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VETERAN'S IN THE WORKPLACE: A TRAINING MANUAL ON RECOGNIZING AN REACTING TO EMPLOYEE'S WITH PTSD

Keilin Hopkins-Bey

Southern Illinois University Carbondale, k_hopkinsbey@yahoo.com

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VETERAN'S IN THE WORKPLACE: A TRAINING MANUAL ON RECOGNIZING AND
REACTING TO EMPLOYEE'S WITH PTSD

By

Keilin Hopkins-Bey

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A Research Paper

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
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A Research Paper Submitted in Partial

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Approved by:

Dr. Randolph Burnside, Chair

Dr. Cynthia Simms

Dr. Ratnapradipa Dhitinut

Graduate School

Southern Illinois University Carbondale

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TITLE: VETERAN'S IN THE WORKPLACE: A TRAINING MANUAL ON RECOGNIZING AN REACTING TO EMPLOYEE'S WITH PTSD

MAJOR PROFESSOR: Dr. Randolph Burnside

The focus of this paper is to provide a diversity training manual for companies that hire veterans that may be suffering from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). This is in part to bring awareness not only to employers of the public sector who have employed a veteran or veterans of the military (mainly combat veterans) with their company, but also coworkers of the veteran who may be suffering from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, commonly known as PTSD. PTSD is a disorder that can erupt within an individual at any given moment, including when triggered by a loud outburst, sudden movement, or the level of stress that an individual diagnosed with PTSD may have. In a workplace it is imperative that the employer has training readily available. It is more important than ever that everyone in the workplace is up to date with training and awareness is made. With programs like the Wounded Warrior programs and other veteran's preference programs, recruiting veterans has become a trend. In the long run it may prevent potential workplace problems one may experience when working with an individual who has PTSD.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Everyday thousands of Americans join our United States military, with the acceptance of a great benefits package, a retirement plan, travel and the opportunity to serve, protect, and possibly die for our country and its freedom. American soldiers train hard to prepare themselves mentally and physically for battle. Our American soldiers are willing to go into the unknown to protect America with the most selfless intent with little to no regard for their own lives.

While in training, soldiers are conditioned mentally and physically to a harsh reality that involves death and taking the life of another for the greater good. It is on the battlefield where each individual soldier's training and conditioning is hardened, and the harsh reality of what they have prepared for is now standard practice. This becomes a complete contradiction of what any American with a moral sense of human nature has been taught. During war the battlefield is their job. It includes being able to show up every day and by any means necessary complete their job to the highest regard, sacrificing their own lives, their own mental capacity, and their own sanity. Our soldiers do it day-in-day out without any questions asked.

When a soldier returns home they are not the same beautiful person that their families waved goodbye to. Soldiers have the potential of returning home possessing unbelievable mental problems from their experience on the battlefield, unlike most other careers that people choose; these experiences are likely to have long term negative effects. The severity of the mental problems that a soldier acquires during war is so explicit that doctors have to diagnose them with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

Not every returning soldier of Iraq or Afghan War veteran suffers from PTSD. Though the condition is prevalent enough that it has become the topic of a recent study involving 2,525 soldiers, and the results indicate that more than 40% of soldiers with injuries associated with loss of consciousness met the criteria for PTSD (Hoge, McGurk, Thomas, Cox, Engel, & Castro, 2008). PTSD opens up a whole new set of problems especially in the workplace. These problems appear in the workplace of a former combat veteran and affect him on a daily basis. Peers of a combat veteran may be oblivious to their coworker has a disorder. As we know all disorders or disabilities are not necessarily physical, and most people are oblivious of this just off first glance. It is up to the employer to understand that they hired a veteran of the military, and whether or not that veteran has seen combat or not there should be training offered that will bring awareness and understanding of this disorder, so that coworkers can become familiar with symptoms and possible triggers that may have an explosive effect on the veteran suffering from PTSD. Training on PTSD in the workplace is necessary regardless of whether the employer are hiring a veteran or not because the employees are interacting with the public which includes people who suffer from PTSD, so being informed is a necessity regardless.

Over the 5-year period from fiscal years 2006 through 2010, about 2.1 million unique veterans received mental health care from Veteran Affairs (VA). Each year the number of veterans receiving mental health care increased, from about 900,000 in fiscal year 2006 to about 1.2 million in fiscal year 2010. VA estimates that as of September 30, 2011, there were approximately 22.2 million living veteran's (United States Accountability Office, 2011, GAO-12-12).

