VA for Vets Career Center Resource Guide

VA for Vets Account Users

December 19, 2011

Considering civilian employment with the federal government after your military service? Unsure how your military experience translates to Federal jobs? Need help communicating your skills to a potential employer?

Look no further. The *VA for Vets* Career Center helps Veterans find the right VA career opportunities matched to their experience, skills and interests. From translating military skills to providing self-assessments and job search results best suited to your background, the Career Center will guide you toward a rewarding career serving our nation's Veterans and families.

About This Guide

This guide provides step-by-step instructions on using the *VA for Vets* Career Center for registered *VA for Vets* users.

Conventions Used in This Guide

Convention	Meaning
ALL CAPITALS	Acronyms
Bold	• Key names on the keyboard • Buttons or hyperlinks on a page in the *VA for Vets* Career Center
	A note or tip that helps you make better use of the *VA for Vets* Career Center

Technical Support

Please contact a *VA for Vets* help desk at 1-855-VA4VETS (1-855-824-8387).

For more information about the career center, visit www.VAforVets.VA.gov/career_center or contact a career coach at 1-855-VA4Vets (1-855-824-8387).

Abbreviations and Acronyms

VA   Veterans Affairs

VA for Vets   Veterans Affairs for Veterans

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Contents

Getting Started

The *VA for Vets* Career Center, an integrated job search and career-building platform is designed to take the guesswork out of entering the Federal workforce. Use the Career Center tools to evaluate your personal strengths, identify civilian competencies, view the best-fitting VA positions and match all results to open jobs at VA.

And that's not all. Once you log in to the Career Center, a customized dashboard is populated that reflects your activities and job updates in real-time. A resume builder helps you create an easy-to-read resume for applying to VA positions through www.USAJOBS.gov, the official one-stop source for federal jobs and employment information.

You will need a *VA for Vets* account to log in to the Career Center. The *VA for Vets* account gives you access to the following features of the Career Center:

- Build and store resumes
- Save job searches
- Receive new job match alerts

Registering for a *VA for Vets* Account

1. Open your web browser.

2. In the Address bar, enter http://VAforVets.VA.gov. This takes you to the *VA for Vets* home page.

   ❗ You may also register through the Career Center home page by selecting **Register Now** and then performing Step 3 and so forth to complete the registration process.

3. Select **Register**. This takes you to My *VA for Vets* Account Register page.

4. In the Email field, enter <your email>.

5. In the Password field, enter <your password>.

    🛈 Passwords must be a minimum of seven characters in length and contain at least one upper case letter, one numeral and one special character.

6. In the Confirm password field, enter <your password>.

7. In the Type the two words field, enter the two words that are above the field.

    🛈 Enter the two words as one long word. Do not use a space between the two words.

8. Select **Create**. This takes you to My *VA for Vets* Account Profile page.

    🛈 Selecting **Cancel** takes you back to the *VA for Vets* home page.

9. In the First name field, enter <your first name>.

10. In the Last name field, enter <your last name>.

11. VA employee? checkbox:

If…	Then…
You are a VA employee	Check the box.
You are not a VA employee	Go to step 14. (See next page.)

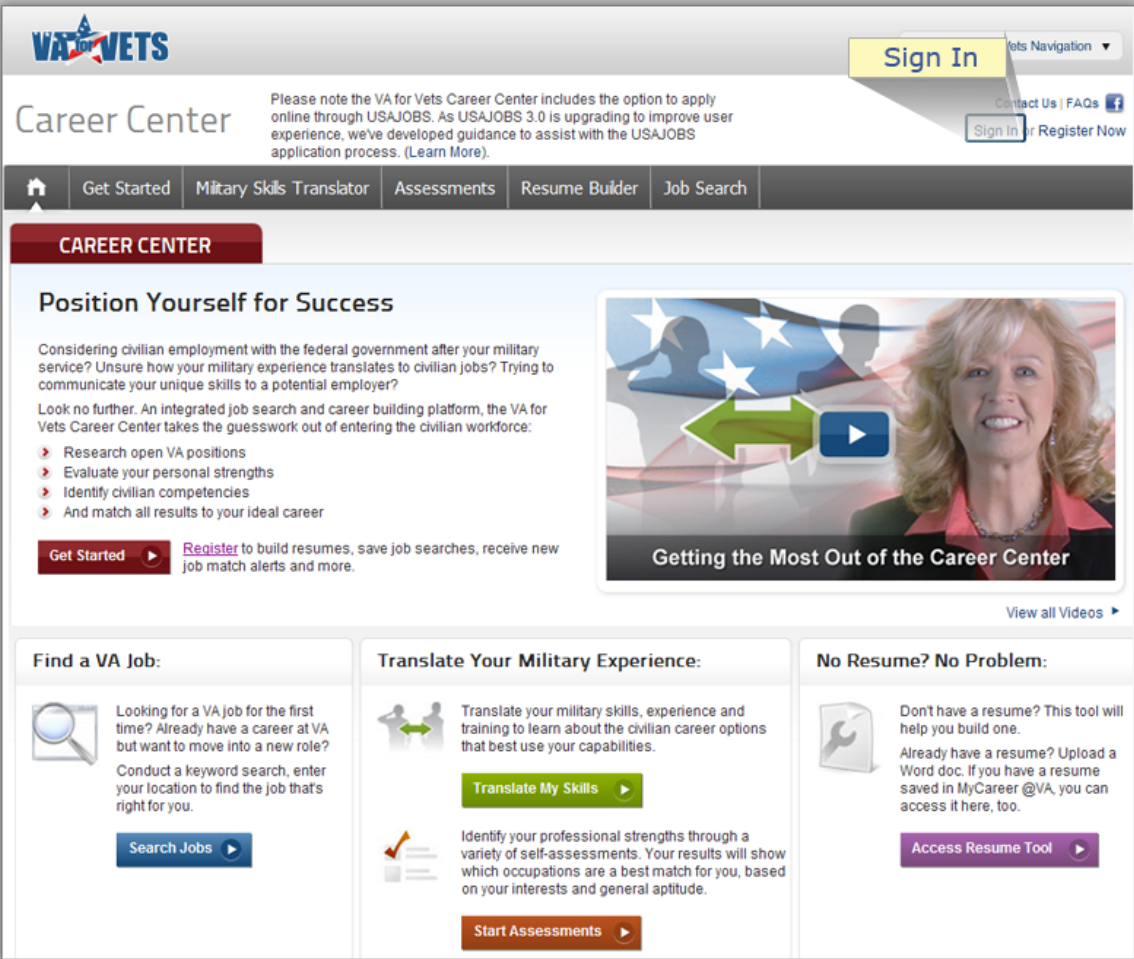12. In the EIN field, enter <your employee identification number>.

13. Select your Day of Birth from the drop-down lists.

14. Select **Save**. A confirmation message appears that your *VA for Vets* account was successfully

created.

Selecting **Cancel** ignores your request for an account and takes you back to the *VA for Vets* home page.

Logging In

1. Open your web browser.

2. In the Address bar, enter https://mst.vaforvets.va.gov/career-center/. This takes you to the Career Center home page.

3. Select **Sign In**. This takes you to the Log On page.

4. In the User name field, enter <your username>.

    (!) Your username is the email address you entered when you registered for a *VA for Vets* account.

5. In the Password field, enter <your password>.
6. Select **Sign In**. This takes you to My Dashboard page.

    (!) After three unsuccessful attempts to log on, the Career Center automatically locks your account. You may select **Forgot your password?** from the Log On page or contact the *VA for Vets* help desk at 1-855-824-8387, option 3, to get the account unlocked.

Resetting Your Password

1. From the Log On page, select **Forgot your password?** This takes you to the Reset Your Password page.

2. In the Email field, enter <your email address>.
3. In the Type the two words field, enter the two words that are above the field.

   (!) Enter the two words as one long word. Do not use a space between the two words.

4. Select **Submit**. A confirmation message appears, and your new temporary password has been emailed to you.

   (!) Selecting **Cancel** ignores your request to reset your password and takes you back to the Log On page.
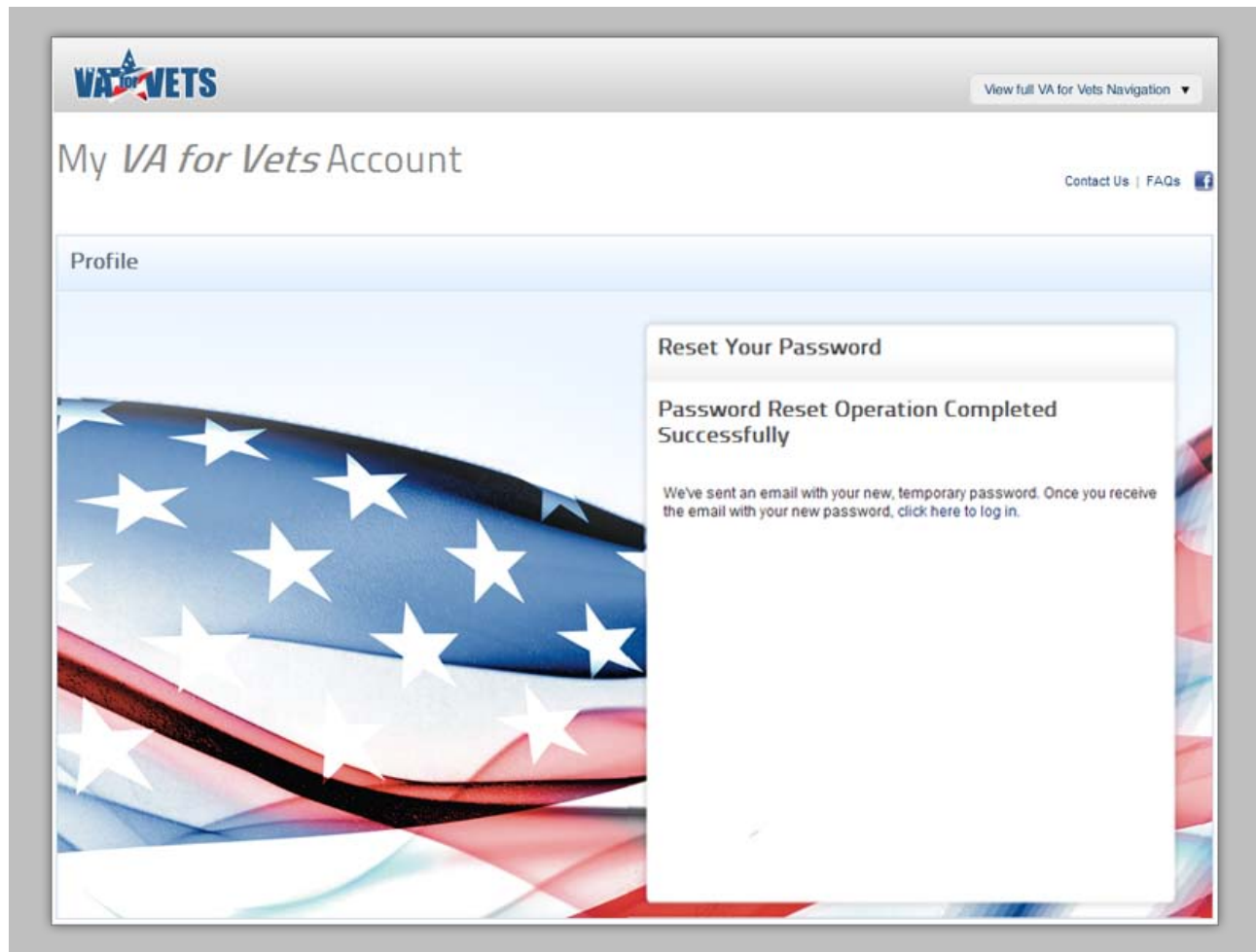
5. Retrieve your new temporary password from your email.
6. Go to the Log On page.

> ⓘ You may do this from the Reset Your Password page by selecting **Click here to log in** or by entering https://vaforvets.va.gov/Pages/Dashboard.aspx in the address bar of your web browser.

7. In the User name field, enter <your username>.
8. In the Password field, enter <your new temporary password>. This takes you to My Dashboard page.

> ⓘ Your new temporary password is the password you retrieved from your email.

Changing Your Password

1. From the My Dashboard page, select **Account Management**. This takes you to the Profile Administration Options page.

2. Select **Change your password**. This takes you to the Change Your Password page.

3. In the Current password field, enter <your password>.
4. In the New password field, enter <your new password>.

> 🛈 Passwords must be a minimum of seven characters in length and contain at least one upper case letter, one numeral and one special character.

5. In the Confirm new password field, enter < your new password>.
6. Select **Save**. A confirmation message appears along with an option to view your dashboard or update your profile. In addition, you will receive an email confirming your password was changed.

> 🛈 Selecting **Cancel** ignores the updates to your password and takes you back to the Profile Administration Options page.

Updating Your Profile

1. From My Dashboard page, select **Account Management**. This takes you to the Profile
    Administration Options page.

2. Select **Update your profile**. This takes you to the Update Your Profile page.

3. In the First name field, enter <your first name>.
4. In the Last name field, enter <your last name>.
5. Select **Save**. This takes you to the Profile Administration Options page with a confirmation message that your profile has been updated.

> ⚠ Selecting **Cancel** ignores the updates you entered and takes you back to the Profile Administration Options page.

Logging Off

1. From the My Dashboard page, select **Logout**. This logs you off the Career Center and takes you to the *VA for Vets* home page.
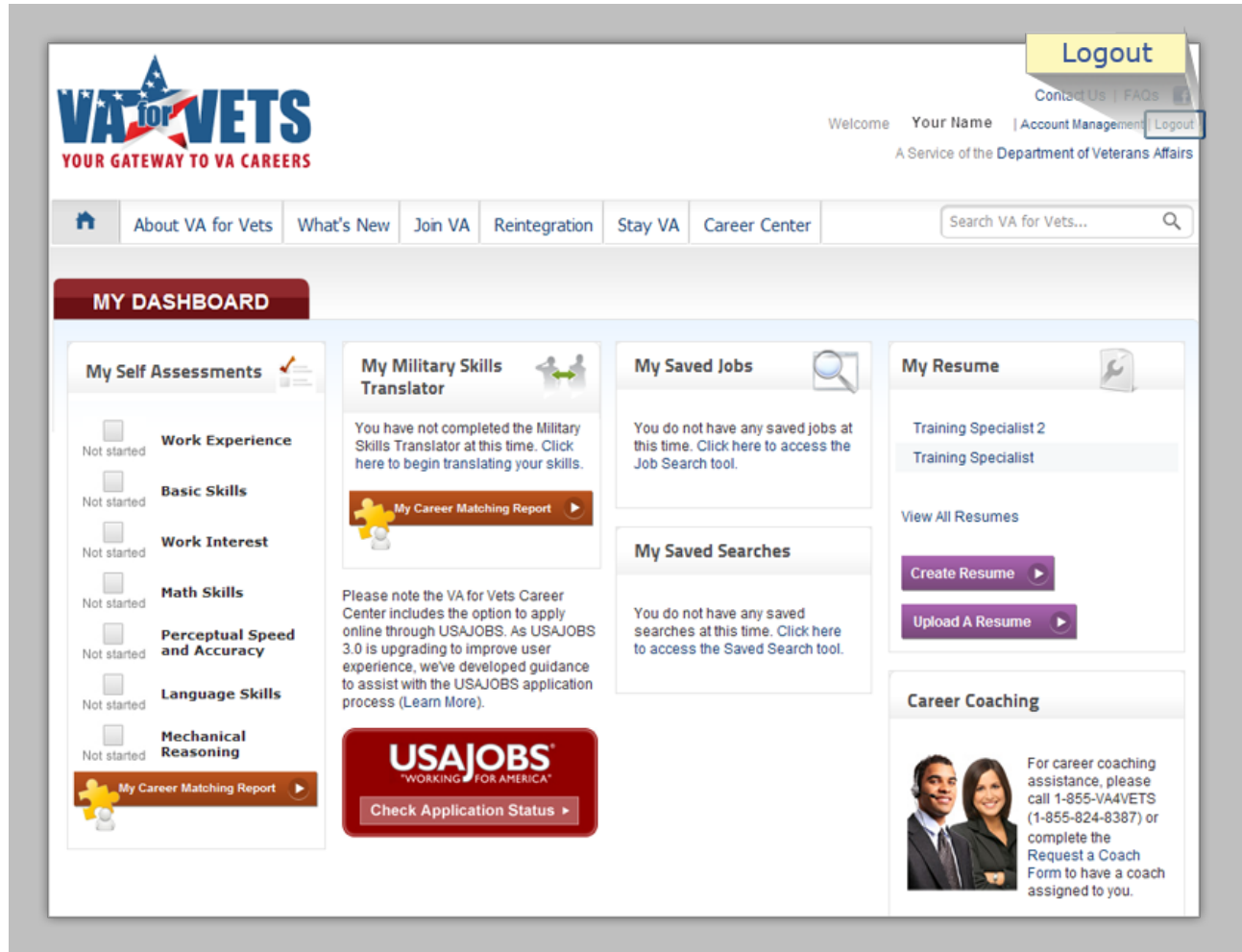
Moving Around in the Career Center

You can move from item to item (buttons, fields or menu options) on the screen by using the:

- Mouse
- Keyboard

Keyboard Shortcuts

To	Press
Go to the next field, image or button	**Tab**
Go to the previous field or button	**Shift Tab**
Activate a selected button	**Enter**
Go down an item within a drop-down list	**Down directional arrow**
Go up an item within a drop-down list	**Up directional arrow**
Delete a character within a field	**Backspace**
Add a character space within a field	**Spacebar**

My Dashboard

The My Dashboard web page organizes information to make it easy to read and interpret which, reflects your activities within the career center, and provides job updates in real time.

