



**Army Reservists: A Great Return on Investment**  
by David Connolly



Imagine yourself as a soldier in combat. You started your patrol with forty people. Then you came under attack. Five people are now badly wounded, including your leader. The enemy has you pinned down. There are explosions all around you, and bullets are cracking over your head. Everyone is lying flat and returning fire, but the enemy numbers appear to be overwhelming and there is nowhere to go. The situation seems impossible. Then someone in the group rises to a crouch and runs along the line, exposing themselves to shrapnel and bullets. They lay down next to the radio operator beside you, pull out a map and compass, perform some calculations and grab the radio handset. You hear them relaying coordinates to someone on the other end. They then make another call, arranging helicopters for the evacuation of the casualties. Once that's done, they continue their crouched movement along the line, issuing instructions to your group, clearly establishing your objective and determining who will move where, and when. Within minutes, artillery rounds begin to fall on the enemy position and your new leader presses forward with you in the attack. Oh .... and your new leader ..... this is their part time job.

Initiative. Courage. Resilience. Resourcefulness. Clarity of communication. Cool under pressure. These are the characteristics demonstrated by the leader in the above scenario. Is this someone you'd like to hire into your organization? If so, then look no further than your HR roster. You may already have him or her as an employee. Men and women who serve as members of the Canadian Army Primary Reserve are part time soldiers, and hold a diverse range of full time civilian occupations. They are teachers, carpenters, data scientists, students, IT professionals, nurses, police officers, welders, lawyers, doctors, administrative staff, independent business people and a host of others. They serve their country and communities part time, while holding full time civilian occupations.

If you're already employing one of these people, then it's a happy story for your company's bottom line. If you don't know whether you're employing one or more, then you should find out; you don't know the full extent of the resources at your disposal. If one knocks on your door looking to join your company, give their application very serious consideration.

Why? All organizations today are looking to do more with less. Training and development dollars can be painfully stretched. If you employ a Reservist, you are inheriting a person who shows up on his or her first day of work who has had and will continue to have access to training that is directly

relevant to any civilian organization, at no cost to you. The Canadian Army recruits and trains full and part time members to:

1. possess an acute understanding and experience of teamwork in a pressured environment; they know that the interests of the team are paramount to their own;
2. understand that attention to detail is critical to successful outcomes;
3. be mission oriented- the job is not complete until the last task has been accomplished;
4. appreciate that their behavior reflects directly upon the reputation of the organization;
5. be flexible in the face of a changing plan -they are taught that the best laid plans will go awry and they must adapt to sudden shifts in approach;
6. lead people in a stressful and time critical environment; and
7. be confident, mature and reliable.

How do I know? Here's the full disclosure piece. At the age of 33, I chose to join The Princess Louise Fusiliers, an infantry battalion based in Halifax, and served as an officer with the Regiment. At that point, I had already been practicing law in a large Atlantic firm for four years, and was used to seeing a high level of professionalism and commitment amongst my peers and seniors. When I walked through the door of the Halifax Armoury in 1995, I recognized the same dedication and professionalism in the men and women who comprised the Regiment. Even when I got out several years later, I never truly "left," because Regimental ties are strong, and in 2017 I was incredibly privileged to be asked to take on the role of the Regiment's Honourary Lieutenant Colonel. Once again, I have been given the opportunity to reunite with some familiar faces and to work with men and women who constantly demonstrate their talent, leadership skills, and immense pride in what they do.

Amongst the Reservist population there are people who can lead your teams, create and maintain your IT systems and networks, repair vehicles in your fleet, present to groups with confidence, run your logistics operations, gather business intelligence, analyze data and bring a host of other talents to your organization. Training that you might otherwise have to pay for has already been provided by the Canadian Army. These are people who remain rooted in your local community, and the salaries they are paid for their Army roles continue to flow into the local economy for as long as they serve. Support the ones who are already on your team or hire one or more to join you. Army Reservists are a great return on investment.

You can find out more about employing Reservists at this link:  
<http://www.forces.gc.ca/en/business-reservist-support/index.page>

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Recommended citation: David Connolly, Army Reservists: A Great Return on Investment, Royal United Services Institute of Nova Scotia, November 12, 2018