

CAREER DEVELOPMENTS

TECHNOLOGY AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT: *Opportunities and Challenges*

**THE USE OF AI IN CAREER DEVELOPMENT:
DIFFERENT EXPERIENCES IN HIGHER EDUCATION
WITH ONE UNIFIED GOAL**

ANGIE THOMPSON AND ERIK M. HINES

**NCDA AI TASK FORCE UPDATE:
ADVANCING CAREER DEVELOPMENT IN
AN AI DRIVEN ERA**

CONQUAYA JAMES AND LOGANN TODD



THOUGHT LEADER INSIGHTS

A Conversation with Emily Grandinetta



BY JENN LEARD

Emily Grandinetta specializes in coaching and career support to help Veterans successfully navigate transition from military service and identify and achieve their career goals in a complex, technology-forward, rapidly evolving global civilian work landscape. Author of, *At Ease: The Guide to a Smooth and Successful Military Transition* and developer of the Certified Military Transition Coach (CMTC) program, Emily brings a holistic approach to training career counselors, coaches, and specialists working with Veterans. Emily shares a multifaceted lens of opportunities and challenges at the intersection of advancing technology, specifically Artificial Intelligence (AI), and military transition.

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Why is it important to spotlight military transition in an issue focused on technology and

career development? What opportunities exist, and what do you believe is on the horizon?

EG: Military transition has been an unmet need for a long time, and it's about much more than just finding a job. The existing resources and training tend to focus on the tactical side — getting a job — without addressing the deeper, psychosocial aspects of the transition. Veterans often face loss of purpose, identity shifts, and cultural adjustments that aren't adequately addressed. This is where technology can play a significant role by delivering scalable solutions to a geographically dispersed population, including online learning and e-resources. However, we also need to tread carefully. I've seen some concerning trends, like the rise of AI-based counseling/coaching tools that may deliver emotional support at scale but lack the depth and nuance required for true human connection. For Veterans, especially, we need thoughtful, ethical tech solutions that complement — not replace — human guidance.



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The transition from military to civilian life is a complex journey for many Veterans. In light of

what you've shared, how do you see emerging technologies, such as AI and digital career platforms, influencing the transition process and helping Veterans find new career opportunities?

EG: Digital platforms can be both a help and a hindrance. In this case, as it often is with AI, it's definitely a "yes, and..." For example, technology has been used to create crosswalks — tools that translate military job classifications into civilian equivalents. While these can be useful, they're often overly simplistic, focusing on matching job titles rather than addressing the broader context of transferable skills and career satisfaction. This focus on "just getting a job" contributes to the high rates of underemployment among Veterans — where they're in

jobs that don't fully utilize their skills or align with their long-term goals. So often Veterans have not established clear goals, beyond a paycheck, and broadened their awareness of what's possible. Additionally, transition training provided by the military presumes that the service member wants to find a job *similar* to the one they are leaving, however this faulty presumption (particularly for enlisted or Junior Military Officers) can also result in reduced options. The goal-setting domain continues to be best supported by coaches and counselors, not AI. Lack of goal clarity ultimately results in "job hopping" and quick job transitions that become an employer flag for hiring and longer-term career building.

AI and digital tools *can* enhance this process by helping Veterans explore career possibilities beyond their military experience. For instance, AI could generate civilian-friendly descriptions of military tasks or help Veterans better articulate their strengths, making it easier for them to explore, strategize, and articulate their professional story and the impact of their experience in a civilian workplace. However, this must be paired with human guidance to ensure Veterans aren't underselling or misrepresenting themselves in a way that hinders their transition, access to a breadth of available opportunities, and satisfactory employment.



As technology rapidly reshapes the job market, digital fluency is increasingly

vital. What strategies do you recommend for Veterans to upskill and adapt to the tech-driven career demands, particularly in STEM and other emerging fields?