From My Dashboard, you may:

- Take assessments.
- Use the military skills translator.
- View saved job opening.
- Set up an automatic search for jobs based on your search criteria.
- Create/update your resume.
- Apply to open positions.
- Manage your *VA for Vets* account (updating your profile and changing your password).

Note: *You must be signed in to access the My Dashboard page.*

My Self Assessments (Assessments)

My Self Assessments on the My Dashboard page lists the career discovery questionnaires (self assessments) you have completed. These questionnaires consider your military talents, training and experience and provide you with a career matching report. From the report, you will be able to identify and match your strengths and interests to available positions within the VA.

You do not have to take any of the assessments; however, the more assessments you complete, the more career matches that most closely align with your skills and professional goals will be revealed.

Note: You must complete the Work Experience and Basic Skills assessments before you are able to access the other self assessments.

Accessing the Assessments

1. From My Dashboard, select **My Career Matching Report**.

If this takes you to the …	Then …
Assessments page	Begin taking or completing an assessment.
Career Matching page	From the Career Center navigation bar, select Assessments. This takes you to the Assessments page. Begin taking or completing an assessment.

The Assessments page keeps track of the assessments that you:

- Have not started: **Begin Assessment** ▶

- Started but not finished: **In Progress** ▶

- Completed: ✔

Taking an Assessment

1. From the Assessments page, select **Begin Assessment** or **In Progress** for the assessment you would like to begin taking or complete. This takes you to the introduction page of that assessment.
2. Read through the introduction page.
3. Select **Begin Assessment**. This takes you to the first question in the assessment.
4. Answer the question.
5. Select **Record Answer**.

    (!) The Progress bar on the page conveys the progress of completing the assessment.

    Progress:

6. When you have recorded your answer to the last question, a message appears indicating that the score assessment is in progress. After the score has been assessed, you return to the Assessments page with the assessment you completed marked with a check mark.

Retaking an Assessment

1. From the My Dashboard page, select **My Career Matching Report**.

If this takes you to the …	Then …
Assessments page	Go to Step 2.
Career Matching page	From the Career Center navigation bar, select Assessments. This takes you to the Assessments page. Go to Step 2.

2. From the Assessments page, select the check mark of the assessment you would like to take again. This takes you to that assessment.
3. Read through the introduction page.
4. Select **Begin Assessment**. This takes you to the first question in the assessment.
5. Answer the question.
6. Select **Record Answer**.

> The Progress bar on the page conveys the progress of completing the assessment.
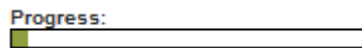
Progress:

7. When you have recorded your answer to the last question, a message appears indicating that the score assessment is in progress. After the score has been assessed, you return to the Assessments page with the assessment you completed marked with a check mark.

Exiting an Assessment

You may exit any of the assessments at any time by selecting **Access My Dashboard**. This takes you back to the My Dashboard page.

Note: When you go back to that assessment, you will start at the next question from the last recorded answer. For example, if you recorded your answer to question 3, you will start at question 4. If you answered question 3 but did not record the answer, you will start at question 3.

My Military Skills Translator (Military Skills Translator)

My Military Skills Translator on the My Dashboard page lists the military skills. The military skills translator is a tool that translates your active-duty skills into civilian-friendly language with the ability to drill down to sub-specialty levels. The Career Center's military skills translator is the most robust and thorough option within the federal government.

From the military skills translator, you may perform each or all of the following:

- Search for your military job title.
- Search for your VA occupation series.
- Enter additional civilian skills you possess.
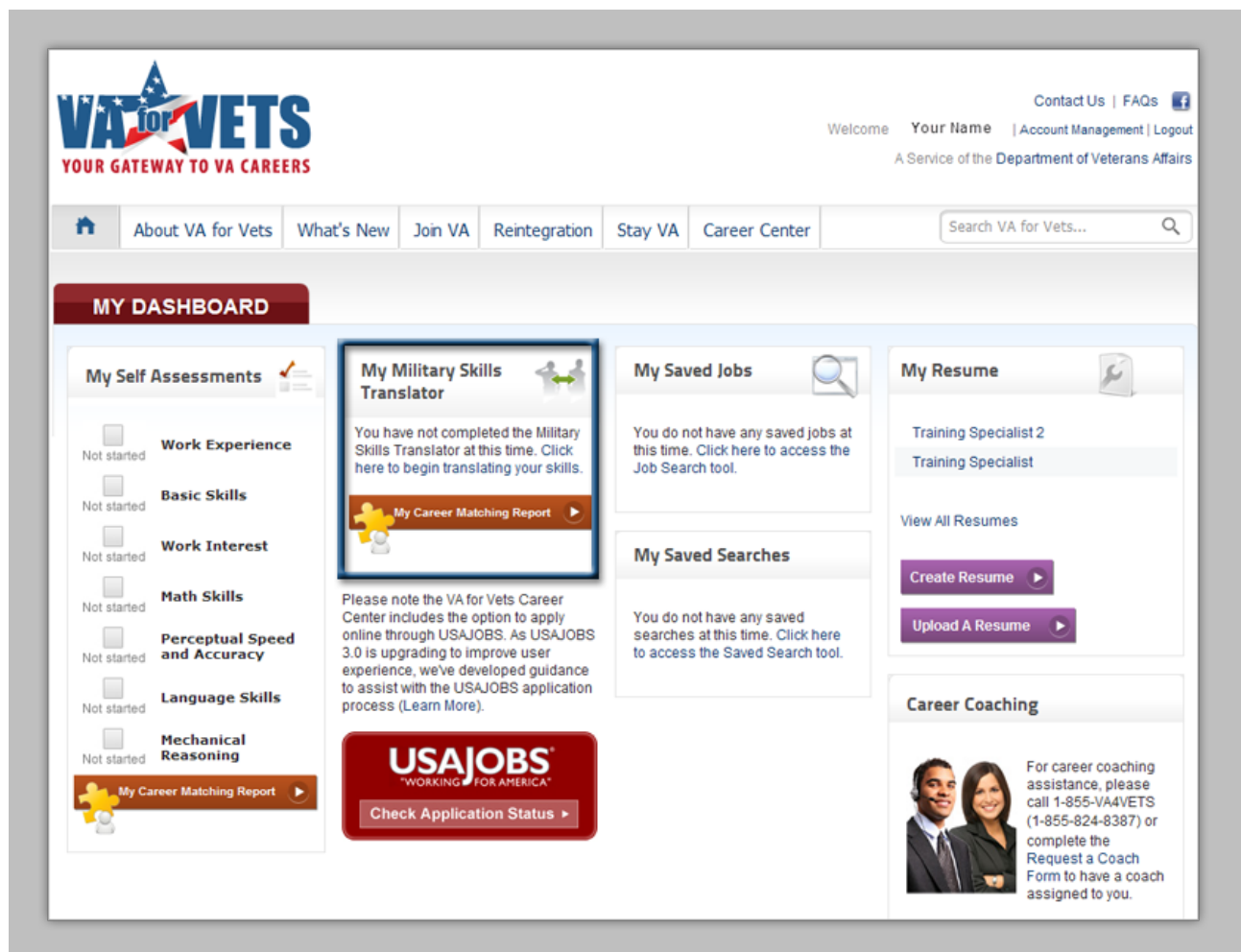
Accessing the Military Skills Translator

*Note: If you have not used the Military Skills Translator before and/or have used it but did not save your translated skills, select **Click here to begin translating your skills** to access the Military Skills Translator page.*

1. From the My Dashboard, select **Career Center**. This takes you to the Career Center page.

2. From the Career Center, select **Military Skills Translator** or **Translate My Skills**. This takes you to the Military Translator Skills page.

Finding Your Military Skills

You may find your military skills by browsing or searching for your military job title.

Browsing for Your Military Job Title

1. From the Military Translator Skills page, select **Browse by Military Service**. The Select a Military Job Title pop-up box appears.
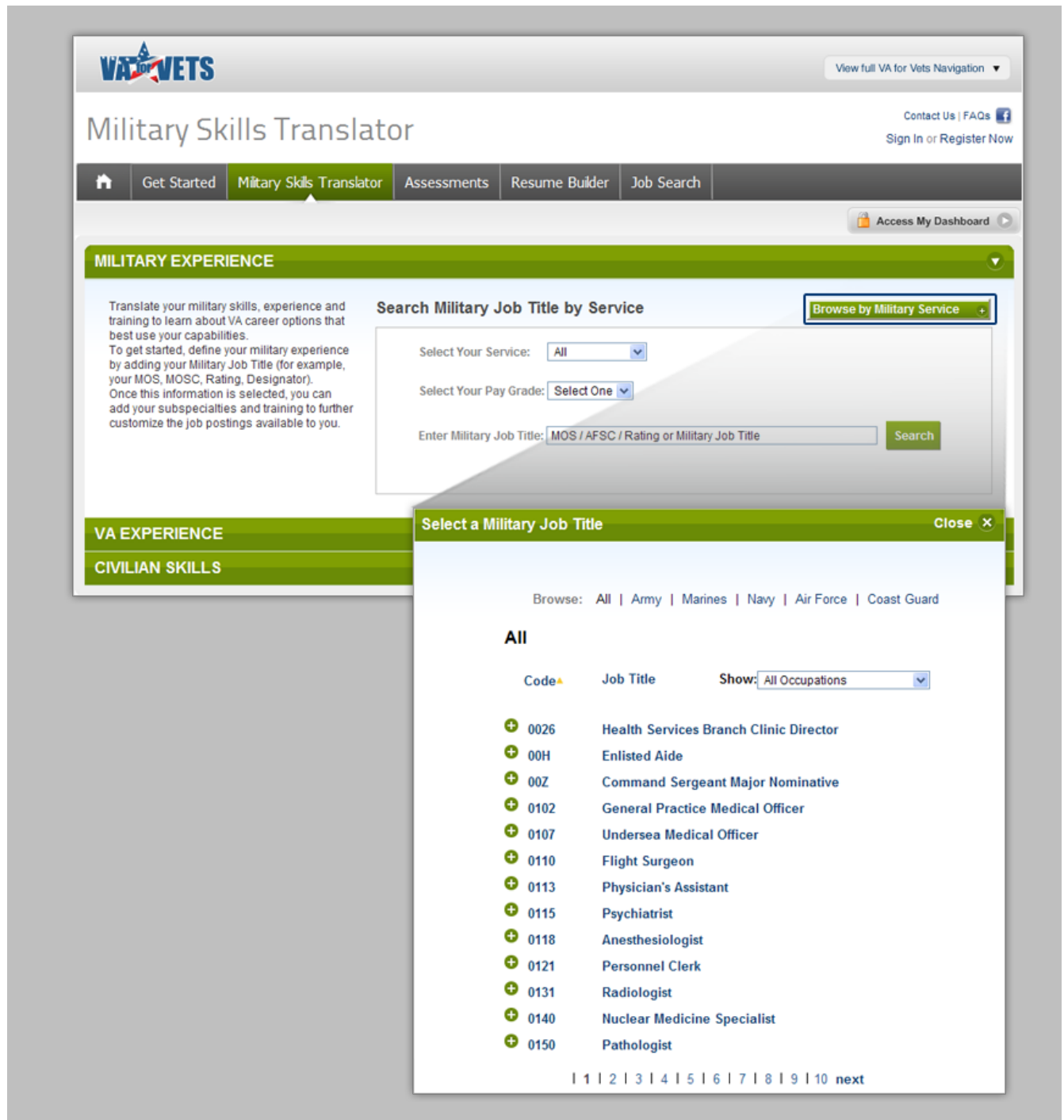
2. Locate your military job title.
3. Select your military job title. This closes the pop-up box and updates the Military Translator Skills page as follows:
    a. The job title you selected appears under Military Experience.
    b. Your military skills translated into civilian-friendly language appear under Civilian Skills.
    c. Equivalent VA Openings appears beneath Civilian Skills with a list of possible VA openings that match your skills based on the military job title you selected.

4. From the Civilian Skills area, select **Save profile**. This saves your military experience in the *VA for Vets* database. A pop-up box appears indicating your profile has been saved.

(!) If you do not save your profile, you will have to reenter your military experience.

5. Select **OK**. This closes the pop-box.

(!) The next time you access My Dashboard, your military job title will be displayed along with a link to view job openings that match your skills.

Searching for Your Military Job Title

From the Military Translator Skills page:

1. In Select Your Service field, select your service from the drop-down list.
2. In Select Your Pay Grade field, select your pay grade from the drop-down list.
3. In Enter Military Job Title field, enter your military job title.

> ⚠ As you enter your military job title, a pop-up box appears beneath the field with titles that match the letters and/or numbers you have entered. You may select a military job title from the pop-up box or continue entering your military job title.