There has been aggressive measures taken regarding estimates of psychological casualties, typically measured in the form of PTSD are estimated to be as high as 30 percent of the American troops serving in Iraq and Afghanistan (as cited in Lapierre, Schwegler, & LaBauve, 2007). “The estimated risk for PTSD from service in the Iraq war was much higher than from service in the Afghanistan mission (18% vs. 11%). In both instances, reports made about combat exposure were highly associated with the risk of PTSD (Litz, 2007). The VA provides exceptional mental health care for veterans suffering from PTSD, but who is providing the training for the families or companies that employ and come into contact with these individuals? Providing training is the most important way that we can inform people about the problems that PTSD present and how to best address them in the workplace.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Upon returning home soldiers are asked to continue with a life that they are no longer conditioned or accustomed to being a part of. As citizens they are expected to work like the next citizen, but society forgets that these heroes who have returned home just experienced what most people cannot even fathom in their worst nightmare, and they are expected to be a productive member of society like the next. What happens when a combat veteran is employed in the public sector and he is triggered by something that could seem small to the average person but it ignites him into a rage most have never seen before? As an employer how does your company handle this sensitive situation? Proper training on PTSD, what triggers PTSD, and why a person with PTSD reacts the way they do is in necessary.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

What steps are necessary in developing a training manual for veteran-friendly companies to have on hand for training their employees?

Within veteran-friendly organizations, how can current employees be trained to recognize and develop strategies to effectively deal with a fellow employee with PTSD?

SIGNIFIGANCE OF TRAINIING

What happens when a soldier's tour of duty on the battlefield is over? Soldiers are sent back home with high anxiety, stress levels are to the max and all of the previous feelings that a soldier had to suppress are now returning to the surface, and they are returning with a vengeance. Soldiers return home from war every day with the inability to control their feelings, possessing uncontrollable anger, with a very touchy temper but as a society we expect them to return to the model citizens they once were. How is this possible, when mentally a soldier returning from a stressful environment such as war, are unable to return that switch which separated them from being a citizen to a trained soldier for combat back to a normal working citizen? When this is not possible our soldiers are looked at as leopards, the black sheep of society, and doctors label them as mentally unstable for society, applying a disorder to the soldier.

What a lot of people may not know is that an individual who has PTSD may be labeled with a disability or as a disorder; they have also fallen into an invisible dimension of diversity. On the diversity wheel an invisible dimension can be categorized as a secondary dimension of diversity, rather than a primary dimension. The primary dimension usually consists of what is most important to an individual in their life. The secondary dimension consists of non-essential complexes of an individual's life. It is usually the secondary dimensions that are non-important to individuals and for this

reason peers and colleagues of these individuals are less tactful when it comes to what is important to others. In this case what is important to others and there diversity complexes that they are suffering from and it is up to the managers and leaders of organizations to provide an environment that is conducive to everyone working.

If managers are not able to provide a safe working environment for their employees from physical, verbal, or mental abuse than the lack of attention to these hazards can have a potential to send someone with PTSD, veteran or non-veteran. Managers are under extreme pressure this day in age to provide a safe environment in the workplace, and motivating their employees to achieve a higher level of performance. Having a safe environment is obtainable for any organization, but once it has been achieved employees will feel less threatened and will perform at a higher level of achievement.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

WHAT DO WE KNOW?

Since America has been at war, there has been an overwhelming amount of soldiers that have returned from Afghanistan and Iraq suffering from wounds both physical and psychological. As a country, the United States has struggled to understand, support, and treat veterans with PTSD. With all the advances in finding ways to repair a soldier's body, the medical establishment is still struggling on how to treat their minds (Boone, 2011). Though there have been many studies and researching for an exact number PTSD diagnoses, there is still no clear answer. The question still remains, how many soldiers suffer from PTSD? The Department of Veteran Affairs (VA) states there are more than 177,000 Iraq and Afghan war veterans that have received a provisional diagnoses of PTSD, keep in mind that this number does not take into consideration soldiers who are still on active duty serving our country, or veterans who seek care outside of the VA system (Boone, 2011).

