

Public Service Employment Act (PSEA) and the Veterans Hiring Act (VHA)

My experience with Veteran's Affairs Canada, the Veterans Hiring Act, and the Public Service has been nothing short of what I feel is discriminatory. I submit to the committee the following concerns. Under the current system:

1. Veterans who apply for positions in the Public Service Commission (PSC) are not given credit for their qualifications, experience or their service. This is a poor business case for the PSC, they are refusing to employ qualified personnel whose qualifications and experience were financed by the public, in my case alone there are hundreds of thousands of public dollars wasted (BSc, Maint O, Qualified to manage the General Safety Program, ESO, QATA, ATO, and Project Management Basic course, all financed and certified by DND);
2. The system allows petty grudges and personal bias to allow managers to 'screen-out' obviously qualified, and in my case the most qualified, candidates based on vague, unsubstantiated, unqualified, opinions. Hiring committees are formed out of Managers and other PSC employees who are grossly unqualified to make judgments about a candidate's abilities which leads to years of training and experience being completely ignored during the hiring process. – Why isn't the task of assessing and hiring of qualified personnel given to specialist who are specifically trained for that purpose? In every other aspect, the government requires technical abilities to be proven, except this one. Hiring should be an objective process performed by experts, as is done in the CAF by the Personnel Selections Office of each unit;
3. Veterans, who have been traumatized by their situation and released through no fault of their own, are subsequently required to 'beg' for accommodation in an organization to which they have dedicated their lives. Why isn't 'Priority Entitlement', particularly for veterans who have been medically released due to a service injury, automatic and applied to the first position that they volunteer for after being assessed as 'suitable for employment' by VAC?
4. How is it that I have lost my eligibility to 'Priority Entitlement' before I have even completed the revocational training plan approved and supported by VAC?
5. The amount of tax payer's dollars that are being wasted by this subjective, unfair system of personnel selection must be staggering; and
6. The office charged with investigating unfair hiring practices within the PSC is completely ineffective. According to Kimberly Jessome, of the Director General, Investigations Directorate Oversight and Investigations Sector, my case does not meet the criteria necessary to be investigated. I submit to this committee, considering the hiring priorities published by the government, to give preference to qualified veterans, with the requisite language profile, and, in my case 5+ years of experience in the specialty required by the position, if my case does not merit investigation, I can't imagine one that would. To say that my oral communication skills do not meet the level required, and are, 'not in line' with those required by DND, after having served as a member and Officer of the CAF for over 23 years is laughable. It was an excuse not to hire me despite overwhelming evidence that I was the best candidate, according to the requirements of the position and the hiring priorities of the Government. Everyone I have recounted this incident to, civilians in the PSC, military personnel, and even private citizens who have had no previous contact with DND, thought I was joking when I told them the outcome. Moreover, I am certain the incumbent is NOT a qualified ATO, and can't possibly have the experience I have in the ATO trade specialty, based on the facts that:
 - a. To have this qualification, the candidate would have had to have been trained by the CAF, in which case, the competition would not have been open to the public; and
 - b. Neither the hiring manager nor HR personnel dared to answer the question when I asked.

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Justification

When I was released due to a service injury in Dec 2011 I went through a SISIP revocational training plan, which, unfortunately was unsuccessful in that I needed VAC to support me while I found an entry level position in order to gain the requisite experience needed to reach a reasonable level in the industry. This plan was subsequently rejected by VAC, hence I was reevaluated by VAC and entered a revocational training plan, which I am currently in the process of completing. (MASc Aero Eng, RMCC)

Owing partially to my own ignorance, and inadequate guidance I received from VAC, I missed the 5 year deadline to apply (Beg to be recognized for my training, education, experience and 23 years of service) for 'Priority Entitlement', nonetheless, I submitted my application and it was denied. I appealed this decision on the basis that by release fell within the confusing transition period, (2012-2015) and that I have not, as yet, completed the revocational training plan chosen and supported by VAC (Sep 2015 to present). I was subsequently informed by the Minister's office, the Veteran's Affairs Ombudsman's office and my VAC Case Manager, that there were NO exceptions to the 5 year rule regardless of the circumstances, which I do not believe to be true however, I lac the time and wherewithal to investigate this point at this time. Regardless, my appeal was denied.