EG: One of the biggest challenges is overcoming the frustration that comes with automated hiring processes. Veterans often apply to hundreds of jobs online without receiving a response, which is demoralizing (certainly not unique to Veterans as most of our clients and students face this challenge in the current landscape). It's critical to shift the focus from mass job applications to strategic networking — leveraging platforms like LinkedIn effectively to build connections and access opportunities through referrals.

Upskilling is also essential. Veterans with STEM backgrounds, such as those from the military's Signal Corps or engineering units, are well-positioned for in-demand roles, but they need to learn how to present these skills in civilian terms. This means not only listing technical proficiencies, but also demonstrating outcomes and impact. This is where AI tools could be useful to help Veterans get started, with, of course, careful review for accuracy and tailoring. The privately funded Veteran service organization VetsinTech (<https://vetsintech.co>) provides technical training at no cost to the Veteran, and is a resource the community should know about.



Many Veterans come with highly transferable skills, yet struggle to connect them with

new roles outside of the military. How can technology tools or digital resources better bridge this gap and help Veterans position their military experience in ways that resonate with potential employers?

EG: Great segue from the previous question. AI can be a useful starting point for this. For example, a Veteran could input a description of their military role into a tool like ChatGPT and receive civilian-friendly suggestions for how to describe their experience. But — and this is key — those suggestions should always be vetted by the Veteran themselves and could benefit from a review by human career professionals, as well, who can add context and nuance. It's about helping Veterans translate their skills without losing the essence of what makes their experience unique and, certainly, them as an individual unique. Beyond AI, Veterans need structured opportunities for self-reflection. This need was a key piece of what drove me to build the CMTC program to further support this need (and help other professionals support their Veteran clients' needs) through extensive guided exercises to build "situational self-awareness" — a term I use to help Veterans understand cultural differences they will encounter in the civilian workplace. I also emphasize building community and finding purpose, which may or may not come from a job, and taking a holistic approach to Veteran transition.



With automation and AI altering many industries, how do you think this will affect

military transition, especially in terms of traditional roles versus emerging tech-focused positions? What advice would you give Veterans navigating these changes?

EG: The landscape has shifted. It used to be that any degree would make a Veteran competitive, but now the quality and relevance of that degree matter more than ever. Veterans with STEM credentials or experience are likely to find more opportunities, but they need to understand how to market themselves effectively. This means avoiding the temptation to overpromise and instead target roles that match their actual, transferable skills and experience.

Veterans also need to be educated on what STEM encompasses — many are already in STEM fields without realizing it. By understanding the broader landscape, they can better align their job search with industry demands.



As career work continues to evolve with technology, how do you envision the future of our

work with Veterans? What role will AI, virtual coaching/counseling, and online career resources play in shaping how you guide Veterans through their career transitions?

EG: Career professionals already have many of the tools they need, but they often lack the cultural context to fully support Veterans. This is where resources like, *At Ease* and the CMTC come in. By understanding the unique cultural and psychological dynamics of military transition, career counselors and coaches can anticipate common pitfalls and provide more targeted guidance.

The future will likely involve a blend of human and AI-driven support. AI

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can handle some initial tasks — like generating initial resume drafts or suggesting job matches — but the deeper work of career counseling and coaching, particularly around purpose, identity, and self-awareness, will always require a human touch. My hope is that by equipping career professionals with both cultural insights and practical tools, we can create a more seamless and supportive transition experience for Veterans.



Any final thoughts or resources you'd recommend?

EG: I'd encourage career professionals to engage in ongoing learning about military culture and transition challenges. Veterans need professionals who can help them see the full range of possibilities ahead — not just the next job, but the right job that aligns with their skills, values, and purpose.



To learn more about Emily and follow her work focused on military transition and supporting Veteran's career advancement,

go to <https://military.grandinetta.com/>. Access a recording of Emily's recent NCD A Maximizing Your Impact with Veterans webinar through the NCD A website. Thank you to Emily for conducting a PDI session: The Psychosocial Aspects of Military-to-Civilian Transition with Michael Pett, in advance of the 2025 NCD A Global Conference in Atlanta.



