

Role Of Women Leadership Attributes In Defense Services

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Abstract

In certain settings, women really do better than males. Women's participation in the military would quadruple the number of qualified candidates for sensitive positions that need people skills. Armed forces are better able to put their finest and most diplomatic troops to work to rapidly resolve conflicts when they have access to a larger pool of potential recruits. Restricting women from serving in combat perpetuates sexism since it is widely accepted that combat experience is a prerequisite for advancement to senior officer posts. In the military, women must be subjected to the same dangers as males if they are to be afforded the same chances.

Keywords: talent pool, sensitive jobs, interpersonal skills soldier, militaries, combat duty, sexism, opportunities.

Introduction

Women in the military face more dangers due to their inherent vulnerabilities. Feminism aside, there are a number of considerations that must be made in relation to women. However, patriotic sentiment and the will to sacrifice for one's nation are not contingent on a person's gender. Women who join the military but would otherwise not be able to afford higher education will have access to educational opportunities. They will be able to go to college and work at the same time thanks to the GI Bill. Therefore, not only may women go to college, but they can also work. Women who choose to serve in the military will also reap several advantages.

If a service member decides not to extend their contract and seeks civilian work instead, they have excellent prospects. This is due to the fact that military experience and training tend to produce individuals who possess personality traits and skill sets highly valued by the private sector. Discipline is key in the military. This implies that the staff won't procrastinate and will instead be able to do all of their jobs on time. They are ready to take on any task, no matter how strenuous. Having military experience on top of other career history is a huge plus.

The military and other sectors of government are just now realising that a person's sexual orientation has nothing to do with a person's ability to be a good soldier. That's why, despite the mental and physical strain, the military is a great place for women who want to show they are just as capable in war as males.

The military offers an equal playing field for anyone who choose to demonstrate their patriotism by serving their nation. After all, the United States of America is where the free and the courageous call home. And it would be contrary to this conviction to exclude women from military duty.

Any woman who wishes to enlist at a time when doing so is no longer mandatory and fewer people overall are entering the military should be encouraged to do so. Furthermore, there is a benefit to maintaining a military force that includes members of both sexes. Having a lot of them means your country's military is always well-equipped.

Women who join the armed forces are aware that becoming pregnant is not an option because of the potential consequences for their careers if they do so. As a result, female soldiers would be more dedicated to their responsibilities as fighters. If working women may delay having children, so can female soldiers. It's also unclear whether or not women will take their work with the same seriousness as males. If they hadn't, the service would have permanently removed them. Despite the occasional emotional outburst, women may show great bravery and courage when the time is right. Physical and sexual assault are not exclusive to women in the service industry. Just by chance, some individuals succeed.

The Debate on whether women should be in Combat: A wide number of Army roles are negatively impacted by the ban on women from engaging in direct ground combat. Progress can be made on several of them. Furthermore, women cannot anticipate much advancement in any of the professions offered to them since these exclusions are a part of policy and not just a transitory consequence. Harrell and Miller speculate that many women will quit the Army or transfer careers since they will have to compete with each other and with males for the limited leadership postings available in these professions. The researchers also discovered several informal roadblocks. Some Army leaders restrict the number of

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women serving in any given unit by assigning "surplus" women to other jobs, while others refuse to place women in newly formed units on the grounds that doing so would constitute "collocation" with an active combat unit.

Effects on Units: This research indicated that gender integration had a minor influence on preparedness, cohesiveness, and morale across a variety of measures (interviews, surveys, focus groups). To suggest it has no impact would be inaccurate. However, respondents to surveys and interviews see leadership as a far more significant effect.

Readiness: Gender is not seen as a factor in preparedness in comparison to training, operating tempo, leadership, and equipment. If a unit has an unusually high percentage of women or is already short-handed, pregnancy may delay the unit's availability for deployment. The vast majority of commanders and senior enlisted members who were polled agreed that women are just as capable as males.

Cohesion: In cohesive groups, gender differences were negligible at best. In teams with rival factions, gender was cited as a lesser concern than divides along work group or rank lines. When it was seen as having a negative impact, it was often due to the fact that dating within a unit highlights gender disparities, that structures or organisational behaviour emphasise gender differences, or that individuals tend to split into groups based on gender when conflict arises. The impacts of gender are not always detrimental. Women's participation was also credited with improving professionalism. Several justifications have been made for the military's current stance on women in combat jobs. In this article, we will examine the main reasons for and against allowing women to serve in combat groups.

Some female Marines may feel qualified for the opportunity to take on the job because they have shown the physical, mental, and moral capacity to command and execute combat-type activities.

