

Matrix Hacksters LinkedIn Transition Program Proposal

January 8, 2018, President Trump signed an Executive Order titled “Supporting Our Veterans During Their Transition from Uniformed Service to Civilian Life¹.” The order’s aim is threefold: Expand peer community and group sessions in the VA Whole Health Initiative; extend DoD support call and outreach for the year following separation; and expand DoD Military OneSource for one year beyond service as well. We would like to focus on the peer community and group session initiative, with a focus on connecting veterans with peers using LinkedIn as part of the VA’s Whole Health Initiative. According to the Suicide Resource and Prevention Center, social connectedness and support are key protections against suicide and help buffer the effects of risk factors².

Currently the VA has Patient Centered Care where “patients” are encouraged to “find their community” so that veterans can connect and learn from other veterans who have shared life experiences³. The problem is that 42 percent of Veterans are not aware of VA health care benefits, while 26 percent reported that they do not know how to apply (National Survey of Veterans)⁴. Therefore, if veterans are not enrolled in VA Health care, they miss the opportunity to connect to peers and will not be able to reap the social protections that stem from community.

In our research, we found that every branch of service has implemented the DoD’s mandatory Transition Assistance Program⁵. As part of the curriculum, every individual is mandated to complete an Individual Transition Plan⁶. As part of that plan, all service members must complete areas of Career Readiness Standards. As part of

that process, we could encourage the creation of a LinkedIn account (In the United States Marine Corps Transition Assistance Program, this is a specific requirement.).

One of the most effective way for finding veterans via social media would be through LinkedIn, as former workplaces are listed in LinkedIn and new workplaces can be reliably added to track veteran employment. We believe that LinkedIn's role should be further expanded in the transition process such that every veteran creates a LinkedIn account, as this would make it easier for the VA to be able to mine information concerning its veterans and be notified about behaviors that would be a cause for concern, such as long-term unemployment. LinkedIn API already allows for companies to track the success of their former employees through the Alumni Networking Tools, which we believe that while we were unable to obtain, the VA would be able to utilize.

Our Application would be a project made using a few different Javascript files, but due to the fact we were not able to obtain access to the LinkedIn API, we have instead listed relevant examples of open-source JavaScript Scripts (cited with their github repository) that could be utilized in the project:

First, we would have a public profile parser that would be able to convert LinkedIn accounts to JSON files, such as what is found at. We were thinking about applying this for tracking veterans, but we are unable to access the necessary API tools, such as retrieving information concerning every former member of the armed forces. We were also not available to test this script due to LinkedIn blocking browser based requests, but have included the sample output that the creator of the script has made readily available.

<https://github.com/akitten/linkedin-public-profile-parser>

```
{
  "url": "https://www.linkedin.com/in/iteles",
  "connections": 500,
  "fullname": "Inês Teles",
  "location": "London, United Kingdom",
  "current": "Technology Project Manager, Organiser Ladies Who Code meetup",
  "picture": "https://media.licdn.com/mpr/mpr/shrinknp_200_200/p/1/005/091/3bb/0380caf.jpg",
  "summary": "What makes me tick lies at the intersection of technology with improving people's lives in bi

  "experience": {
    "current": [
      {
        "title": "Cheerleader & Mentor",
        "org": "Founders & Coders'Eynsford Tenant Management Organisation CIC",
        "date": "October 2014 - Present (1 year 3 months)September 2011 - Present (4 years 4 months)",
        "location": "London, United Kingdom",
        "desc": "I&apos;m beyond excited to be involved with the UK&apos;s first completely free coding aca
      },
    ]
  }
}
```

Example Output:

As you can see above, it can very easy to parse the current position of a veteran using LinkedIn, all that would be necessary would be the developer toolkit, which the VA should be able to obtain through the the Alumni Networking API key.

We would integrate this into the current peer mentor Initiative to create a dynamic system of peer mentors for when veterans move across the country. Currently, it is difficult for mentors to track mentees that they have fallen out of contact due to relying on old contact information from the time of the veteran's resignation. Integrating LinkedIn would allow peer mentors to gain new mentees when the mentees move to a new area, and we could dynamically track and assign new mentees using a program like the script below (i.e. if the relative distance between peer mentor and mentee addresses exceeds some threshold, say 200 miles, they can automatically be assigned a new local mentor)

Relative Distance Script

directions.jsRaw

```
1  var directionsService = new google.maps.DirectionsService();
2
3  var request = {
4    origin      : 'Melbourne VIC', // a city, full address, landmark etc
5    destination : 'Sydney NSW',
6    travelMode  : google.maps.DirectionsTravelMode.DRIVING
7  };
8
9  directionsService.route(request, function(response, status) {
10    if ( status == google.maps.DirectionsStatus.OK ) {
11      alert( response.routes[0].legs[0].distance.value ); // the distance in metres
12    }
13    else {
14      // oops, there's no route between these two locations
15      // every time this happens, a kitten dies
16      // so please, ensure your address is formatted properly
17    }
18  });
```

<script src="https://gist.github.com/levymetal/5083949.js"></script>

scripts.htmlRaw

```
1  <script src="https://maps.googleapis.com/maps/api/js?v=3.exp"></script>
```

¹ Press Release: <https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=3995>

²“Advancing Peer Support in Suicide” <https://www.sprc.org/news/advancing-peer-support-suicide-prevention>

³ VA Patient Centered Care <https://www.va.gov/PATIENTCENTEREDCARE/explore/about-whole-health/find-your-community.asp>

⁴ VA Health Benefits https://www.va.gov/healthbenefits/apply/application_process.asp

⁵ Transition Curriculum https://www.dodtap.mil/rest/docs?filename=Transition_GPS_Curriculum.pdf

⁶ Individual Transition Plan https://www.dodtap.mil/rest/docs?filename=Individual_Transition_Plan.pdf