That notwithstanding, I applied through an external competition, DND18J-017444-000002 (18-DND-EA-MAT-427698-A), in early 2018 and my application was retained. On 26 Jul 2018, I received an e-mail:

Good day,

Your name has been drawn randomly from the inventory "Various Engineering Positions" # 18-DND-EA-MAT-427698-A as a potential candidate for a position within the materiel group of the Department of National Defence. The position is entitled – Disposal Project Manager and the candidate would be responsible for: managing a portfolio of projects; staffing and managing human resources; exercising financial and technical authorities; conducting systems engineering and integrated logistics support planning; and managing the procurement of goods/services.

The candidate that fills this position would be expected to manage a 4-person team for the acquisition and commissioning of \$10M of ammunition disposal industrial equipment (e.g., mutilation equipment, thermal treatment unit, incinerator with pollution abatement system, etc.)

The position is full time indeterminate at the Engineering and Land Survey Group ENG-04 level with a salary range from \$96,191 – \$112,186 plus a bilingual bonus of \$800 per year.

The position is bilingual and requires a second language profile of BBB and a security clearance level of level 2, secret. The other conditions of employment are:

- Willing and able to work overtime occasionally
- Willing and able to travail internationally and in Canada.

The required work location is the National Capital Region – Gatineau. More specifically, the work address is 975 Richelieu, Gatineau, Quebec.

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Please indicate if you are interested in being assessed for this position no later than 1st of August 2018 via e-mail: MATStaffing.DotationMAT@forces.gc.ca.

Regards,

Team MAT Staffing ID1

To which I replied in the positive, and started the process of being assessed for a specific position within DND.

Based on the government's publicized hiring priorities, I find it hard to believe that there was a more qualified candidate for this position who would be applying from the general public particularly in light of the fact that I;

1. am a qualified Ammunition Technical Officer (ATO) with over 5 years' experience in the trade (qualified on the same course as the hiring manager);
2. have worked at all possible levels in the trade, DRDC Valcartier, DGMPD (L & S) Gatineau, and 5CMBG Valcartier;
3. Have served as a member of a Major Project Team at DGMPD (L & S) and Attended the Project Management Basic course in Feb 2010; and
4. Served in the CAF for over 23 years during which time I went from being a Basic Recruit to a Senior Captain, received my CD for 12 and 22 year's Service, attended RMCC where I achieved a BSc Mech Eng, attended the Army School of Ammunition in the UK where I achieved my ATO qualification, have served as a Maint O, ESO, QATA, and ATO, and was finally medically released due to a service injury.

This application process culminated in my attendance at a 'Best Fit' interview chaired, despite an obvious conflict of interest, by Ian Lau, an old colleague of who became a qualified ATO on the same course as I and has worked exclusively in Ottawa ever since.

When I was informed that I had been 'Screened Out' of the process for what they claimed was, 'an inability to communicate effectively orally', I was infuriated. This led to several e-mails passing between myself, HR, and Ian Lau the culmination of which was that they refused to provide any reasonable or written explanation of their assessment.

At that point, I submitted my complaint and the supporting documentation, through the web site provided by Kathryn Irwin to the Complaints and Investigations office of the PSC. After approximately, 18 weeks, I was required to re-submit owing to what the office claimed was a 'computer glitch'.

The response which I received from Kimberly Jessome stated:

sections 30 and 36 of the PSEA provide organizations with the flexibility to determine the essential qualifications required for a position as well as the methodology and the tools used to assess candidates in an appointment process.

