



Jack Jackson: One Vet's Success Using His Dependable Strengths

By Bob Pack, Burlington, WA

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Stanley "Jack" Jackson (photo) served for 21 years in the Army, and retired after a full military career in security. Following retirement, he worked as a security manager for a civilian employer for several years before being laid off, and then decided to pursue further training at Edmonds Community College in Washington State. At the time he attended a Dependable Strengths® workshop for veterans sponsored by the college in early 2010, he had been unemployed for almost one year.

Within two months following his completion of the workshop, Jack was successfully hired to be the Security Management Director for King County (Seattle). He feels this job is a very good match for his strengths, one that lets him do what he does best on a daily basis, including team leading, and managing emergency situations and safety and security programs. Prior to being hired for this position, Jack had not previously held a job of this caliber, and he notes this is the highest-level job he has ever held.

In the military, Jack started out in the infantry, went into the military police course, and then served 16 years in the MP Corps. He worked investigations and patrol, and was in charge of a military police investigation unit. Though he had military and civilian education and experience, his job search prior to going through the Dependable Strengths workshop was pretty uncertain, and frustrating. He wasn't sure he had the skill set to actually get the jobs he wanted, he didn't know his strengths, and he didn't know what information to share with employers.

Jack recognizes the opportunity the Dependable Strengths process provided him in recognizing, understanding, and learning to talk about his strengths. In the workshop, he worked together with other vets, who helped point out his strengths to him as he shared stories of his Good Experiences (something he felt he did well, enjoyed doing, and was proud of). Then he went through the Reality Test, a process to prove to himself which strengths were really his.

You guys gave me the tools to successfully sell myself in an interview with passion and confidence. I started believing in myself. I figured that I had the education and the background; I could go in and apply for those positions, and be successful. I had the knowledge and skills I needed to succeed. Dependable Strengths gave me the confidence to go in there and believe in myself, and when I was in the interview, I found that I was able to sell myself. I was comfortable talking about my strengths. This was very different from how my job interviews were prior to going through Dependable Strengths.

Attending the workshop and doing all the practice he did (to get comfortable talking about his strengths with others), gave him the confidence he carried within himself to every job interview. Writing his Dependable Strengths report, one of the powerful tools he learned to create during the workshop, was eye opening for him.

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I could say, hey, look, I have all these strengths and qualities that I never realized I had. The Dependable Strengths process helped me present myself to employers at my very best. I felt confident, I knew I was up to the job I was applying for, and I could communicate this to the employer.

Before his interview, Jack practiced the Dependable Strengths interview strategy repeatedly with his wife to build up his comfort in answering interview questions, and he practiced with his kids too. The practice helped him get his words right, and helped him smooth out his presentation; this was especially useful when interviewers asked him to tell them something about himself.

I was able to tell them clearly how I could be an asset to their organization, and I was able to prove it. It was amazing how comfortable I felt talking to the panel with the newfound skills I learned through Dependable Strengths. I felt the passion of delivering a message that captured their attention.

In adapting his Dependable Strengths report for the job he was applying for, Jack was able to take the requirements of the job, and build on that information by matching his strengths to the employer's needs. Though participants are encouraged to take their report with them to the interview, the way he used his report was to memorize it before the interview, and recall his strengths and proofs of those strengths when that information was called for.

He actually went through three four-person panel interviews before being selected for the job. During the first interview, he wrote down the questions interviewers asked him, and then went home and further refined his Dependable Strengths report to incorporate additional evidence of his strengths. He acknowledges being skeptical about the value of Dependable Strengths until he was called back for a second interview. During the second interview, he was able to build on what he learned about the employer's needs, and his value in meeting those needs.

The Dependable Strengths process made the difference for me because it builds your confidence, and helps you bring out and focus on your strengths and value to the employer. I believe vets of any age or experience level could benefit from participating in a Dependable Strengths workshop. Everybody benefits by getting in touch with their strengths, especially when they can provide proof of those strengths, and this is very helpful in a job interview. Knowing that you can provide value to the employer is very powerful, and practicing to talk about your strengths makes it flow. Employers like to hear about your strengths, and they want to know how you see yourself as an asset to their organization. The military instills certain qualities in you, and a strong work ethic, but most vets do not know or appreciate their own real value to civilian employers. I am very thrilled by my success and it is attributable to the work I put into Dependable Strengths. It gave me the confidence to persevere. Vets of any age or experience level can benefit from the Dependable Strengths workshop, and I wish that all vets could participate.



If you would like to ask Jack any questions about his process and success with Dependable Strengths[®], he has expressed a willingness to answer them. Please forward your questions to:

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