- i. While the military welcomes women for the most part, there are certain positions for which they are not physically fit. Women who try to meet the fitness standards designed for males will put undue strain on their bodies. Furthermore, fighting units do tasks that are tailored to men's strengths. There will be more injuries among female service members in integrated groups.
- ii. In terms of productivity, some women may be able to reach the necessary benchmarks, but the vast majority will not. While it is conceivable to integrate competent women into combat roles, the tiny number does not justify the increased logistical, administrative, and disciplinary expenses involved with doing so.
- iii. The morale and cohesiveness of the unit will suffer if women are allowed to participate in direct combat.
- iv. When a military unit has an unusually high percentage of women or is short on personnel, pregnancy might hinder the unit's ability to deploy.
- v. Men, particularly those who are more likely to join, tend to adhere to more conventional gender norms. Men in military units may go to extreme measures to shield women from harm. It's conceivable that women would face hostility and resentment from members of a hyper-masculine military ethos.
- vi. Torture and rape are real threats for both male and female inmates, although in patriarchal communities the maltreatment of women prisoners may be tolerated more openly.

Career advancement Channels: Women and men are welcome to apply for military service, with the knowledge that various positions call for varying levels of physical and emotional preparedness. So that women may advance in their careers without having to engage in warfare, there should be other paths to advancement. The following are general considerations for both male as well as female incumbents in the armed services:

- i. Ability vs. Gender: If a person has the necessary skills for the job, their gender shouldn't matter. Women are easier to recruit and deploy than males, and they often arrive at the front lines in superior physical condition. It is feasible to tailor hiring and training policies to accommodate female candidates. Injury rates among women may be lowered by engaging in additional strength training before competition. Technical knowledge and the ability to make quick decisions are becoming more useful than raw physical power in today's high-tech battlefield.
- ii. Having service members of both sexes helps maintain a robust military. The all-volunteer forces are experiencing serious difficulties due to low recruiting and retention rates. Growing the pool of potential job candidates will attract more enthusiastic workers. Women who voluntarily enlist as active combat troops are not likely to skip out on their responsibilities because they are expecting a child.
- iii. Efficiency: Commanders in the air cannot hire the best qualified individual for the position due to the complete ban on women.
- iv. According to custom, women will need special training in order to join military formations traditionally reserved for males. The macho subculture is not immune to cultural shifts. Over the last century, women have made great strides towards entering traditionally male-dominated fields.
- v. All women participating in the military now face "front-line hazards" in the current world of battle (Afghanistan, Iraq). There has been no wavering of support for women participating in the armed services despite the evolution of warfare, which is evidence that women's participation in combat roles is essential.
- vi. Respondents did not name gender as a major factor in any of the problems that were harming their morale.

Leadership was seen as the most important factor. There were two areas where gender had a role: sexual harassment and double standards. Despite recent headline-grabbing occurrences, the vast majority of respondents said sexual harassment was not an issue in their respective units. Most women who have experienced sexual harassment do not come out about it, despite the fact that there is widespread ambiguity regarding the nature of this kind of discrimination. They usually brush these kinds of things off as unimportant and deal with them on their own. The fear of retaliation from coworkers, the belief that such reports decrease the case for women in the military, and the belief that nothing will happen to the offender are less frequently cited reasons for not reporting. Most males believe there are two sets of expectations for how much is expected of men and women when it comes to matters like appearance and the readiness of male leaders to demand the same of women as they do of men. Finally, even if they're not technically against the rules, romantic and sexual interactions may nonetheless bring down morale in the unit.

Other Gender Effects

Participants, both male and female, overwhelmingly support integrated basic training. 25% of women and 39% of men prefer gender-specific training environments. Only 14% of men and 18% of women preferred placing more women in fewer units, while the remainder of the respondents were evenly divided between allocating women to all units and using a gender-blind assignment mechanism. Most people do not care whether they are reporting to a male or a woman when it comes to incidents of harassment. However, between 22 and 35 percent express a strong preference for reporting to someone of the same sex. While over half of the enlisted men support softening the combat exclusion rule, barely a third of the male commanders do. More than 80% of women want reform, while opinions vary on whether or not women's participation in combat roles should be optional.

Historic Perspective on women's inclusion in the Military

As a result of the women's movement and cultural transformations in the 1960s and 1970s, more and more women began serving in the military and entering the workforce in the private sector. Changing social standards and government legislation have had a significant impact on the number of women in the labour sector. In 1960, women made up just 32% of the labour force in the United States; by 2012, that number had increased to 47%. Women make up a significant portion of the civilian and military labour sectors, yet they are still underrepresented in positions of authority. Only four out of the current 38 four-star officers in the military are female.

Over the last several decades, women have made great strides in the workforce and the armed forces. They make up a rising portion of both workforces, and top executives in both sectors recognise the importance of attracting and keeping women to keep their teams at peak performance. The few women who have made it to the highest levels of leadership in the military (generals and flag officers) and in the commercial sector (the so-called "C-suite") serve as role models for others who want to follow in their footsteps.

Despite this, women continue to confront a variety of problems, some of which are very similar whether they work in the military or the private sector.