My question to this statement is, although I agree that section 30 and 36 of the PSEA should require that organizations determine the essential qualifications, I believe that qualities of a non-technical nature such

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as communication skills and general psychological abilities should be judged on past performance by qualified HR personnel. Moreover, what qualification/certification do the members of the hiring committee have that qualifies them to make these assessments? I have worked with two of the 3 members who assessed me, and I can say with guarded certainty that they are not qualified to judge. The balance of probability says, this assessment has no bearing on my ability and is strictly an unwarranted dislike by the chairman of the hiring committee. Further the letter stated:

DND indicates that your responses at the interview lacked focus and were not in line with the rating guide.

I have attached a copy of my responses to the interview questions. Excluding this one occasion, I have never been accused of 'lacking focus', moreover, I contend that my responses focused on the importance of integrity, honesty, and technical competence. If these are not 'in line' with the rating guide for a DND employee, then I suggest that the guide must be contrary to the common values and ethos of Canadian society.

In Summary

In accordance with the [Guide for Submitting Briefs to House of Commons Committees](#), Under the current system:

1. Veterans who apply for positions in the Public Service Commission should truly be given credit for their qualifications, experience and service, in my experience, and should not have to depend on the 'Priority Entitlement' to ensure that they will be treated fairly. Above all, when it comes to considering qualifications and experience that were financed by public funds, as mine were, (BSc, Maint O, Qualified to manage the General Safety Program, ESO, QATA, ATO, and Project Management Basic course) the PSC should not leave the decision whether to retain or reject these qualified candidates to unqualified personnel.
2. The current system allows petty grudges and personal bias to allow managers to 'screen-out' obviously more qualified, candidates based on vague, unsubstantiated, unqualified, opinions. Although it is appropriate for Section 30 and 36 of the PSEA to allow organizations the flexibility to determine the essential qualifications for the position to be staffed, the assessment of all candidates with respect to those qualifications should be performed by HR personnel specifically qualified for that purpose. It is no more appropriate to have an ATO assess the communication skills of an individual, than it is to have an HR specialist assess the risk factors of a given piece of ammunition. Plus, candidates are not given a fair chance when personal bias and subjectivity is allowed into the hiring process. This is not a private business hiring a candidate base on the personal feelings of the manager, these are assets, qualifications, and experience that have been duly earned by the candidate, and financed by the government, that are being wasted. Positions should be awarded on qualifications, experience, and years of service based on objective assessments carried out by specifically qualified HR personnel, as is done by the Personnel Selections staff of the CAF. The current system allows managers to disqualify candidates based on unsubstantiated whims of unqualified personnel, which is unprofessional and unfair. Hiring committees should not be formed out of Managers and other PSC employees who are grossly unqualified to make judgments about a candidate's abilities which leads to years of training and experience being completely ignored during the hiring process. The task of assessing and hiring

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qualified personnel should be given to specialist who are specifically trained for that purpose. In every other aspect, the government requires technical abilities to be proven, except this one. Hiring should be an objective process performed by experts, as is done in the CAF by the Personnel Selections Office of each unit;

3. Veterans, who have already been traumatized by their situation and released through no fault of their own, should not subsequently be required to 'beg' for accommodation in an organization to which they have dedicated their lives. 'Priority Entitlement', for veterans who have been medically released due to a service injury, should be automatically applied to the first position that the veteran volunteers for after leaving the forces, having been deemed 'fit for duty' by VAC, particularly when the completion of their revocational training plan takes longer than the current 5 year limit.
4. It should not be possible that a veteran, like myself, struggling to readapt to civilian life after over 20 years of service is no longer eligibility for 'Priority Entitlement' prior to even having completed the revocational training plan approved and supported by VAC.
5. The amount of tax payer's dollars that are being wasted by this subjective, unfair system of personnel selection must be staggering; and
6. The office charged with investigating unfair hiring practices within the PSC, in particular, the Director General, Investigations Directorate Oversight and Investigations Sector, Kimberly Jessome, should be investigated for their refusal to take action in my case which is an obvious of abuse of power that merits inquiry. Where the best candidate for the position was unjustly 'screened out', by unqualified personnel for a reason that could not possibly be substantiated. To say that my communication skills do not meet the level required, and are, 'not in line' with those required by DND, after having served as a member and Officer of the CAF for over 23 years is laughable. It was an excuse not to hire me despite overwhelming evidence that I was the best candidate according to the requirements of the position and the hiring priorities of the Government. Everyone I have recounted this incident to, civilians in the PSC, military personnel, and even private citizens who have had no previous contact with DND, thought I was joking when I told them the outcome. According to Kimberly Jessome, my case does not meet the criteria necessary to be investigated. I submit to this committee, according to the hiring priorities published by the government, to give preference to qualified veterans, with the requisite language profile, and, in my case 5+ years of experience in the specialty, if my case does not merit investigation, I can't imagine one that would. Moreover, I am certain the incumbent is NOT a qualified ATO, and can't possibly have the experience I have in the trade specialty, based on the facts that:
 - a. To have this qualification, the candidate would have had to have been trained by the CAF, in which case, the competition would not have been open to the public; and
 - b. Neither the hiring manager nor HR personnel dared to answer the question when I asked.