4. Select **Search**. This updates the Military Translator Skills page as follows:
   a. The job title you selected appears under Military Experience.
   b. Your military skills translated into civilian-friendly language appear under Civilian Skills.
   c. Equivalent VA Openings appears beneath Civilian Skills with a list of possible VA openings that match your skills based on the military job title you selected.
5. From the Civilian Skills area, select **Save profile**. This saves your military experience in the *VA for Vets* database. A pop-up box appears indicating your profile has been saved.
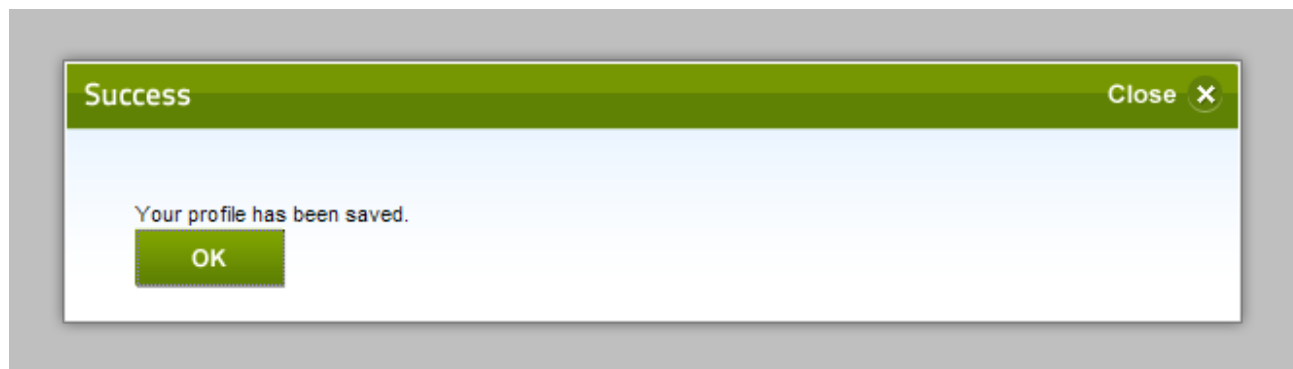
> ⚠ If you do not save your profile, you will have to reenter your military experience.

6. Select **OK**. This closes the pop-up box.

> ⚠ The next time you access My Dashboard, your military job title will be displayed along with a link to view job openings that match your skills.

Viewing Military Job Description and Duties

1. Select ⓘ next to the military job title. A Military Job Details pop-up box appears with a two-tab view of the description and duties for that military job title.

   ⓘ You may copy and paste the description and/or duties directly into your resume so that you may start describing your military responsibilities in civilian-friendly language.

   ⓘ Select **Close ✕** to close the Military Job Details pop-up box.
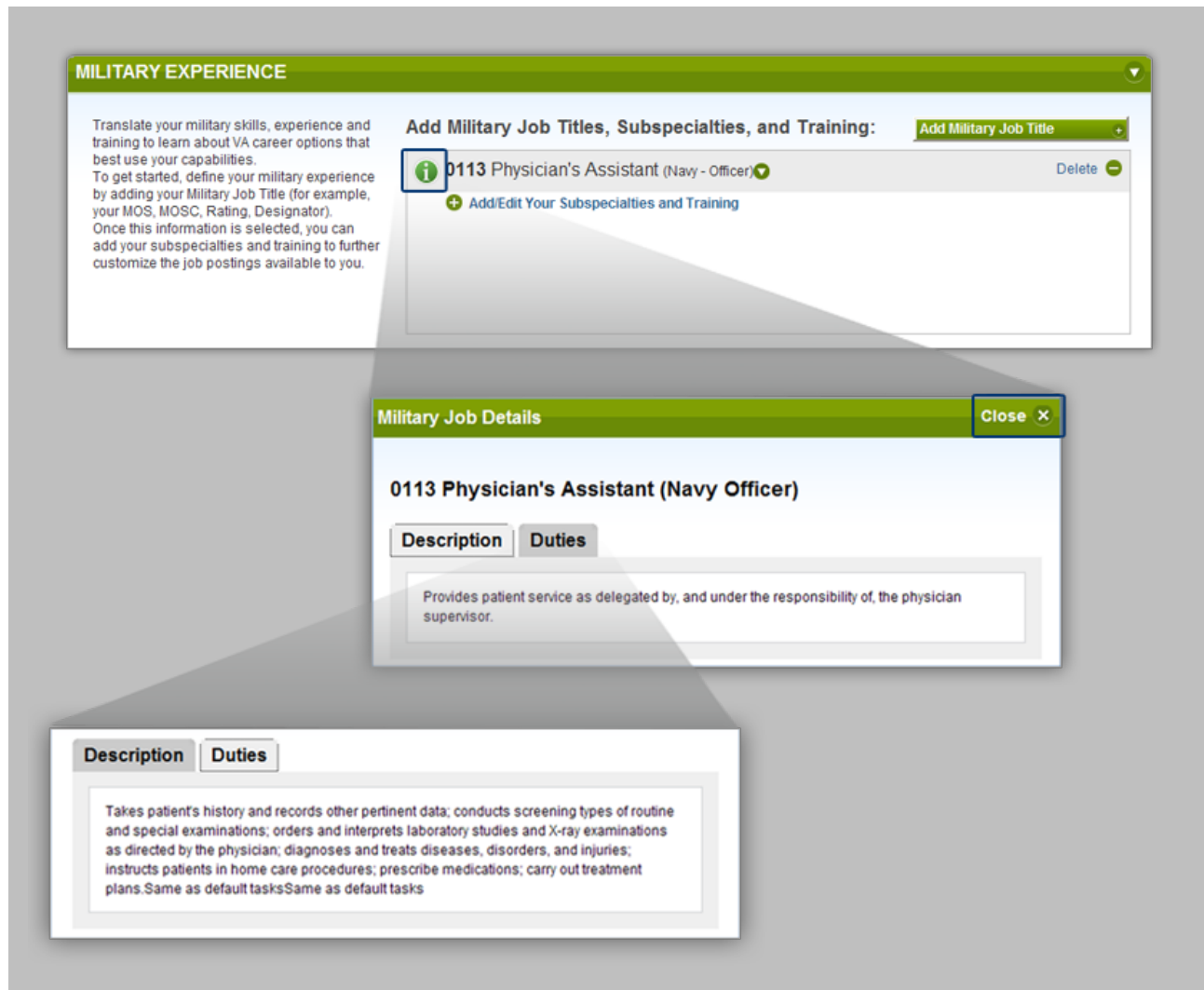
Adding or Updating Your Military Subspecialties and Training

1. Select **Add/Edit Your Subspecialties and Training**. The Add Subspecialties/Collateral Duties and Military Training dialog box appears.

2. In the Select your pay grade field, select your pay grade from the drop-down list. Subspecialties and collateral duties <u>may</u> appear in the Select subspecialties and collateral duties field.

If your subspecialties and collateral duties …	Then …
Appear on the list	Select your subspecialties and collateral duties from the list. Go to step 3.
Do not appear on the list	1. Select **Add More Subspecialties**. 2. Enter your subspecialties or collateral duties.. 3. Repeat the above steps until you have listed all your subspecialties or collateral duties.

3. In the Select specialized training and schools field, select your specialized training and schools from the list.

    (!) You may add military training by:
    A. Select **Add More Military Training**. A text box appears.
    B. Enter your military training. As you enter text, a list of military training appears beneath the text box.
    C. Select the military training you completed.
    D. Follow steps A–C until you have listed all your military training.

4. Select **Save**. This closes the dialog box and updates the Military Translator Skills page as follows:
    a. The subspecialties, collateral duties and/or military training you selected appear under Military Experience.
    b. Your military skills translated into civilian-friendly language appear under Civilian Skills.
    c. The career opportunities listed in Equivalent VA Openings is updated based on the subspecialties, collateral duties and/or military training you selected.

5. From the Civilian Skills area, select **Save profile**. This saves your subspecialties, collateral duties and/or military training you selected in the *VA for Vets* database. A pop-up box appears indicating your profile has been saved.

    (!) If you do not save your profile, you will have to reenter your subspecialties, collateral duties and/or military training.

6. Select **OK**. This closes the pop-up box.

Updating Your Military Experience

If you want to …	Then from the Military Skills Translator page …
Add another military job title to your military experience	1. Select **Add Military Job Title**. 2. Follow Browsing for Your Military Skills steps 2–5.
Delete a military job title from your military experience	1. Select ⊖ in the row of the military job title you want to delete. 2. From the Civilian Skills area, select **Save profile**. This removes that military experience from the *VA for Vets* database. A pop-up box appears indicating your profile has been saved. 3. Select **OK**. This closes the pop-box. ⚠ If you do not save your profile, your military experience will remain in the *VA for Vets* database
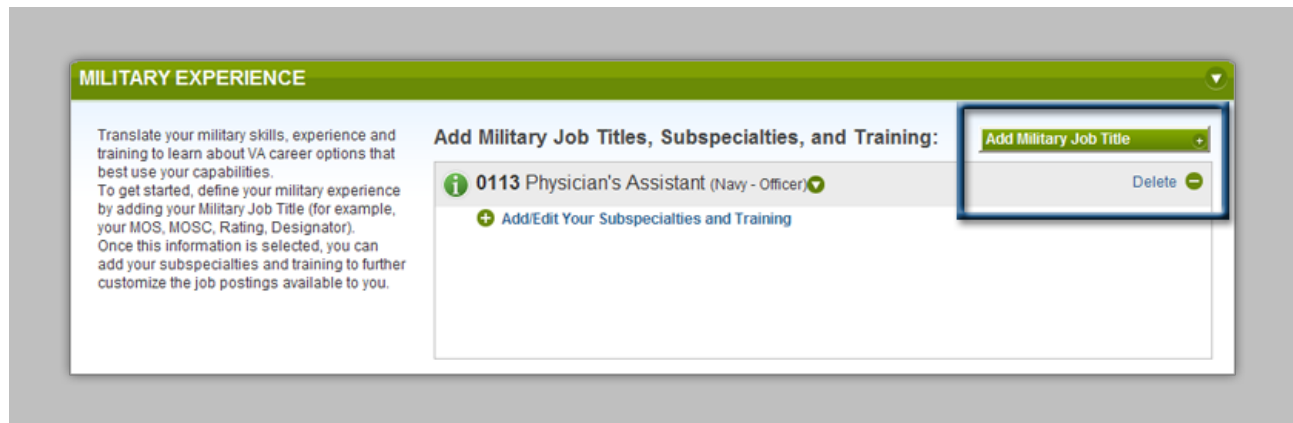
Updating Your Civilian Skills

1. Select Add Civilian Skills. The Add Civilian Skills dialog box appears.
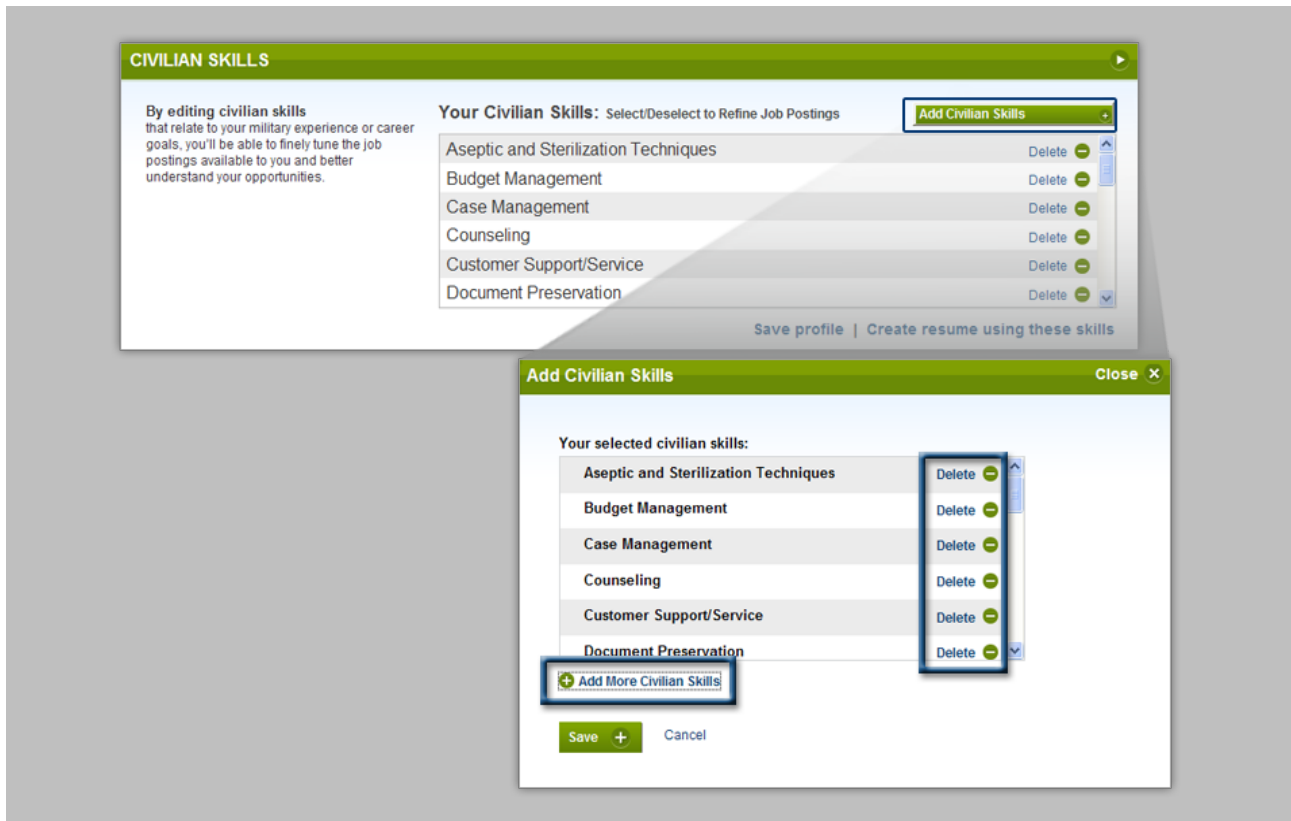
If you want to …	Then from the **Military Skills Translator page…**
Add another civilian skill	Select **Add More Civilian Skills** then enter your civilian skill. As you enter text, a list of civilian skills appears beneath the text box; select your civilian skill. Go to step 2.
Delete a civilian skill	Select ⊖ in the row of the civilian skill you want to delete. Go to step 2.

2. Select **Save**. This closes the dialog box and updates the Military Translator Skills page as follows:
    a. The civilian skills you selected appear under Civilian Skills.
    b. The career opportunities listed in Equivalent VA Openings is updated based on your updated civilian skills.

3. From the Civilian Skills area, select **Save profile**. This updates your civilian skills in the *VA for Vets* database. A pop-up box appears indicating your profile has been saved.

    (!) If you do not save your profile, you will have to redo the updates to your civilian skills.

4. Select **OK**. This closes the pop-box.

    (!) The next time you access My Dashboard your updated civilian skills will be displayed.

VA Experience

If you've worked for the VA in the past, you should select your occupational series to further refine your matching career opportunities listed in the Equivalent VA Openings.

1. Select [▶] in the VA Experience bar. The VA Experience area expands.
2. Select **Add VA Experience**. The Select a VA Occupation dialog box appears.

3. In the Search field, enter your VA occupation or series. As you enter text, a list of VA occupations or series appears beneath the field; select your VA occupation or series.

4. Select **Search**. This closes the dialog box and updates the Military Translator Skills page as follows:
   a. The VA occupation or series you selected appears under VA Experience.
   b. The career opportunities listed in Equivalent VA Openings is updated based on your VA experience.
5. From the Civilian Skills area, select **Save profile**. This saves your VA experience in the *VA for Vets* database. A pop-up box appears indicating your profile has been saved.

   (!) If you do not save your profile, you will have to reenter your VA experience.