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ON THE WEB

www.ncda.org

The NCD A website supports the goal of inspiring and empowering people as they progress in their own career development or assist others in their role as practitioners or educators. The website in particular offers articles and resources on the practical issues surrounding transitions, often focusing on the needs of special populations.

NCD A aims to assist career development professionals in being at the forefront of technological transformations. The following sections of the website are vital to assisting with this goal.

NEW! ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) RESOURCES

The NCD A AI Task Force has created an extensive list of AI resources for career development professionals. How it works, why it matters, and a variety of applications are offered. Links to peer-reviewed content, including ethical implications, training, and podcasts are also included. This is now available under the Resource section of the website.

NCD A'S CAREER CONVERGENCE WEB MAGAZINE

- New feature! As of April 2025, readers can now be listeners, as the newest articles have links to allow audio connection. Click on the article title and use the "play audio" link to listen anytime, anywhere, at your convenience.
- Tech Tips are not full articles but short lessons on some of the newest technology tools, trends, and apps, provided by the NCD A Technology Committee. They allow you to get a peek (and a link) to tools to apply to your daily work (e.g., "**Create Designs Effortlessly with Canva's Magic Studio**") and support the goals of your clients (e.g., "**Use Canva to Create Headshots from Existing Pictures**"). Click on the Tech Tip archives to scroll a wide selection of tips.
- Search the web magazine's archives to identify articles related to artificial intelligence, automation, STEM, or other tech terms. (NOTE: do not use the two-letter abbreviation "AI" when searching, as at least three letters are needed.) The following articles may be helpful:
 - **Leveraging Technology for College Prep and Career Success: 5 Tech Tips** - By Julia Evans
 - **Developing Emotional Intelligence for College and Career Success: An Institution's Digitally-Enabled Approach** - By Segun Ogunwale and Akintomiwa Ogunnika
 - **Teaching Transitioning Military About Interviewing: The AI Factor** - By Mary Rydesky
 - **Using AI to Enhance Applications of Career Theory to Practice** - By Francine Fabricant
 - **ChatGPT: Tips for Career Searching** - By Maggie Kuhn

NCD A'S PODCAST, CAREER PRACTITIONER CONVERSATIONS

Now offering a library of over five dozen episodes covering a variety of topics, the technology episodes and the method of delivery support career development professionals. All episodes are free to access for members and non-members alike. Check out these:

- AI & The Digital Presence Framework with Dr. Sheetal J. Patel and Michael Joiner-Hill
- Job Search 2.0: Leveraging AI to Unlock Career Potential with Dr. Tina Persson
- AI and the Evolution of Career Development Services with Bret Anderson and Leeann Fields
- Guiding Careers in Data Science, AI, and Cybersecurity with Deborah Sgro

INTERNET SITES FOR CAREER PLANNING

Originally an NCD A book title, this webpage was created to offer a list of current, free, and credible Internet resources that career development professionals may use with their clients. Organized by category (such as Self Assessment, Job Search and Special Population), the links are reviewed by the NCD A Technology Committee. Career Service Centers are granted permission to link to this resource webpage, giving credit to NCD A.

NCD A WEBINARS

The technology focused webinars that NCD A has available for free include:

- *Artificial Intelligence: Will AI Replace Career Development Professionals in the Future?*
- *The Age of Social Media*
- *The ILPL Digital Presence Framework and Integrating Generative AI*
- *US Department of Labor Open and Free Online Resources for Career Advisors*
- *What's New on LinkedIn This Year?*

The newest webinar recording, *Be Heard, Be Powerful: Using FiscalNote & VoterVoice to Advocate* offers instruction on using two cutting-edge advocacy tech tools. Visit the webinar webpage to view details about accessing the webinars for watching at your convenience and/or obtaining CEs.

Melanie Reinersman



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