



MSCCN SALUTES KENEXA 2X BRASSRING® AND COMMUNITY GATEWAY: SOLUTION ENABLES MISSION TO FULFILL ITS VISION OF JOB SEARCH, PLACEMENT AND RECRUITMENT TECHNOLOGY



The MSCCN is a first-of-its-kind nonprofit corporate direct-hire program dedicated to providing career opportunities and job portability for military spouses, war wounded soldiers, caregivers and veterans through a nationwide network of employers, and is headquartered in St. Louis, Mo. Website: <http://msccn.org>

For the spouses of men and women dedicated to serving in the U.S. military, getting assigned to a new duty station often creates many challenges. Not only does it require a search for new housing, it may also mean looking for employment. Although onsite military transition programs prepare enlisted service members and their spouses with career counseling and resume building, these programs focus on job opportunities rather than job placement.

Because the military lifestyle requires frequent transfers—typically every three years—spouses who arrive in a new location may find many organizations unwilling to employ them knowing there is a finite span on their tenure. Recognizing the financial and emotional toll that recurring relocation has on military spouses, their families and careers, Deb Kloeppe, wife of a serviceman, decided to help families overcome potential income challenges and employment hurdles often accompany the military lifestyle.

After founding the Military Spouse Corporate Career Network (MSCCN) in 2004 and establishing its mission to serve as liaison between military installations, job applicants and corporate employers, Kloeppe knew she needed to incorporate technology that would advance her vision. Receiving an in-kind gift of state-of-the-art enterprise recruitment technology from Kenexa Government Solutions, a leading provider of hiring and retention solutions, Kloeppe has succeeded in her efforts to help military families find gainful employment in corporate America.

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portability for military spouses, war wounded soldiers, caregivers and veterans through a nationwide network of employers. Headquartered in St. Louis, Missouri, with a virtual presence around the world, the MSCCN is the only military spouse site in the nation that is not funded by the Department of Defense.

From the beginning, the MSCCN set out to distinguish itself from other military-facing non-profit organizations, and was determined to provide services that military installations could use to help families deal with income challenges and help military spouses be considered part of the viable talent pool.

“We wanted to do more than just give out funds,” explained Kloeppe, who is also the organization’s president. “We wanted a true solution that could set their life path of earning power. In the military household, just as in a civilian household, if there are income challenges, everything is a struggle. We wanted to help our military families alleviate the need for money by helping military spouses find employment.”

Kloeppe searched for over a year to find the right technology to connect military installations with corporate employers. Through one of the MSCCN’s five independent contractors, she secured a meeting that introduced her to Kenexa Government Solutions and its recruitment technology solution, Kenexa 2x BrassRing®. Immediately, Kloeppe knew the solution would enable MSCCN to realize its vision of providing more than job opportunities, but job placement.

“Kenexa gave us a generous, in-kind gift of a ‘Cadillac of technology’ and the ability to track applicants,” she said. “To my knowledge, no other military employment endeavor, DoD funded or not, offers applicant tracking.”

Kenexa 2x BrassRing allows organizations to reach candidates throughout the world. Part of the solution includes Kenexa’s Community Gateway, which fosters a creative, collaborative and interactive communicative community for recruiters and candidates. With four separate module options, Community Gateway allows companies to attract more qualified candidates, integrate more tightly with job boards and track potential candidates, allowing for more effective recruiting. Implemented in Spring 2005, the MSCCN first focused on military installations and explained how the organization could help. The Kenexa system enabled interested applicants to register, post resumes and apply to requisitions of interest to them. The MSCCN also established corporate partners—companies that were military friendly and willing to hire spouses, war wounded soldiers and veterans—and delivered access to the system to corporate recruiters who could search for applicants whose skills met requirements for open positions.

“Working with Kenexa enables us to reach out to larger demographics,” said Trina Miller, executive director of the MSCCN. “We are able to extend different types of employment opportunities not just for independent contractors working for MSCCN, but for job seekers who might be in various rural locations or overseas.”

To date, the organization has nearly 3,100 resumes in its system, and for a niche group such as military spouses, that type of accumulation in a short period of time demonstrates strength in numbers.

“Corporations that are military friendly know they are hiring spouses, war wounded soldiers and veterans,” she continued. “Applicants used to move to a new community and have to identify those corporations that would understand the military lifestyle. Now, these individuals have access to companies with a proven reputation of catering to their unique needs.”

Recruiters are able to view resumes on Kenexa’s Community Gateway, make notes to applicant profiles and contact applicants directly through the system.

“The nice thing about the Kenexa solution is that it doesn’t take a lot of time to get into the system and understand it,” added Becky Brillon, Gateway team lead for the MSCCN. “Every employer we work with has a different way to use our system and our services. We have to be mindful of Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs guidelines for some of our employers. Others receive 60,000 resumes on their own website everyday, and some organizations may only need to fill one or two positions each year. However, they all seek the same outcome and Kenexa provides the universal system that brings everything together.”

The Kenexa system provides a common area for the MSCCN, military installations and corporate America to come together, share information in an efficient way and meet mutually beneficial needs.

“The corporations are getting highly qualified, skilled job seekers who are ready to work, and our job seekers are able to be introduced to positions in corporate America that they would not have had access to previously,” said Miller. “We are able to demonstrate a return on investment to our corporate employers that comes from our ability to document, track and report what we are able to do for them. Through the Kenexa system, we can show how many referrals were made, what the cost saving was and how many referrals were actually hired. We are also able to generate internal reports so we can identify areas for improvement. We can see what we did last month and how we can do it better.”

For recruiters, features such as candidate scoring and ranking help prove compatibility between candidates and jobs, create an easy process to upload multiple requisitions and provide automatic communication with candidates.

“Kenexa has thought of everything,” said Brillon. “For every feature, there’s a short cut or another way to accomplish what you need to get done. The system is an efficiency tool that saves so much time. The overnight auto filer lets me know which candidates applied and those who match a new requisition making my job easier. I can look at them and send a communication right from the Kenexa system. Not only does it improve communication with candidates, but it documents it, too.”

For job applicants, the system enables MSCCN to serve as a life-long generational career management partner.

“One feature we have through Kenexa is the ability to generate email reminders a few years in advance to prompt our recruiters to make contact with individuals when they are ready for a change of station and need new employment,” said Miller. “In the future, we see stronger development of a career advancement team for applicants. Before they do their permanent change of station, we want applicants to get back into the system so we can help them find a new position in their next duty station.”

“Without Kenexa, it would really limit the ability that military spouses, war wounded soldiers and veterans would have as far as accessing good corporate-level positions. Kenexa helps these individuals obtain employment much quicker than they would on their own.”

Concludes Kloeppel, “From the beginning, we wanted the program to have a very long shelf life and offer the value of life-long career management. When you look at service to your country, Kenexa did something no one else stepped up to do. Kenexa told us, ‘put your people in jobs.’ By giving us this in-kind service, ongoing support and technology, it has enabled us to truly connect the military applicant to corporate direct hire placement opportunities. Kenexa truly is the heart and soul of our operation.”

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