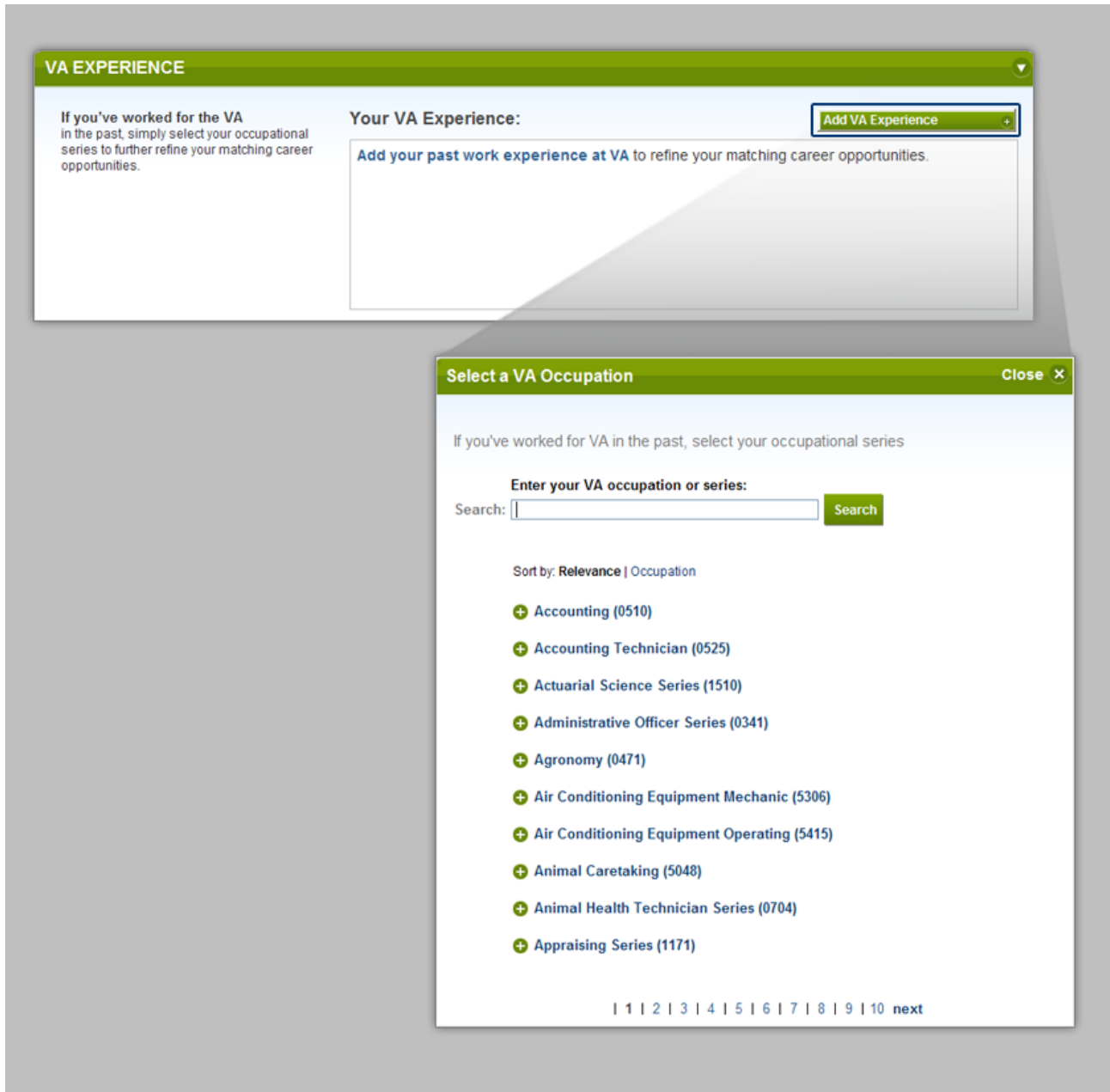6. Select **OK**. This closes the pop-box.

   (!) The next time you access My Dashboard, your VA experience will be displayed.

Special Note about Civilian Skills Area

The Civilian Skills Area of the Military Skills Translator page includes two links:

- Save profile
- Create resume using these skills
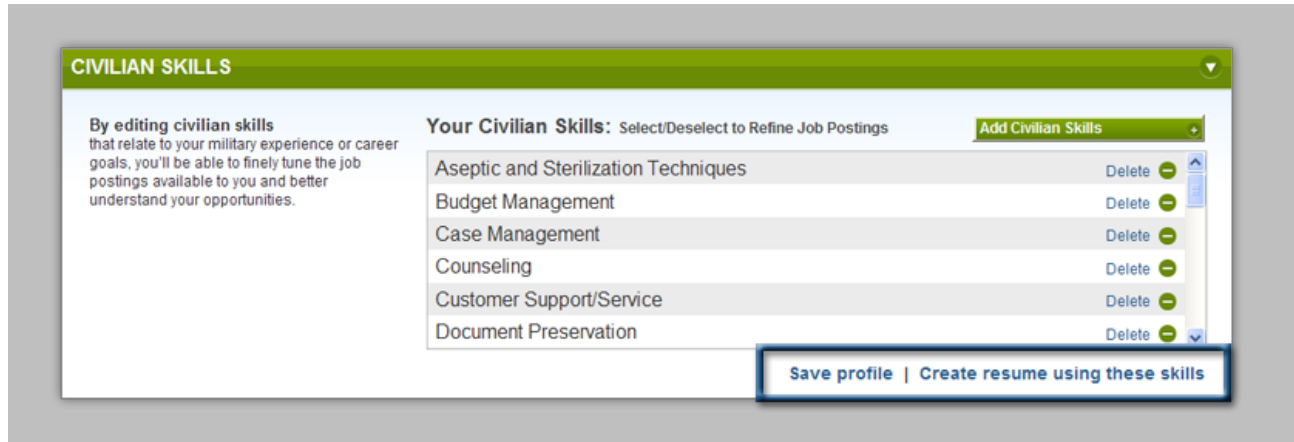
The Save profile link saves any addition or updates to your military experience, VA experience and/or civilian skills to the *VA for Vets* database.

The Create resume using these skills takes you to the Resume Builder page. See My Resume for more information about the Resume Builder.
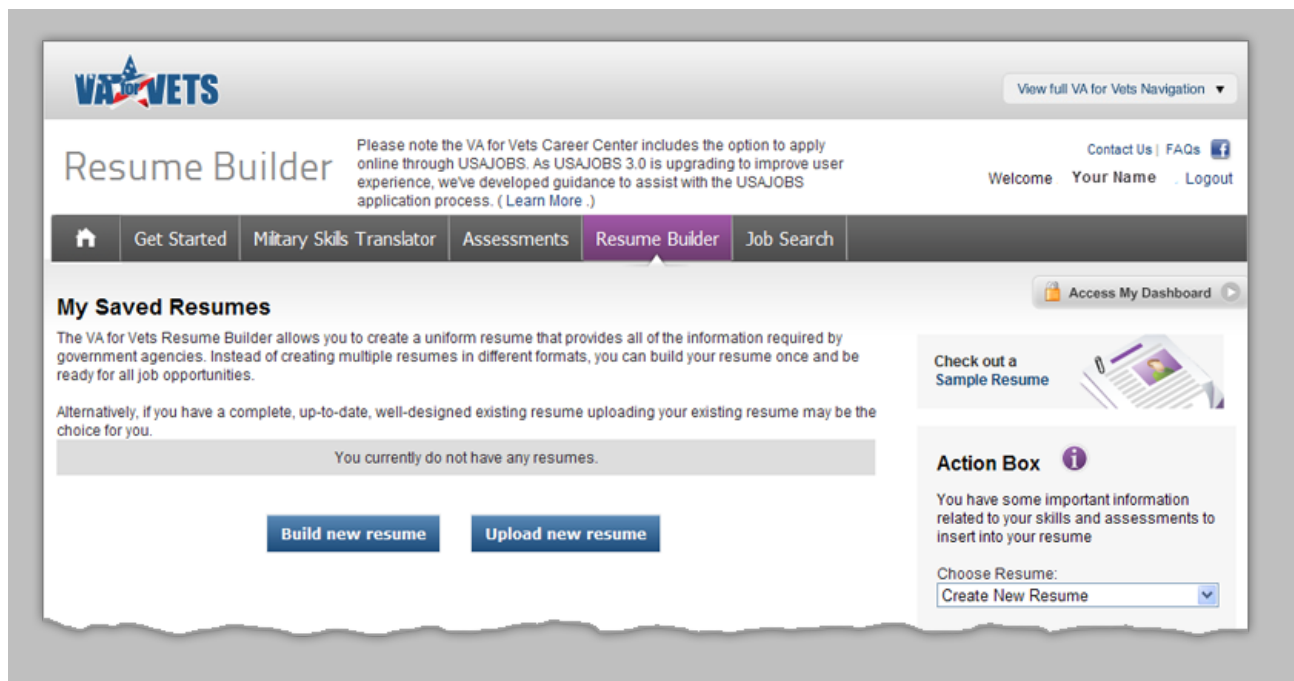
Equivalent VA Openings

The Equivalent VA Openings on the Military Skills Translator page lists the jobs open at VA that match your military experience based on the military job title you selected. You may sort the list by relevance or job title.

You can refine the list of jobs by keywords and/or by location (zip code within a selected mile radius).

Refining Equivalent VA Openings by Keywords

1. In the Refine by keywords field, enter one or more keywords.
2. Select **Refine**. The list of VA openings displays only the jobs with those keywords.

> Delete the keyword and then select Job Title to get the full listings of VA openings that match your experience.
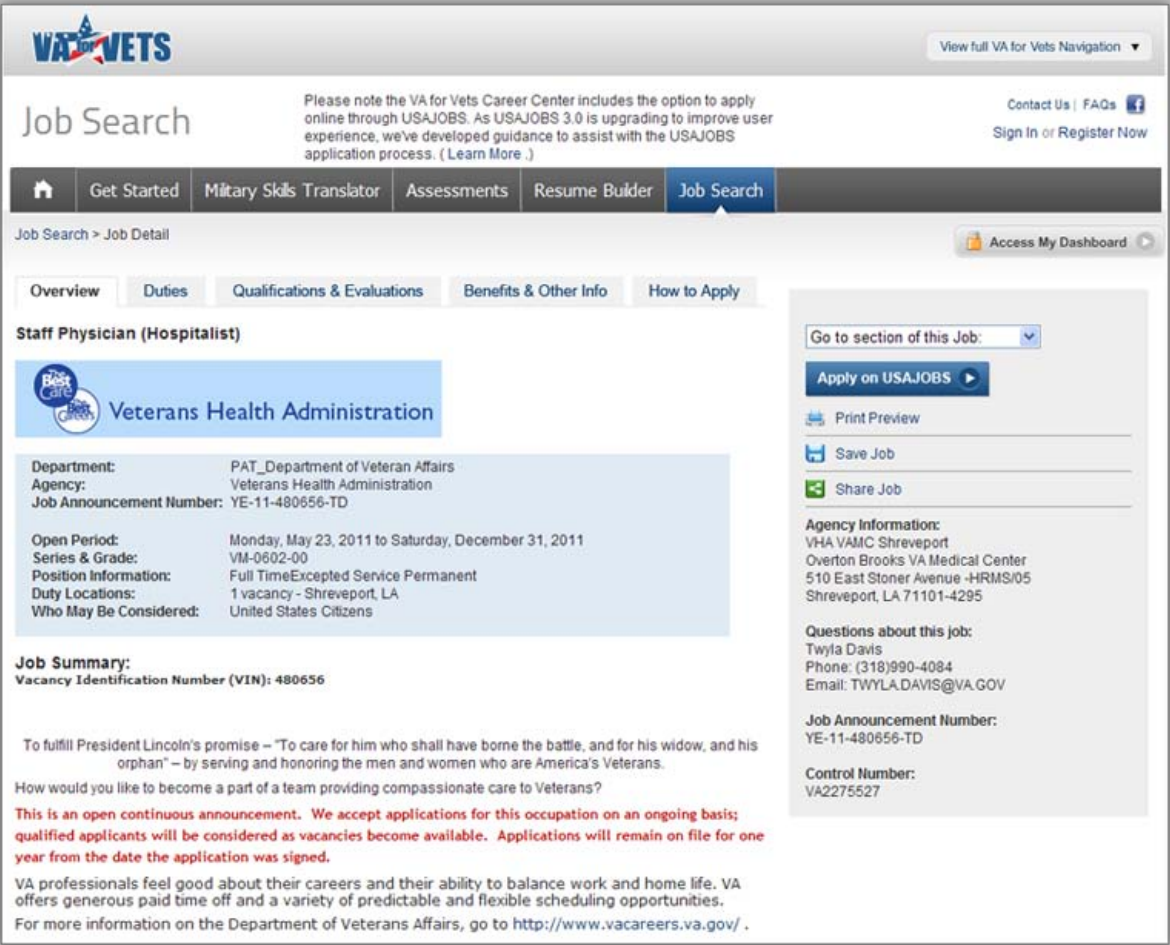
Refining Equivalent VA Openings by Zip Code and Radius

1. In the Zip Code field, enter a zip code.
2. In the Within field, select the number of miles from the drop-down list.
3. Select **Refine**. The list of VA openings displays only the jobs within the radius you selected.

> ⊘ Delete the zip code and update Within field to Select One and then select Job
> Title to get the full listings of VA openings that match your experience.

Viewing Job Announcement

1. Select the job title. This takes you to the Job Search page with the job announcement connected to the job title you selected. See Job Search for more information about the Job Search page.

Career Matching Report

The Career Matching Report list gives you the results from the basic skills assessment you took and military experience you entered. The report lists your top 5 skills and abilities and interest. In addition, the report provides you a list of federal job series that match your skills and interest.

Please note that best-fit civilian careers indicates those jobs that match best with your skills and interest and should not be relied on as the final determination of the best career for you. Only you can determine which career is best for you.

My Resume (Resume Builder)

My Resume on the My Dashboard page allows you to create a resume by integrating your translated skills, assessment results and employment history into your resume using the *VA for Vets* Career Center Resume Builder. The *VA for Vets* Career Center Resume Builder follows the format federal agencies want for applications and allows you to create resumes that provide all of the information required by government agencies.

In addition, you may upload your resume to the *VA for Vets* resume database for VA hiring managers and supervisors to view.

Creating your resume using the Resume Builder is a four-stage process:

- Getting Started—entering your personal information, name, address, and so forth.
- Experience—entering your work experience, education and training.
- Related Information—entering awards, honors, references, and so forth.
- Finishing Up—saving and storing your resume on the *VA for Vets* resume database.

