Participant 7 – Chris Lee

GIBCT – I think I have, but it was a while ago

Usability Testing – No

Importance of benefits:

Army

Can I give you a percentage? I’d say maybe 30%. It was mostly more of a career move and then retire.

Journey:

I just got my bachelor’s in December. I got my undergrad using my GI. International affairs. I sort of used my GI bill strategically so I could use it for both undergrad and grad. I applied to grad but didn’t get in. So I do plan on using it in the future for masters.

Factors:

Location, that’s the biggest one, the program, and can I say the Yellow Ribbon program?

Find alerts from VA?

The first thing I would do is contact the veterans office at the school. I would first find out if the school is veteran friendly. I would call their veteran office and talk to their veterans club president or certifying officer and pick his or her brain on the veteran community at their university.

Characterization:

That’s a good question – fortunate, lucky, mine – as in, I earned it. I don’t know, that’s a good question. Fortunate because without the GI bill I don’t think I’d ever go to college. I can’t afford it. My parents can’t afford it. I dropped out of high school. I never took the SAT. I worked my way up after the military. Just fortunate and very lucky, but at the same time, I earned it.

Task 1: 2

[Scrolled to bottom and searched Arizona state…clicked first option in autocomplete. Navigated to school name.] First thing is Housing allowance and GI Bill, I’d look for those two things….make sure its in-person. Yellow Ribbon recipient. For in-person – I just can’t function/learn on my own. I know I’m not in-state. I would also look at Yellow Ribbon – it’s a big factor for me and it’s not unlimited. So this school would probably not be an option for me. [Scrolling through the rest of the page…looking at the school certifying officials…] I would definitely call Christian (certifying official) and get his information. Tuition is also very low. Which is good.

It’s actually pretty resourceful. It has everything you would need. When I was searching for undergrad, I did not use this. Yeah, I think its very useful.

Task 2: 2

[Scroll to bottom…search the school first. Scrolling through options, went right to Pensacola. Moved downward. ] Is there anything in particular I should be looking for or just my own thoughts? My first thought is that this school has accreditation issues…I believe I would call at least to be sure. A call to the veterans office. Most schools don’t have this warning…the fact that this school does raises a flag. I’d let my friend know. Went down to additional information. Looking at this I don’t think I would consider this…I would look for another school. [Clicked Learn more…] database of accredited….I’ve never heard of them before. I guess instead of calling the school, I’d call them. They would know more than the university. That would be what I would do after this warning.

Well if he’s already there, if he didn’t do his research before…if he did do his research before. When I was applying for undergrad, I called the VA for graduation. And they told me everything I know. That tells me that if he did call, then no one told him about it. I’d tell him to maybe call them. When you call about books, tuition and stuff, they should tell him that the school is not accredited.

Task 3: 2, 2

[Scrolling through options…] I would click on Yellow Ribbon here….click on Student Vet group…[would start filtering] It would just narrow down my search results so I don’t waste my time. I know Phoenix has a lot of online programs and I’m not interested in that. Maybe University of Arizona…a lot of these schools I’ve never heard of, so they don’t appeal to me. Probably University of Arizona. When I was looking at schools, I’ve never seen these warning signs. I think that’s a very useful tool – it helps us. I mean I like it. I think its great. You’re essentially saving a lot of time. It’s sort of kinda like a bad review for a product. When I see this, it throws up flags for me. Unless I talk to someone at the university…if I see it, I would avoid it. I would ask why this school and not other schools. I would say there’s just no point in looking at those schools. I would also look at how many GI Bill students are using these benefits. I know that this school has a small military community as opposed to this school. That’s another thing I would look at.

[Clicked on Brunley. Clicked View Cautionary Information.] I would not attend because it’s not approved for GI Bill…it’s also being sued for deceptive advertising. Yeah, I would not look beyond this school for it being sued…though really if its not approved…Yeah, really those 2 things

Task 4: 2

[Clicked button to remove warning schools. ] Yeah, I suppose I’ll just check this box here. Has this always been here? I just haven’t seen this before…yeah, I just don’t think a lot of schools have warnings.

I don’t think the VA would advertise the alerts because it might ruin the reputation of the schools. It’s all business at the end. I would think they should, but my brain is telling me they would sort of hide it. VA or school hide it? I don’t know, good question. Maybe the school more than the VA. Yeah, I think the school would try to hide it. I think the VA would let them know…but it may take months…so it wouldn’t reflect on this website. Eventually they would though. Maybe they could email you personally…but I don’t know if that’s feasible.

Forms of communication from VA: Mail, email…VA has not called him