Thank you for your attention, I only hope that this is not another case where the **appearance** of transparency and just treatment of veterans will be the result.

Sincerely,

Dennis Allin Bellamy rmc CD, BSc, ATO, oiq

DAEME Interview

DA Bellamy

October 11, 2018

Abstract

In response to the Best Fit questionnaire, I feel that my experience and attention to detail coupled with my proven ability to work within a team and handle complex HR situations with discretion, compassion and integrity will serve DAEME well now and in the future.

Interview Questions

1. What's your story? Tell us what you're about.

- (a) I have been associated DND since Aug 1988 when I attended one of the last few Basic Recruit Training Courses conducted in Cornwallis Nova Scotia. My experience in the Air Force then the Army spans over 23 years from private recruit in Aug 1988 to medically released Capt in Dec 2011. Through out that time I have been a Supply Tech Where I managed a section and created a database to track Goods in the repair circuit, Para-rigger where I supervised a team of 3 packers, and developed an automated equipment management system that revolutionized organization of 442 Sqn SAR section; as Ammo Eng for the 777 field artillery project; and my last post was as ATO of 5MBG Valcartier where my team and I were responsible for the storage, maint, and distribution of all the ammunition used in the Province of QC, including the Det in Farnham. Plus aid to civil powers and re instigating the annual range clean up of the Valcartier training area.
- (b) Since being released from the forces I have continued to improve my skills and knowledge by becoming a commercial pilot with approx 1900 flight hours, teaching both practical and theoretical Skydiving courses and most recently returning to RMC where I am pursuing an MASc in Aeronautical Engineering (expected completion date: Dec 2018).
- (c) As for what I am about, I hold honesty, integrity and courage above all else and I feel as though I am perfectly suited to this position for the following reasons:
 - i. I understand and have experience being a team member, where it is important that the team lead understands what your expertise and experience brings to the team and how important it is to respect each team member or their contribution to the mission;
 - ii. My experience as a team leader who's duty it is to protect his team members, respect them for what they bring to the team and encourage them to push their own limits for the greater good and to the benefit of the mission/team;
 - iii. as the regulatory authority representing NDHQ and as AMMO Eng of a major project I understand the safety, regulatory, and financial constraints associated with completing a project and look forward to expanding those skill with larger and larger projects; and
 - iv. as an experienced teacher, coach, and mentor, I have the will and abilities need to recognize potential in team members and help them reach their full potential.

2. In the work context: What do you value? What are you passionate about?

- (a) I value honesty and maturity above all. I feel as though any problem can be solved by determining and addressing the root cause, and no problem ever gets solved by addressing the superficial symptoms.
- (b) I am passionate about accomplishing a mission or project, knowing how things work, and brining people with varied expertise together to get the best product possible. It's like singing in harmony, everyone has their part that no one else in the group can do as well, and together, the result is better than any part or group could have achieved without the others.