The Resume Builder Status Bar indicates the building stage you are in through the use of color:

- Light purple means that resume building stage has been completed. In addition, the text in the status becomes an active link. When selected, the link takes you to the page for that stage of the resume building process.
- Purple indicates the current resume building stage.
- Gray means that resume building stage has not been started yet.
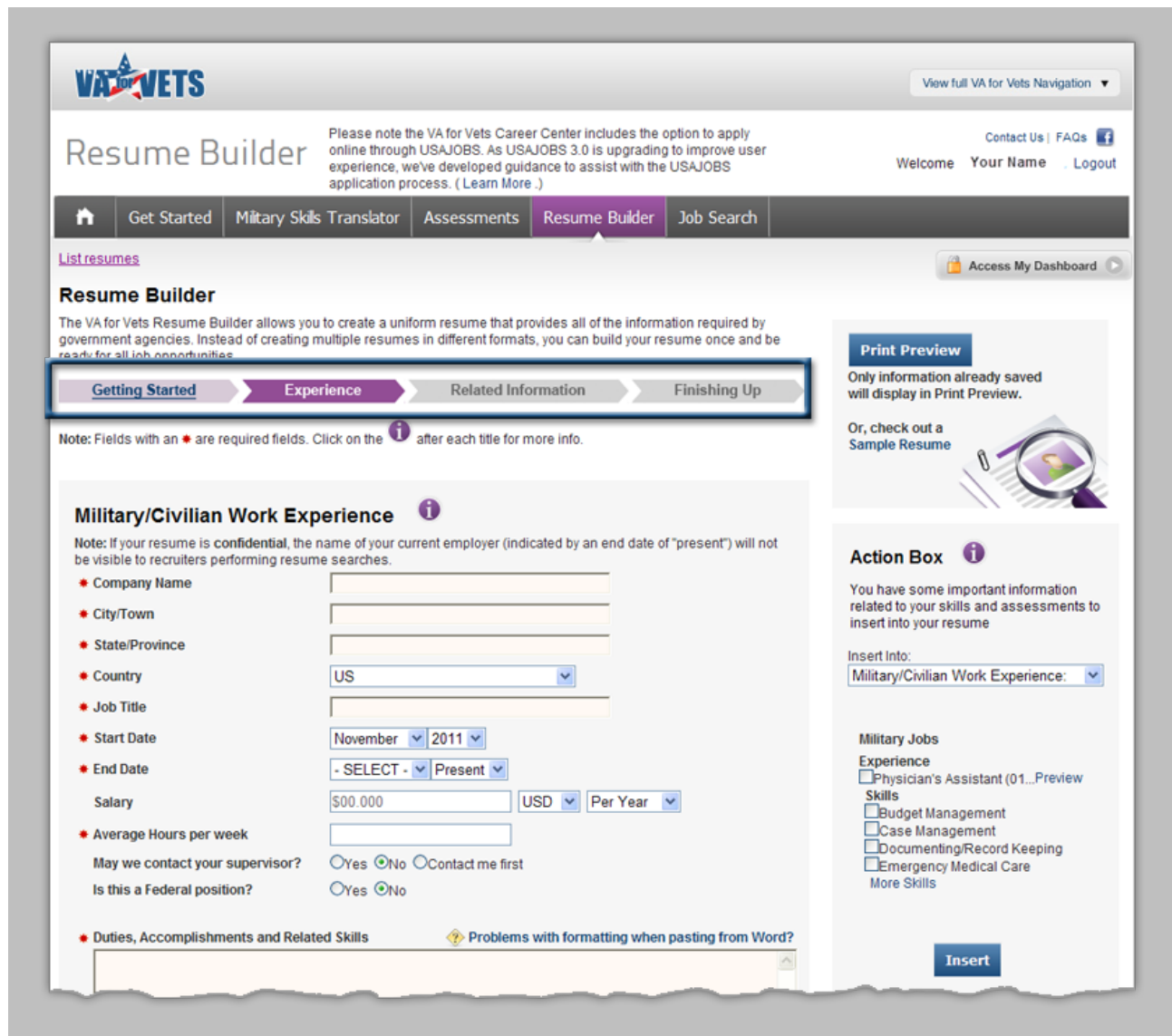
Creating a Resume

If you have completed the assessments and/or translated your military skills, those skills will be displayed in the Action Box. The Action Box feature allows you to import competencies relevant to your skills and experiences directly from the *VA for Vets* Military Skills Translator and Self Assessments into the resume you are creating through the Resume Builder.

Note: *Competencies cannot be imported into uploaded resumes.*

Importing Skills and Experiences into Your Resume

1. From My Dashboard, select **Create Resume**. This takes you to the Resume Builder page.
2. In the Choose Resume field, select Create New Resume from the drop-down list or a resume you have saved to the *VA for Vets* resume database.

3. Select the box next to the item from the Action Box you would like to import when building your resume. A check mark appears in the box that you selected. Continue this step until you have selected all the items you would like to import.

> ⓘ Select **Preview** to view a description of the job title. Select **More Skills** to expand the skills list.

4. Scroll down and then select **Insert**. This saves the items.

> ⓘ Selecting **Delete** removes the selected experience and/or skill(s) from the Action Box.

5. Select **Build new resume**. This takes you to the first stage of creating your resume (Getting Started).

6. Complete each field marked with an asterisk (✹).

> ❗ Selecting ℹ️ opens a new window which includes information about the
> fields you need to complete.

7. Select **Save & Continue**. This saves the information you entered and takes you to the next stage
    of the resume building process (Experience).

> ❗ Selecting **Save for Later** saves the information you entered and takes you to the
> My Saved Resume page of the Resume Builder.

8. In the Military/Civilian Work Experience, complete each field.
    Note: *Fields marked with an asterisk (✹) must be completed.*

! You may select ⓘ for information about the fields you need to complete.
The information will appear in a new window.

! You may insert items from the Action Box to the Duties, Accomplishments and
Related Skills field. From the Action Box:
  a. In the Insert into field, select **Military/Civilian Work Experience** from the
      drop-down list.
  b. Select the box next to the experience or skill you would like inserted.
  c. After you have selected the experience(s) or skill(s), select **Insert**. The
      selected experience(s) or skill(s) appears in the Duties, Accomplishments
      and Related Skills field.

! After you have entered information in the Duties, Accomplishments and Related
Skills field, you should spell check the information by selecting **Spell Check**. This
opens the spell checker feature in a new window. See Spell Checker topic for
more information.
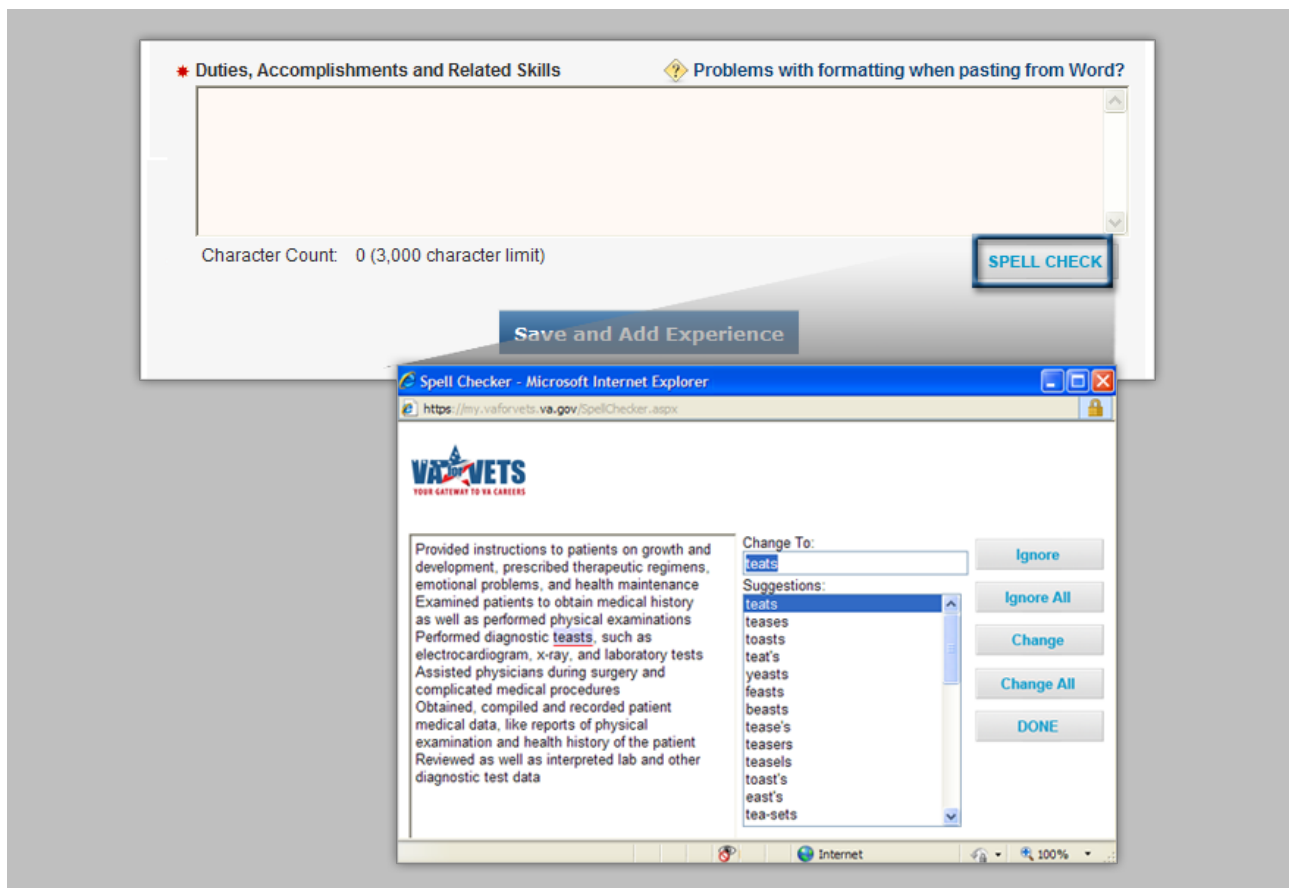
9. After you completed the fields in the Military/Civilian Work Experience, select **Save and Add
    Experience**. This saves the information you entered and displays your work experience on the
    page.
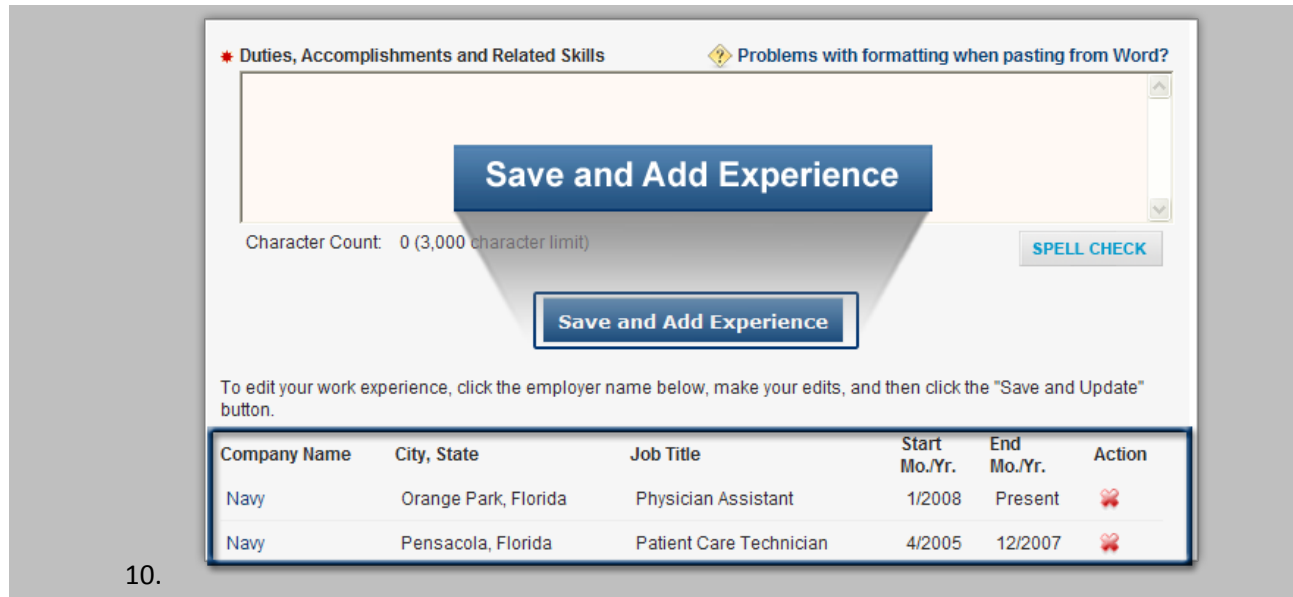
10.

 Edit your work experience by selecting the company name and then follow steps 8 and 9.

 Delete your work experience by selecting in the row you would like to delete. A pop-up box appears confirming deletion; select OK. This deletes the work experience from the page and the *VA for Vets* resume database.
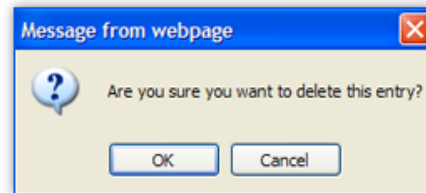
If you have …	Then …
Work experience you would like to add	Complete steps 8 and 9.
Completed entering your work experience	Go to step 10.

10. In the Military/Civilian Education, complete each field.
    Note: *Fields marked with an asterisk (✳) must be completed.*

You may select ⓘ for information about the fields you need to complete. The information will appear in a new window.

You may insert items from the Action Box to the Relevant Coursework, Licensures and Certifications field. From the Action Box:
a. In the Insert into field, select **Military/Civilian Education** from the drop-down list.
b. Select the box next to the education you would like inserted.
c. After you have selected the education, select **Insert**. The selected experience(s) or skill(s) appears in the Relevant Coursework, Licensures and Certifications field.

After you have entered information in the Relevant Coursework, Licensures and Certifications field, you should spell check the information by selecting **Spell Check**. This opens the spell checker feature in a new window. See Spell Checker topic for more information.

11. After you have completed the fields in the Military/Civilian Education, select **Save and Add Education**. This saves the information you entered and displays your education on the page.
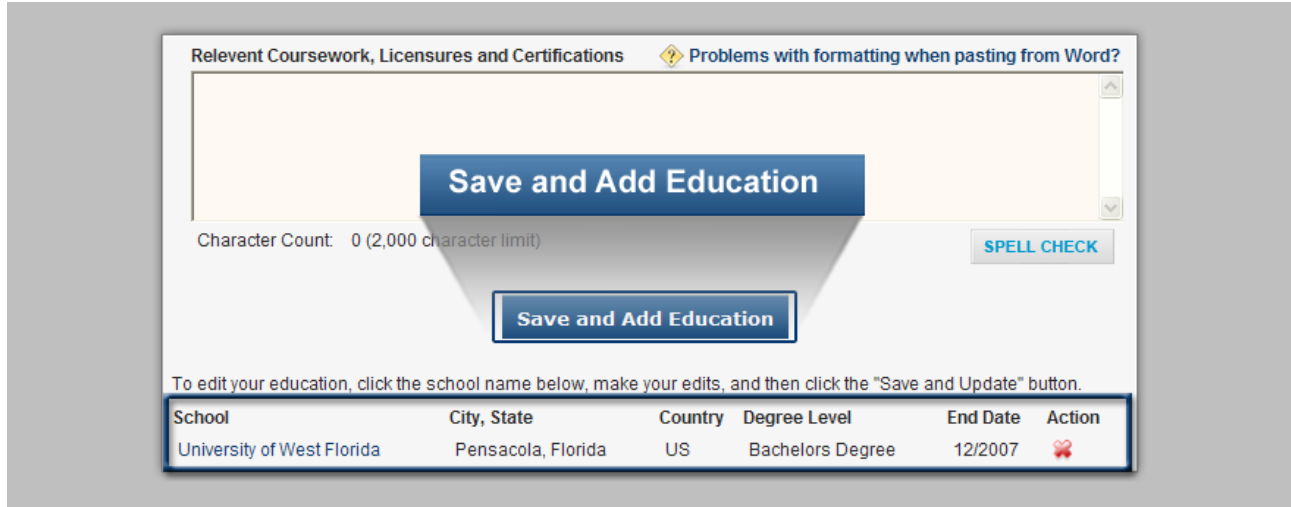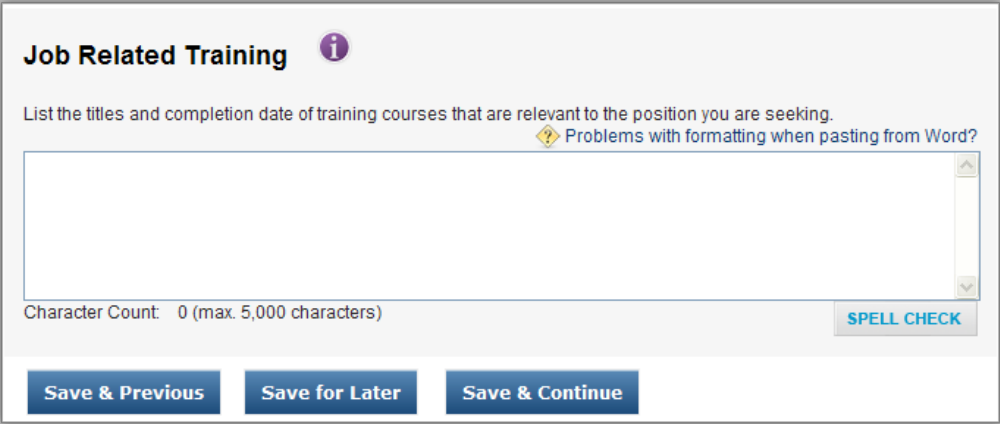
Edit your education by selecting the school name then follow steps 10 and 11.

