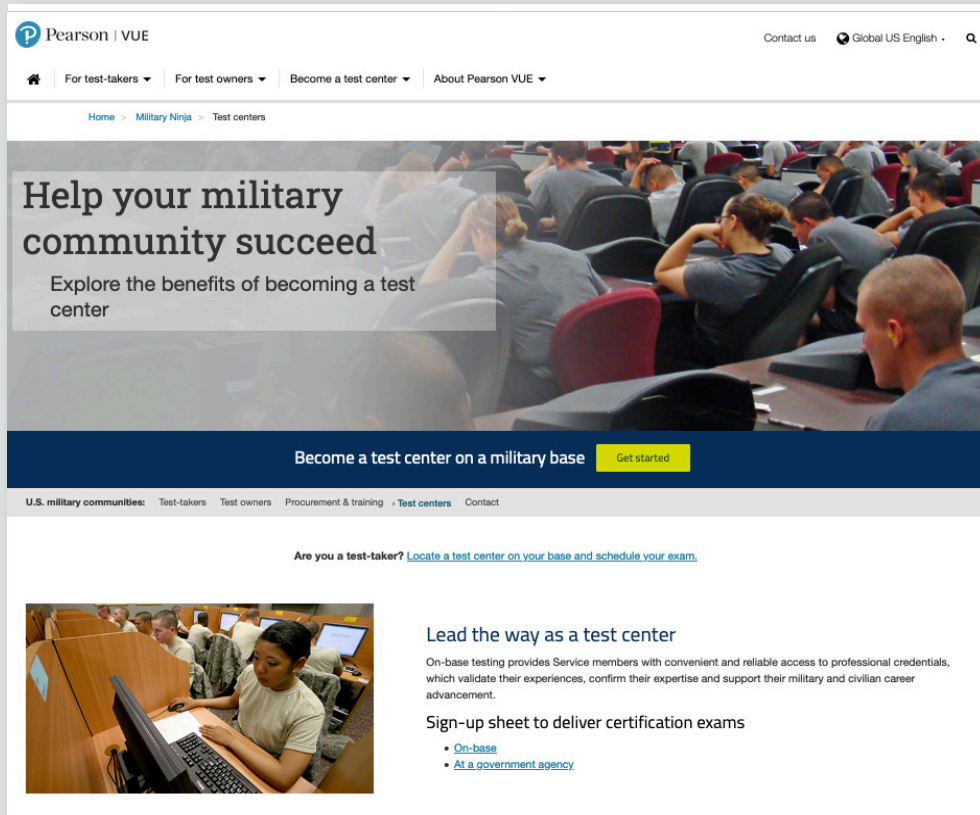
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Help your military community succeed

Drive engagement at your test center! Our updated website contains essential resources to help you engage with candidates at your on-base Pearson VUE test center. Visit PearsonVUE.com/military/test-centers to find branch- and program-specific flyers, roadmaps and data sheets to motivate Service community members as they pursue certification.



30%

of survey respondents said their certification gave them greater excitement and optimism toward their career

Get to know us: Christopher Bloor, Federal Director - Pearson VUE

How long have you worked at Pearson VUE and what have been your responsibilities?

I am in my sixth year at Pearson VUE. I have been in the technology and certification world for over 20 years, though, specifically working with the DoD for almost 15 of those years. My role is twofold: To ensure that the Service member has the tools and resources they need to successfully take and pass a certification exam and to work with leadership implementing systems to ensure that a learning and certification budget can be maximized with little to no waste.



What do you like most about your job?

The people I work with in the Armed Services and the federal government are just fantastic. I genuinely appreciate the opportunity to understand their goals and helping to meet requirements to ensure mission success.

What do you enjoy doing when you're not at work?

I am extremely competitive, against myself and others! I truly enjoy seeing how far and hard I can push my body (my colleagues will tell you I am not normal). Most of my 2020 fitness schedule revolves around Olympic lifting (2-3 Crossfit competitions), running (a bunch of 10ks, a few ½ marathons and 1 full marathon) and climbing (I plan on climbing Cotopaxi in Ecuador next fall). If I am visiting and you would like to go for a run or do PT at 0500, I am in! You won't have to ask twice.

62%

of survey respondents said an employer or government program paid for their most recent certification exam.



2018 Pearson VUE Value of Certification Survey (Government sector).

Don't forget

COOL: Service members in all branches can find information on training, credentials and licenses related to their military and civilian careers. Credentialing Opportunities On-Line (COOL) helps identify training gaps and define the paths needed to earn civilian and federal positions. Additionally, each COOL website features key information about funding, accreditations and in-demand credentials. Visit PearsonVUE.com/military/funding to learn more about how COOL works in your branch.

mindhub™: Service members and government employees can receive 25% off training materials through mindhub, Pearson VUE's certification prep store. mindhub offers a wide variety of learning products designed to help test-takers prepare for industry-recognized certifications. Simply apply coupon code GOV25 to your shopping cart at checkout to receive the discount. Visit mindhub.com/service-members for more information.

The Certification Outlook:

If you are interested in opening a Pearson VUE test center on your base, contact DoD@Pearson.com.