The following are some suggestions on how military and business leaders might work together or independently to meet these difficulties.

a) Improve leadership training and development programs at early stages of careers: This is especially crucial in the private sector, where women's lack of self-confidence sometimes prevents them from asking for increases and promotions or even applying for jobs that would be a good fit for them and help them develop professionally. Women in their early military careers, whether as officers or enlisted, would benefit much from this. These programmes not only assist them deal with the specific difficulties of military life, but also prepare them for civilian life and the job market after they leave the service.

According to a survey by the Defence Business Board, 83% of service members leave the military during the first 20 years of their careers, so these types of programmes are especially important for the many young women who will become veterans during the early stages of their professional lives.

b) Solicit feedback about addressing challenges & implement recommended solutions: In addition to being able to name the difficulties they experience, the women we interviewed in the military and the business world also seemed to have concrete suggestions on how to fix them. However, employees may be hesitant to bring up their ideas with their superiors, especially when they are just starting out in their careers and feel less secure in their positions, or when they work for a large, hierarchical organisation where it is unclear which department or individual must take action.

Although large-scale surveys may be useful for identifying broad patterns and prioritising certain sorts of concerns, in order to elicit concrete proposals and solutions, one has to have one-on-one conversations, preferably in private focus groups comprised of women at a comparable point in their careers.

c) Establish public dialogue between the military and private sector women improving women's leadership and career development: Women in the C-suite or in general or flag officer roles have frequently gone through similar

experiences, giving them unique insights on women's leadership and how to further women's careers. To guarantee that the perspectives and ideas of military and commercial sector leaders are as widely disseminated as possible, they should collaborate to hold conversations on this vital subject via public events, seminar series, papers on the subject, and other means.

- d) Jointly conduct leadership and skills programs for female high school and college students.** Since today's students are tomorrow's workforce and military members, the military and the commercial sector have a vested interest in ensuring that female students acquire the leadership and content knowledge they'll need to advance in their chosen fields. It would be beneficial for women in the military and the private sector to share their experiences and perspectives with students at the service academies, while also teaching them fundamental leadership and professional skills such as public speaking, conducting interviews, negotiating, and mentoring. The STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) sectors and the financial sector are two examples of industries that may be targeted by such a programme. Directly, the military services and the firms that fund such programmes will have an easier time attracting programme graduates who are women. Indirectly, the programmes may boost the services' and companies' image as desirable places for women to work.
- e) Help female veterans transition effectively and fairly to private sector:** The burden of ensuring that transitioning service personnel are ready for civilian life falls equally on the military and the private sector. The military is tasked with creating job-transition programmes, the success of which will increase the efficiency of the private sector. While the military's pay structure based on rank and time in grade may result in more equal earnings between men and women while serving, it may leave personnel unprepared for the rigours of civilian salary bargaining. Female veterans, who already face extra sociocultural and structural hurdles when applying for jobs, may be harmed more by this lack of experience. The corporate sector should keep in mind the need of negotiating appropriate pay practises with transitioning veterans, especially women veterans.
- f) Improve data collection retention and attrition of talent:** Strengthening efforts to gather and analyse long-term data on its leaving members will help the military and the commercial sector, albeit this data must be kept anonymous to protect employee confidentiality.

When workers depart and why they leave should be recorded in exit surveys to help pinpoint retention and turnover drivers. By learning more about the factors that motivate uniformed and private sector workers to leave, company executives may rethink incentives and fix ineffective practises. These polls might potentially be used as an early warning system to prevent the loss of key employees.

- g) Include men in solution, through initiatives like the UN's 'HeForShe' campaign:** Fighting for women's rights and fair treatment has always been seen as a "woman's problem," but real societal shifts can only occur when males are included as full participants in the movement. Men have a disproportionate share of top leadership positions in both the military and the business sector, making them powerful agents of change and the most persuasive defenders of women in the workforce. To ensure that women are represented at the highest levels of leadership, it is imperative that males play an active role in mentoring and supporting women who are climbing the corporate ladder.

In lower-level positions, males should take the initiative to address gender inequality by raising public consciousness, fostering creative approaches, and questioning the validity of established gender norms. Both the military and business may learn from recent efforts like the United Nations' HeForShe campaign, which encourages males to become champions and agents of change for gender equality.

Conclusion

Opportunities for women to hold top positions in both the public and commercial sectors will grow in the years and decades ahead. Women's leadership and involvement in all spheres are expected to expand dramatically in the 21st century, thanks to rising numbers of college-educated women and a wealth of untapped ability. There are a number of issues that affect women in the military and the civilian workforce equally. Workplace atmosphere, mentoring opportunities, remuneration, negotiations, parenting responsibilities, and promotions are all examples. It would be beneficial for both parties to learn from one another's mistakes and triumphs in order to better prepare for the future and overcome future problems. Women in the military and other fields may benefit greatly from this report's lessons and suggestions by internalising them and putting them into practise during the next years.

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