Delete your education by selecting ✖ in the row you would like to delete. A pop-up box appears confirming deletion; select OK. This deletes the education from the page and the *VA for Vets* resume database.
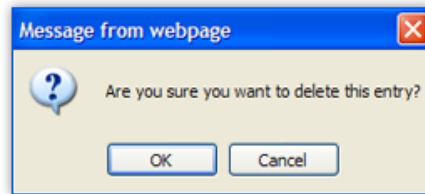
If you have …	Then …
Relevant coursework, licensures or certifications you would like to add	Complete steps 10 and 11.
Completed entering your education	Go to step 12.

12. In the Job Related Training, enter all your job-related training in the field.

After you have entered your job-related training, you should spell check the words by selecting **Spell Check**. This opens the spell checker feature in a new window. See Spell Checker topic for more information.

13. Select **Save & Continue**. This saves the information you entered and takes you to the next stage of the resume building process (Related Information).

Selecting **Save & Previous** saves the information you entered and takes you to the previous stage of the resume building process.

Selecting **Save for Later** saves the information you entered and takes you to the My Saved Resume page of the Resume Builder.

14. On the Related Information page, complete each field.
   ***Note:*** *Fields marked with an asterisk (✹) must be completed.*

    > You may select ℹ️ for information about the fields you need to complete. The information will appear in a new window.

15. Select **Save & Continue**. This saves the information you entered and takes you to the next stage of the resume building process (Finishing Up).

    > Selecting **Save & Previous** saves the information you entered and takes you to previous stage of the resume building process.

    > Selecting **Save for Later** saves the information you entered and takes you to the My Saved Resume page of the Resume Builder.

16. To allow recruiters to find your resume in the *VA for Vets* resume database, select **Save & Activate Resume**. This takes you to the My Saved Resume page with the resume you created listed on the page.

    > The Finishing Up stage offers other options; see the next page of this guide for those options.
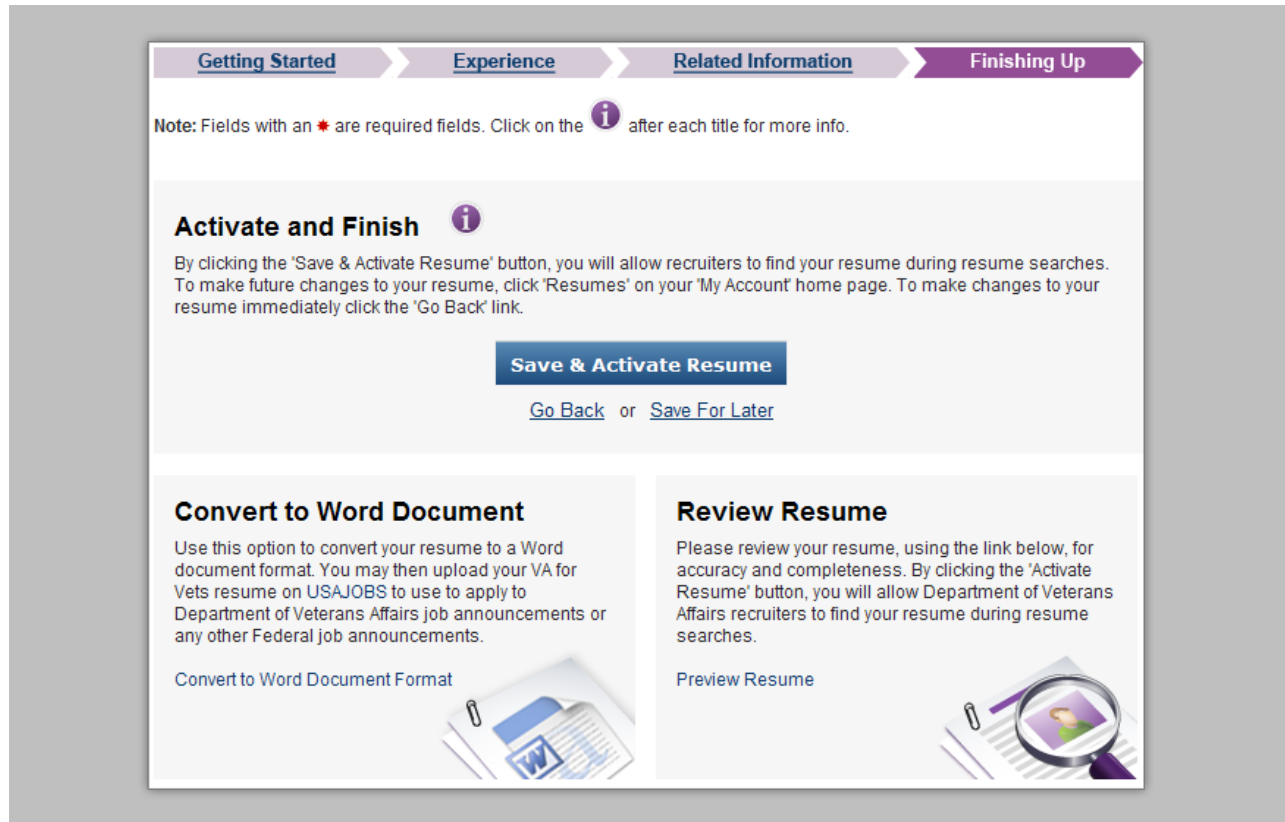
To …	Then …
Review your resume before saving and activating	Select **Preview Resume**. A new window appears with your resume. From this window you may print or email your resume.
Open or save your resume to your computer as a Word document	Select **Convert to Word Document Format** and then follow the screen prompts to open or save your resume.
Go back to the previous stage	Select **Go Back** or **Related Information** (status bar).
Save but not activate your resume	Select **Save For Later**. This takes you to the My Saved Resume page.
Allow recruiters to find your resume in the *VA for Vets* resume database	Select **Save & Activate Resume**. This takes you to the My Saved Resume page.

Uploading a Resume

1. From My Dashboard, select **Upload a Resume**.

If you have…	Then
One or more resumes saved on the *VA for Vets* resume database	This takes you to the My Saved Resumes page. Select **Upload new resume**. This takes you to the Resume Uploader page. Go to Step 2.
Not saved a resume on the *VA for Vets* resume database	This takes you to the Resume Uploader page. Go to Step 2.

2. Complete each field in the following sections: Resume Basics, Candidate Information, Federal Employee Information, Target Job, Desired Locations and Confidentiality.
    Note: *Fields marked with an asterisk (✹) must be completed.*

3. In the Upload a Resume section, select **Browse**.
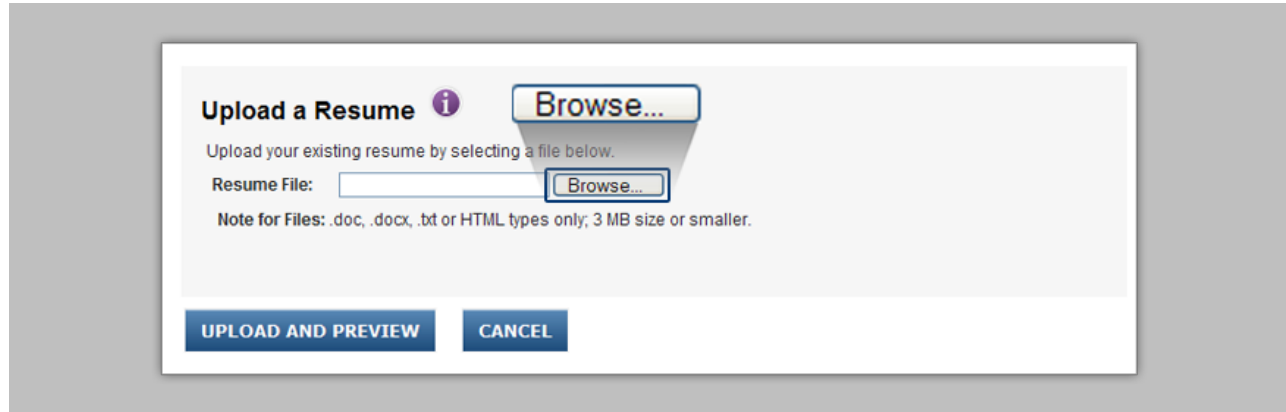
The Choose File to Upload dialog box appears.
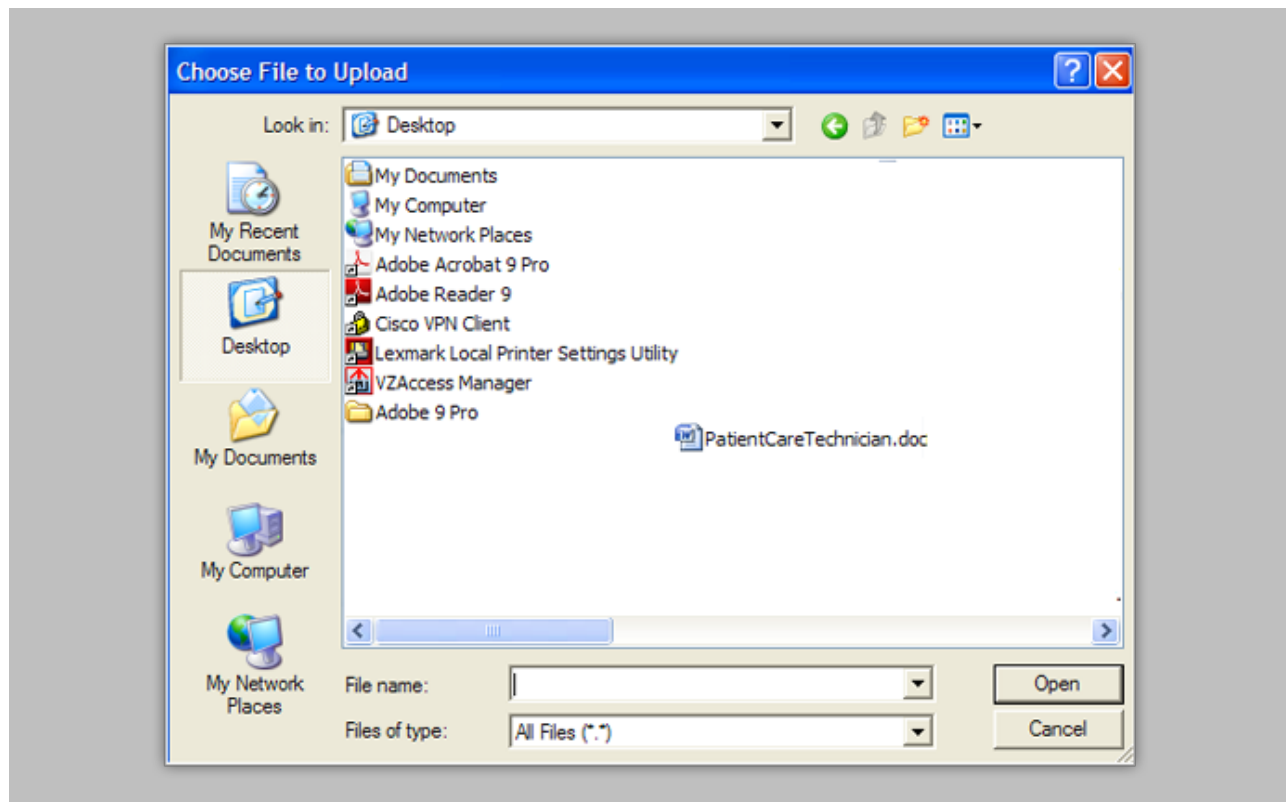
4. Locate the resume file you want to upload from your computer.
5. Select the resume file.

6. Select **Open**. The path to the document you selected displays in the Resume File field.

   ⓘ   Selecting **Cancel** closes the dialog box without displaying the path.

7. Select **Upload and Preview**. This uploads the resume file to the *VA for Vets* resume database and takes you to the My Resume page.

   ⓘ   Selecting **Cancel** takes you to My Saved Resumes page and does not upload the resume to the *VA for Vets* resume database.
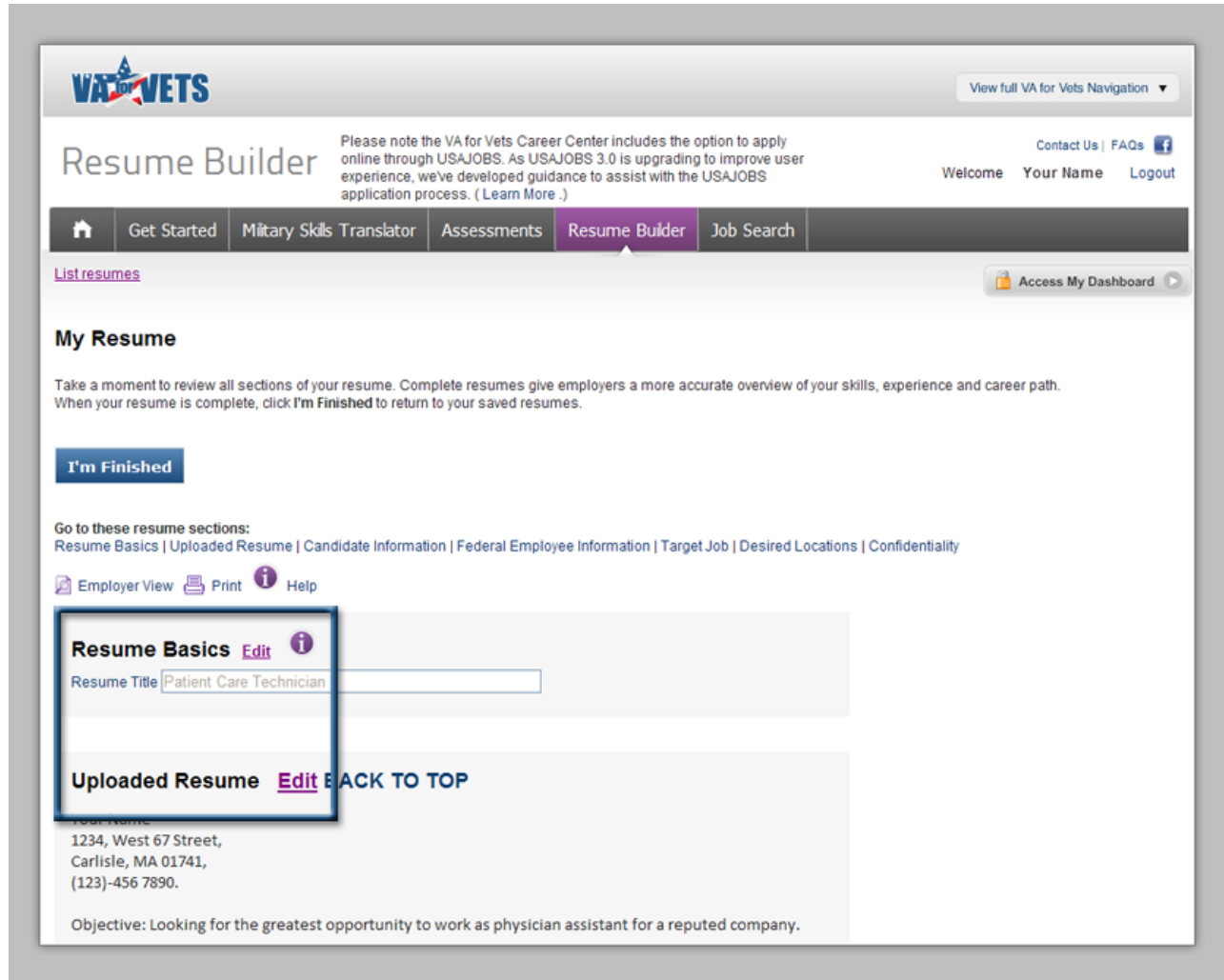

8. Select **I'm Finished**. This takes you to the My Saved Resume page.

   ⓘ   Before selecting **I'm Finished**, you may edit your uploaded resume.