3. What things do you not like to do?

- (a) I don't like ad-hawk solutions: which isn't to say that they are not sometimes necessary, but I prefer to take the time and expend the energy needed to resolve an issue or repair a piece of equipment properly rather than 'covering it with gun tape.
for example, we, at the end of last year, the furnace in our hangar quit working. I have been very busy over the summer and it was not a priority, until last week. when it made it to the top of my list, obviously, winter is coming... the problem was, that every time it was turned

on, the breaker would trip. It took a few iterations but we managed to narrow it down to a 7 Pole connection between the control relay box and the igniter box. The point of my story is, my tenant argued with me for three days that we could just bypass the connector and put individual terminals on all 7 wires and the furnace would work. My preferred solution was to find a source for the same type of connector and replace it the way it should be done. We will see next week whether my solution is better, or we will have to go with his. (had to order the part from Missouri)

4. What project would you consider is your post significant career accomplishment to date? Tell us about it.

That would be a toss-up between when I started working for 442 Sqn and what I intend to accomplish by the end of this year.

- (a) When rumours started circulating that I might be posted to 442 Sqn as one of the first Riggers to work with SAR, I took it upon myself to check-out their system for managing and tracking their equipment. I found their system to be manual and quite disorganized. this was back when Microsoft first came out so I used the Access program to develop a Database which we used to automate the maintenance system for the unit. it was implemented in spectacular fashion in that, I created the entire system on my own time prior to being assigned to the unit; consequently, on the morning of my very first day working for the unit, I arrived with my 35' floppy in hand and announced, 'this is how we are going to operate from now on'. The leadership accepted my plan without hesitation and the transition was as smooth as could have been expected
- (b) I am currently working on my Master's thesis, which will bring a new capability to RMC. In the world of fluid dynamics, Particle Image Velocimetry (PIV) is the industry standard for examining fluid flows. David Demel did a study in 2014 which involved 2D PIV but had to go to the university of Sherbrooke to take his measurements. Since June 2016, I have been working on a project aimed at establishing Time Resolved, Stereoscopic PIV, a more advanced method than that available at Sherbrooke, as the new standard for research at RMC. The project has been delayed for many reasons like the fact that RMC did not have a laser safety policy, which I was not responsible for, nonetheless, I did produce the draft policy and training package as part of what I thought was necessary to move the project forward. Right now we are dealing with issues associated with the availability of qualified staff to conduct the on-site training needed to get the system up and running. This will be accomplished before the end of the year.

5. If I were to poll everyone you've worked with:

- (a) What percentage would not be fans of yours? Why not?
(b) What percentage would be super fans of yours? Why so?

a. I would estimate that about 20% of the people I have ever worked with would not be fans, they are those who chose not to uncover the root cause of a given conflict or situation. the ones who put popularity or political gain ahead of honesty and integrity. Or misunderstood when I was required to hold them responsible for their actions.

b. I would further estimate that between 40 to 50% of the people that I have worked with would be super fans, those are the subordinates that I have supported and helped reach their goals, like my 2ic from Valcartier Ammo Pl, and those I have been subordinate to, like Bob Verret, who appreciated my mission oriented work ethic, innovative solutions, and the fact that they could trust me to do any job or assignment to the best of my ability with little or no supervision.

6. When I contact your last supervisor and ask which area of your work needs the most improvement, what will I learn?

- (a) contact any of my former supervisors and they will tell you that I could be more diplomatic. I have improved over the years but I still sometimes tent to 'tell it like it is', and in a bureaucracy like the CF, that is not always helpful.

7. What interests you most about working at DAEME?

- (a) The opportunity to bring my years of experience and knowledge in to a major project and lead a team of equally knowledgeable and experienced members through the process that will bring a much needed capability to the government of Canada that will greatly benefit the people of Canada for generations to come, including making it a safer, better world for my daughter, as well as setting the right example for her.

8. Where do you see yourself in 5 years?

- (a) At the completion of this project I would hope to move into a mentoring or teaching position, or perhaps into another major project that will have equal or greater impact on the greater good.

9. Do you have any questions for us?

- (a) When are you expecting me to start working?
- (b) Is there a possibility of having years of service considered with regard to leave credit?
- (c) how long do you expect to deliberate before announcing the successful candidate?

Thank you for the opportunity.