Editing an Uploaded Resume

1. From My Saved Resumes, select **View/Edit** for the uploaded resume you want to edit. This takes you to the My Resume page with the resume information displayed.

2. Select **Edit** in the section you want to edit.
3. Make the updates.
4. Select **Update**. This saves the updates you made and displays the updates on the page.

   Selecting **Cancel** does not save any of the updates you made.

5. Continue steps 2 through 4 until you have made all the updates you want.
6. Select **I'm Finished**. This takes you to the My Saved Resumes page.

My Saved Resumes Page

The My Saved Resumes page displays the resumes you have created and/or uploaded. From this page, you may view, edit, copy or delete your resume. In addition, you may allow recruiters to view or prevent them from viewing your resume on the *VA for Vets* resume database.

Select …	To …
View	Open your resume in a new window
View/Edit	Update your uploaded resume through the My Resume page
Edit	Update your resume using the resume builder; this takes you to the Getting Started stage
Copy	Make a copy of your resume, which will display as a copy of <resume name>
Delete	Remove your resume from the *VA for Vets* resume database
Renew	Update creation date of your resume to the current date

Spell Checker

Correct spelling makes a difference on a resume; therefore, fields that require a lot of text entry include a spell checker. You'll know this feature is available for a field when you see SPELL CHECK . Simply select SPELL CHECK to activate the spell checker. The spell checker opens in a new window with:

- The first misspelled word highlighted with a red underline in the text.
- The first suggested word correction in the Change To: field.
- A list of suggestions to replace the misspelled word.
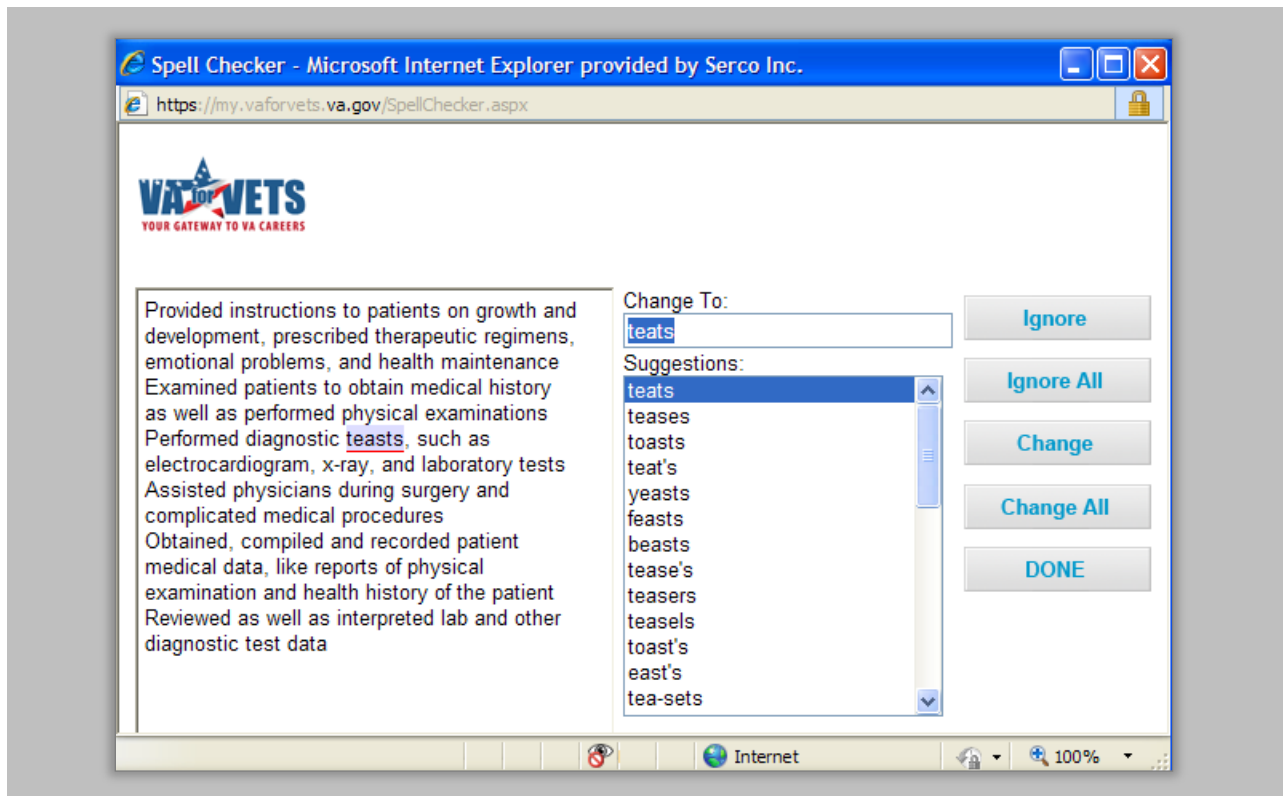
Use the following buttons to check your spelling:

- **Ignore**—Ignore this word and continue to the next misspelled word.
- **Ignore All**—Ignore this word throughout the text.
- **Change**—Use the highlighted suggested word in the Suggestions field.
- **Change All**—Use the highlighted suggested word in the Suggestions field to change all instances of the misspelled word.
- **Done**—Stops spell checking the text and closes the window.

My Saved Jobs

My Saved Jobs on the My Dashboard page allows you view the job(s) you saved from a job search you completed. If you have never accessed the job search feature, then a link would appear that takes you to the Job Search page.

Saving a Job Search

1. From My Dashboard, select **Career Center**. This takes you to the Career Center page.

2. From the Career Center, select **Job Search** or **Search Jobs**. This takes you to the Job Search Results page. If you have taken the assessments and translated your military skills, the Job Search Results page will have a list of jobs that are potential matches based on your skills and interest.

   You may refine your job search or select a job to view more information about that job. See Refining Your Job Search for more information.

3. Locate a job you would like to apply for.

    Selecting **Expand** displays a high-level overview of the job.

4. Select the job title. This takes you to the Job Detail page. The Job Detail page provides you more information about the qualifications and benefits of the job.

From this page, you may print, save or share the job announcement, or apply for the job through USAJOBS. See Appendix A for more information about applying online through USAJOBS.

5. Select **Save Job**. This saves the job announcement and takes you to the My Saved Jobs page.

> The job title will appear in the My Saved Jobs section of the My Dashboard page.

> Select **Job Search** to go back to the Job Search Results page.

Job Search Results Page

The Job Search Results page lists jobs that are the best matches for your skills and interests. You may refine you job search or job results. In addition, you may save the search criteria you used so that you can run the search criteria again.

Refining Your Search

You may refine your job search by:

- Job title and/or keyword
- Job location within a specified mile radius
- Both job title and/or keyword and job location

Refining by job title and/or keyword

1. In the What field, enter the job title and/or keyword in which you are interested.

2. Select . This refreshes the job search results tailored to the job title and/or keyword you entered.

Refining by job location

1. In the Where field, enter city or zip code.
2. In the within field, select a mile radius from the drop-down list.
3. Select [🔍]. This refreshes the job search results tailored to the job location you entered.
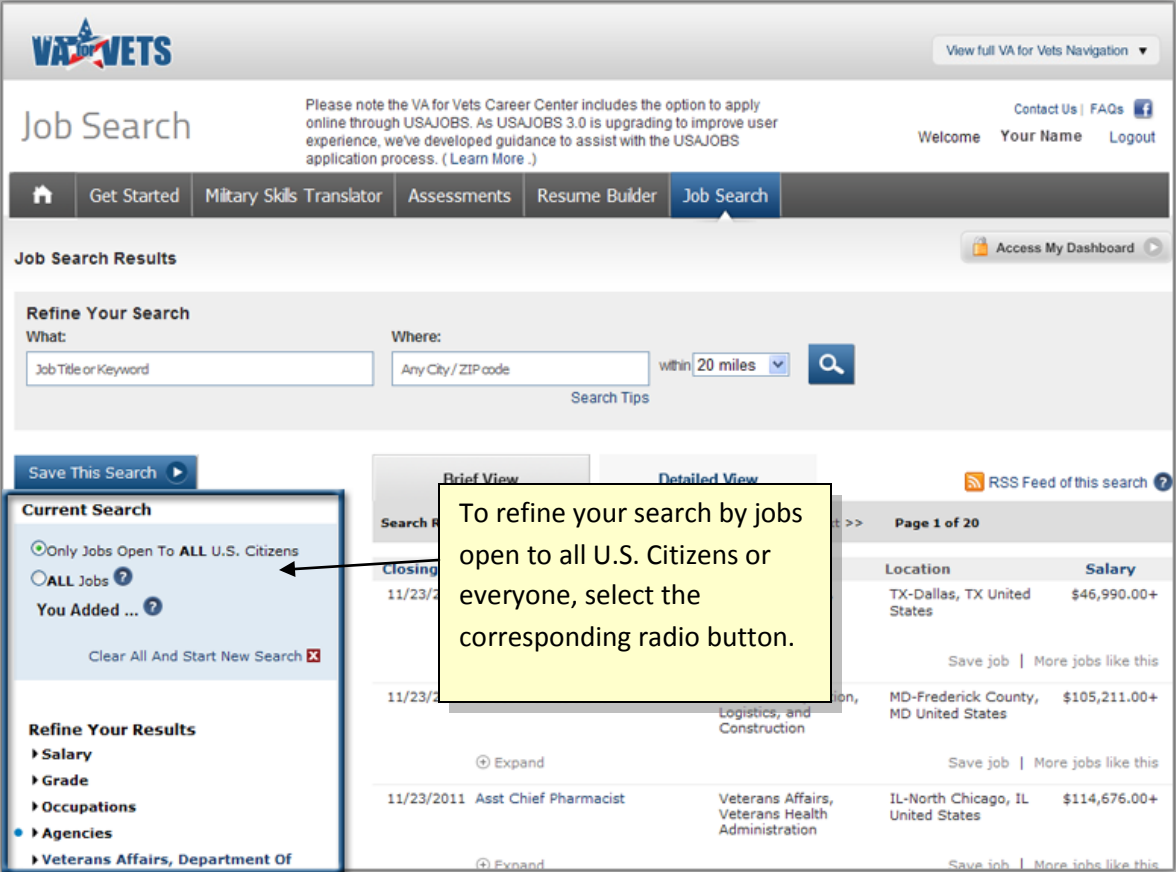
Refining by job title and/or keyword and job location

1. In the What field, enter the job title and/or keyword in which you are interested.
2. In the Where field, enter city or zip code.
3. In the within field, select a mile radius from the drop-down list.
4. Select [🔍]. This refreshes the job search results tailored to the job title and/or keyword and the job location you entered.

Refining Your Job Results

After you have conducted a job search, you may refine your job search results by:

- Salary
- Grade
- Occupations
- Agencies
- Job opening to all U.S. citizens or everyone

To refine your job results by salary, grade, occupation or agency, expand the item and then make a selection(s). The following are step-by-step instructions on how to expand the item and make the selection(s).

1. Select the ▶ next to Salary. This expands the salary.

2. Select one of the salary ranges.

🛈 If you would like to select more than one salary range, select **Select Multiple Salaries**. This opens the Select Salaries pop-up box. From the pop-up box, select the salary ranges and then select **Make Selections**. This closes the pop-up box and displays the ranges in the Current Search box.

3. After you have refined your results, select **Save This Search**. This saves the refinements you selected.
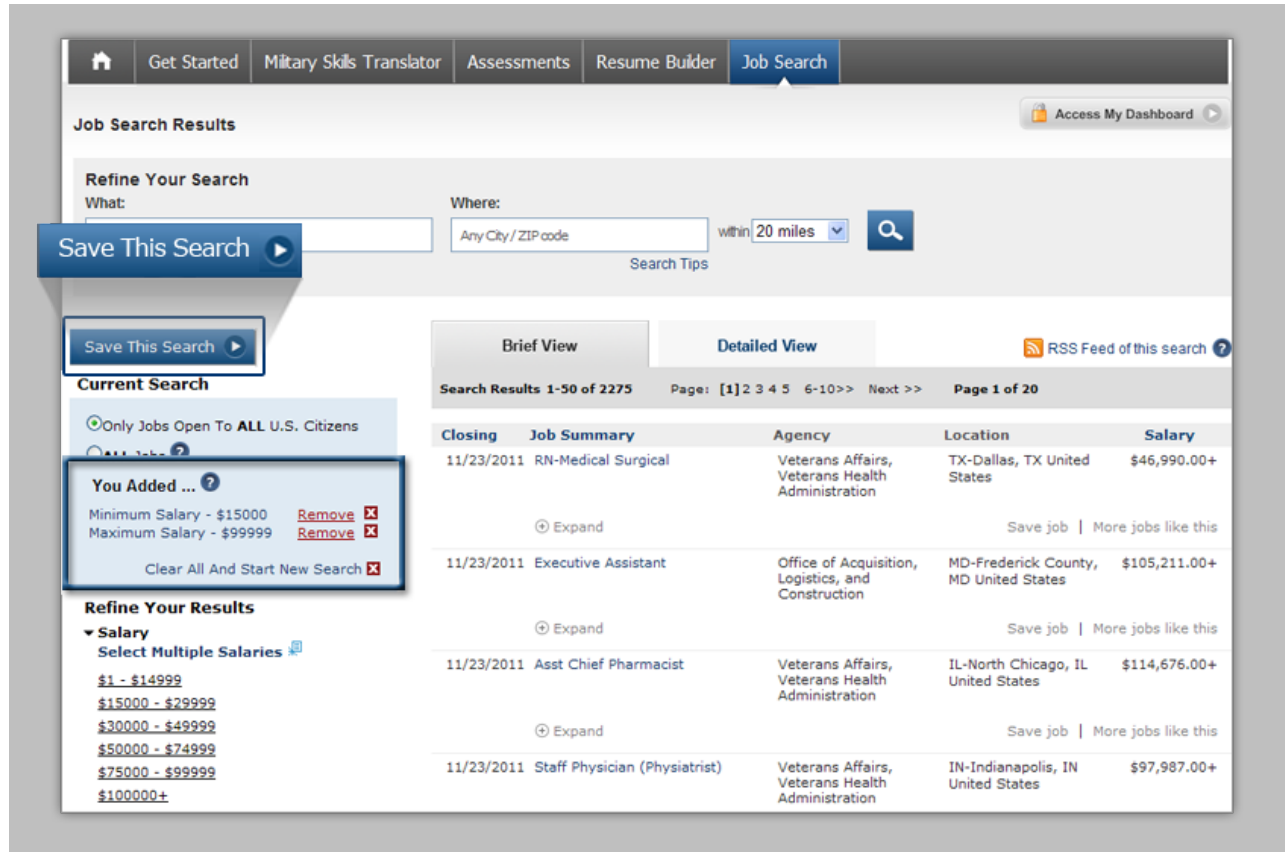
Updating Your Search Results Criteria

You may update your criteria by selecting Remove ☒ or start over by selecting
Clear All And Start New Search ☒ .

Saving Your Search Results Criteria

1. Select **Save This Search**. This saves the search results criteria. The next time you access Job Search, you will see the search results criteria you saved.

Job Detail Page

When you select a job title from the Job Search Results, that job is displayed on the Job Detail page. The Job Detail page provides the entire job announcement and allows you to apply for the job through USAJOBS. See Appendix A for more information about applying online through USAJOBS. In addition, you may print, save or share the information on the Job Detail page.

You can scroll down to view all the details associated with the job or go directly to a specific topic by selecting a tab or selecting a topic from the drop-down list.

Sharing a Job Announcement

1. From the Job Detail page, select **Share Job**. Two pop-up boxes open. One pop-up box has various ways to share the job with others. The other pop-up box displays a message alerting you that you are leaving the *VA for Vets* website.

> ⓘ   Closing the pop-up box with the message alerting you that you are leaving the *VA for Vets* website will close the other pop-up box and take you to the Job Detail page.

2. Select the communication preference you would like to use.
3. Follow the prompts.
4. When you have completed sharing the job, close the pop-up box by selecting ⌧ .

Printing a Job Announcement

1. From the Job Detail page, select **Print Preview**. A new web browser window opens with the job announcement displayed.
2. Print the job announcement using the print feature on your web browser.

Saving a Job Announcement

1. Select **Save Job**. This saves the job announcement and takes you to the My Saved Jobs page.

   ⚠️ The job title will appear in the My Saved Jobs section of the My Dashboard page.

Returning to the Job Search Results Page

1. Select **Job Search**. This returns you to the Job Search Results page.

My Saved Jobs Page

The My Saved Jobs page lists the job announcements you saved. From this page, you may view, delete or share the job announcement.

Returning to the Job Search Results Page

1. Select **Return to Job Search Results** or **Begin your job search**. This takes you to the Job Search Results page.

Viewing a Job Announcement

1. Select the job title of the job announcement you would like to view. This takes you to the Job Detail page for that job announcement.

Deleting a Job Announcement

1. Select **Delete** in the row of the job announcement you would like to remove. This refreshes the My Saved Jobs page with the job announcement removed.

Sharing a Saved Job Announcement

1. Select **Share job with a friend**. This takes you to the Job Detail page.
2. Follow the instructions for Sharing a Job Announcement.
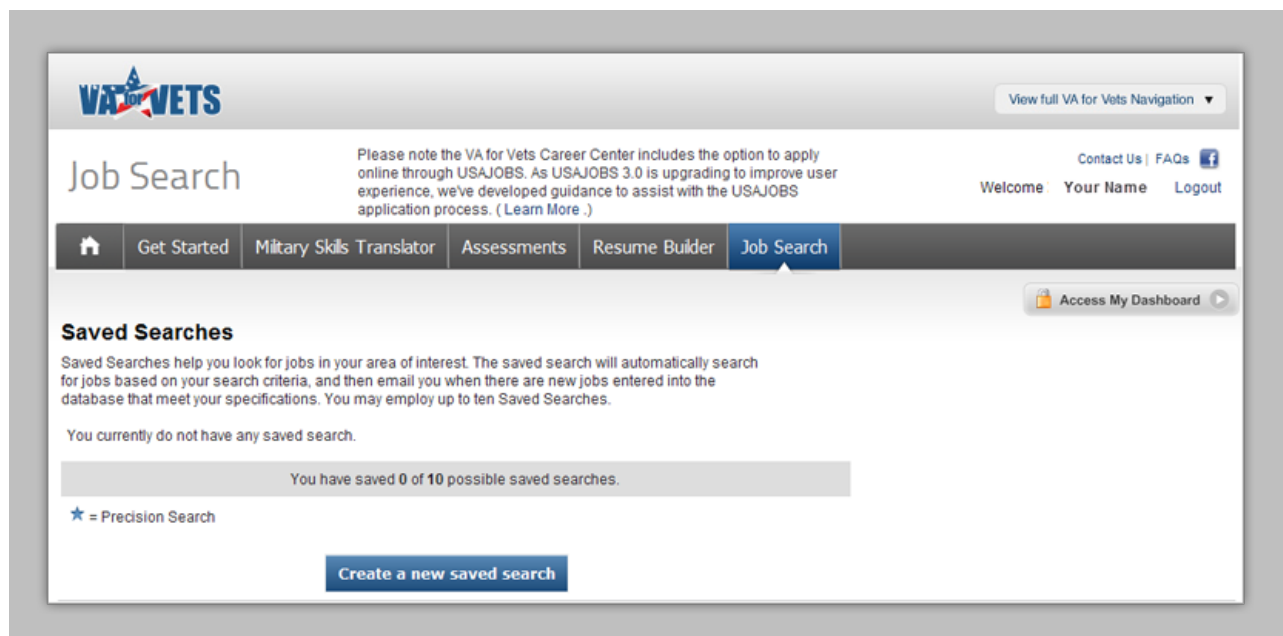
My Saved Searches

My Saved Searches on the My Dashboard page lists the searches you have saved. The saved search feature automatically searches for jobs based on your search criteria, and then emails you when new jobs are entered into the database that meet your search criteria. You may have up to ten saved searches.

Saving a Standard Search

The standard search allows you to refine the job announcements, which means you will receive fewer job announcements, but the job announcement will more closely match your preferences.

1. From My Dashboard, select **Click here to access the Saved Search tool** or **View All Saved Searches**. This takes you to the Saved Searches page.

2. Select **Create a new saved search**. This takes you to the Create New Saved Search page.

> (!) Make sure Standard Search is highlighted. If it is not, select **Standard Search**.

3. Complete each field.
    Note: *Fields marked with an asterisk (✳) must be completed.*

> (!) You may select (i) for information about the fields you need to complete.
> The information will appear in a new window.

4. Select **Save Agent**. This takes you to the Saved Searches page with the search name listed on the page.

> (!) Selecting **Cancel** clears the information you have entered and takes you to the
> Saved Searches page.

Saving a Precision Search

The precision search allows you to receive more job announcements because you define fewer criteria.

1. From My Dashboard, select **Click here to access the Saved Search tool** or **View All Saved Searches**. This takes you to the Saved Searches page.

2. Select **Create a new saved search**. This takes you to the Create New Saved Search page.

    Make sure Precision Search is highlighted. If it is not, select **Precision Search**.

3. Complete each field.

   Note: Fields marked with an asterisk (✱) must be completed.

   🛈 You may select ⓘ for information about the fields you need to complete.
   The information will appear in a new window.

4. Select **Save Agent**. This takes you to the Saved Searches page with the search name listed on the page. When you access My Dashboard, the saved search will be listed in the My Saved Searches area.

   🛈 Selecting **Cancel** clears the information you have entered and takes you to the Saved Searches page.

Saved Searches Page

The Saved Searches page lists the searches you have saved. You may view, edit or delete your saved searches.
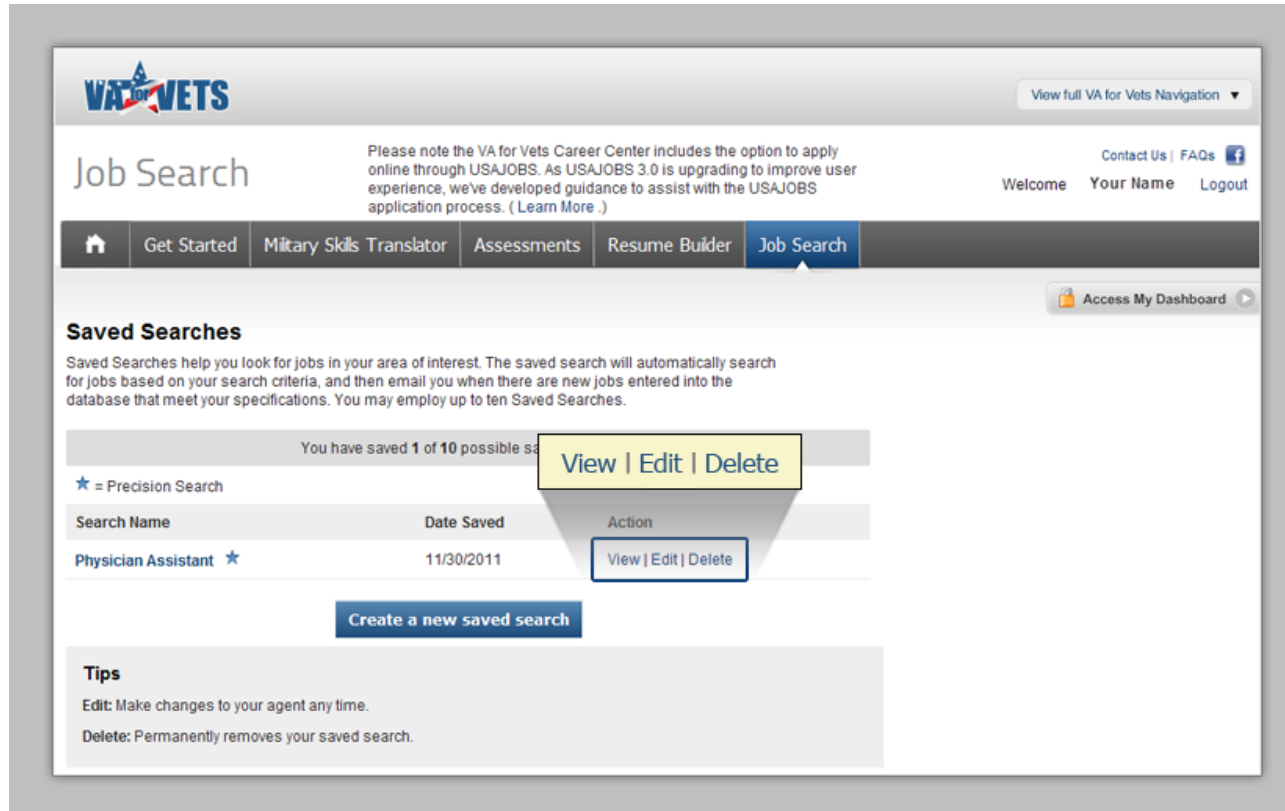
Select …	To …
View	Display job search results based on the saved searches
Edit	Update that saved search; this takes you to the Edit Saved Search page
Delete	Remove that saved search; you will no longer receive emails associated with that saved search

Editing a Saved Search

1. From the Saved Searches page, select **Edit** for the saved search you want to update. This takes you to the Edit Saved Search page.

2. Complete each field.
   Note: Fields marked with an asterisk (✹) must be completed.

   > You may select 🛈 for information about the fields you need to complete. The information will appear in a new window.

3. Select **Save Agent**. This takes you to Saved Searches page with the search name listed on the page. When you access My Dashboard, the saved search will be listed in the My Saved Searches area.

   > Selecting **Cancel** clears the information you have entered and takes you to the Saved Searches page.

Tips for Job Seekers with Military Experience

Define Federal Job Opportunities

You can't effectively market yourselves for a Federal job if you don't have a clearly defined goal. Because you may have a diverse background, you may make the mistake of creating a resume that is too general to be effective. Before writing a resume, you should do some soul-searching and research occupations in order to pinpoint a specific career path. If you are having trouble with this step, contact a career coach at 1-855-VA4Vets (1-855-824-8387).

Create a Resume that Speaks to Employers' Needs

Consider a resume's purpose: To answer the employer's question, "What can this person do for me?" A great way to start thinking about employers' needs is to research target jobs. What types of skills and experiences are employers seeking? What aspects of your background are most relevant? Any information that does not relate to your goal should be eliminated or deemphasized, and this includes any unrelated military awards, training and distinctions. For example, that medal you won for rifle marksmanship doesn't belong on a civilian resume. This is often the hardest step for former military personnel, which is why it's so common to see military resumes span five pages or longer. You need to make the decision about which information to include. Ask yourself: "Will a potential employer care about this experience?" Only include information that will help you get an interview.

Assume the Hiring Manager Knows Nothing about the Military

Demilitarize job titles, duties, accomplishments, training and awards to appeal to civilian hiring managers. Employers with no exposure to the military do not understand military terminology and acronyms, so translate these into "civilian terms." Use job postings as a tool to substitute civilian keywords for military terms. Consider showing your resume to several nonmilitary friends and ask them to point out terms they don't understand.

**Showcase Track Record of Accomplishments**

Military careers offer excellent opportunities for training, practical experience and advancement. You should tout your accomplishments so the average civilian understands the importance of achievements and the measurable outcomes. The following is an example of a demilitarized accomplishment statement:

"I increased employee retention rate by 16 percent through training, team building and recognition programs. My IT organization earned a reputation for being one of the most progressive and innovative in the Army's communications and IT community."

The following is an example of incorporating a military award so employers understand its value:

"I received an Army Achievement Medal for completing 400+ medical evaluations and developing a patient database using Microsoft Access. The database improved reporting functions and tracked patient demographics, records, medications, appointments and status."

Show Off Military Background

You may have heard that you need to develop a functional resume format to mask or downplay your military experience, but the opposite is true. A Veteran's military experience is an asset and should be marketed as such. Many employers realize the value of bringing Veterans on board. Attributes honed in the military include dedication, leadership, teamwork, positive work ethic and cross-functional skills. You should make sure your resume clearly communicates the value that you bring to the table.

Leave Out the Details about Combat

Defending your country and its interests is among the most admirable pursuits, but the sad truth is actual references to the horrors of combat leave many employers squeamish. For example, if a Veteran worked in a short-range air defense engagement zone, this experience might not relate to his or her future goal. You should tone down or remove references to the battlefield. Address those experiences in terms that are understandable to civilians without the squeamish details. For example: "Successfully led and directed the training and task-accomplished efforts of a 144-member group of diverse employees in a high-stress environment."

Test Drive the Resume

For some Veterans, developing a resume that works in the civilian world is an ongoing process. After you have polished your resume, you should start a distribution and keep track of your resume's response rate. You should solicit feedback and listen carefully to suggestions for improving your resume. You should continue to tailor your resume to specific position descriptions until it successfully generates job interviews.

If you need assistance using the *VA for Vets* career center or submitting a resume for a job, contact a career coach at 1-855-VA4Vets (1-855-824-8387).

Appendix A: Apply for Jobs through USAJOBS

VA fills jobs two ways:

- Competitively—Jobs that are filled competitively are advertised through the USAJOBS website.
- Non-competitively—Jobs that are not advertised; VA searches the *VA for Vets* Career Center resume database to identify qualified Veterans eligible for appointment without competition.

You may apply for a job you find on the *VA for Vets* Career Center through the USAJOBS website.

Note: On October 11th, USAJOBS launched a new release (version 3.0). Since this release, some people have experienced technical issues when applying for a job through USAJOBS from the *VA for Vets* Job Detail page.

1. Select **Apply on USAJOBS**. This opens a new window to log in to USAJOBS.
   Note: VA for Vets window will remain open.

   > If you do not have a USAJOBS account, please refer to the USAJOBS Quick Start Guide (https://vaforvets.va.gov/veterans/resources/Documents/USAJOBS%20Quick%20Start%20Guide.pdf) to learn how to create a USAJOBS account.

2. Upon signing in, you should be prompted to select your resume and related documents to apply to the position.

    > If you are not directed to the position selected from *VA for Vets*, you can search for the position by returning to your *VA for Vets* window, copy the announcement number and paste it into the What field on your My Account page in USAJOBS.

3. Select **Apply Now**. This submits your resume to the federal agency to which you are applying for a job.