DIAGNOSING PTSD

After participating in many wars PTSD, shell shock, and other names that were given to describe a person suffering from post war mental health issues PTSD could not be labeled because of unclear definitions describing this disorder. Soldiers who served in earlier wars after returning home could not receive treatment because it could not be diagnosed do to the unclear definitions of the disorder. The creation of PTSD as a diagnostic category emerged as much from politics as from medicine. The disorder was first included in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM III)

third edition, published in 1980. It took the aid of activists, many of them being Vietnam War veterans, or a veteran from a previous war, who lobbied and fought for a formal diagnosis to be made, with a proper definition, stating that the current definition for diagnosing PTSD was inadequate for a proper diagnosis for individuals suffering from PTSD. Validating the experience of delayed and prolonged psychic pain but also relieved sufferers of the shame and stigma associated with a mental illness only (Boone, 2011).

The current Diagnosis and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM), DSM-IV, describes PTSD as “the development of characteristic symptoms following exposure to an extreme traumatic stress or involving direct personal experience that involves actual or threatened death or serious injury, or other threat to one’s physical integrity. True PTSD response must involve intense fear, helplessness, or horror” (APA, 2000, 309.81).

DEFINITIONS

Posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) characterizes the re-experiencing, avoidance, hyper-arousal, and emotional numbing symptoms that may persist in response to traumatic events that may have occurred. What is important is the understanding of the precursors related to PTSD symptoms in response to a range of highly stressful experiences (Ruscio, Ruscio, Keane, 2002).

Many theories of PTSD that have thought of, share the premise that PTSD symptoms are caused and maintained by a person’s cognitive efforts, or ability to cope with a traumatic event (Keane, Fisher, Krinsley, & Niles, 1994). “The symptoms of this disorder may include flashbacks, avoidance, numbing, and the state of heightened tension known as hyper-arousal” (Boone, 2001, p 4).

TARGET HIRING AUDIENCE

Boone (2011) states the National Center for Posttraumatic Stress Disorder recorded approximately eight percent of American adults will experience PTSD in their lifetimes. Some may feel that the eight percent of the working American adults suffering from PTSD is a very small percentage of people, and should not be looked at as a public health issue. However, those American adults are coming home after successfully defending their country and are looking for jobs. The same eight percent are awarded veteran's preference rights for any job they are applying for; also veterans are being heavily recruited by employers because of their work ethic. This is where veterans suffering from PTSD and working becomes a public health issue. "The VA estimates that among the more than two million soldiers who have served in Iraq or Afghanistan, the proportion will be between 11 and 20 percent. Other researchers who look just at Iraq vets, project rates of up to 35 percent" (Boone, 2011, p.5). These numbers display what was thought to be a small percentage of the American population of soldiers returning home is in fact a larger percentage than expected of the population of soldiers returning home. These same soldiers returning home are among us and in our work places.

According to the Disabled Veterans Affirmative Action Program (DVAAP) Accomplishment Report for fiscal year 2010, the number of employees in the United States has increased by 4% during fiscal year 2010. According to the same report and for the same fiscal year 2010, the number of veterans employed in the United States also increased by 4%, and there was a large increase of 10.42% in the number of disabled veterans in the VA's workforce alone. While having a larger increase of 12.09% in the recruitment and employment community 30% or more are disabled veterans in the United States (Department of Veteran Affairs).

As of now there is a clear description of what PTSD is and how this disorder can mentally cripple an individual diagnosed with the disorder. Organizations that are military friendly with the hiring of veterans, need to be able to prepare their staff to be compassionate, non-biased to what they may have heard about PTSD, empathetic, and most importantly capable of understanding what triggers outburst, or the symptoms of an outburst that a veteran may exhibit in their work place. It is very important that the leader of an organization or company who hires veterans has some type of training in place to assist with educating their staff and personnel on the proper symptoms and triggers that coincide with having PTSD.

RECOGNITION OF SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

According to Help Guide .org, a trusted non-profit resource, studies and research show that there are three main topics when recognizing signs and symptoms of someone with PTSD. These main topics are: re-experiencing the traumatic event, avoiding reminders of the trauma, and increased anxiety and emotional arousal. Within these main topics there are some areas that more pertinent to veterans in the workplace working with coworkers, and it is very important that the coworkers and immediate leadership staff should be aware of.

Soldiers you have experienced serving in wartime and being a combatant at war is exposed to an active theater of war, which in turn makes for a highly stressful situation and a highly stressed individual. Studies have shown time and again military personnel that engage in direct combat are at increased risk for experiencing elevation of Post-Traumatic Stress (PTS) symptoms, also known as Combat Stress Reactions (CSR) (Vinokur, Pierce, Lewandowski-Romps, Hobfoll, & Galea, 2011)

Not all persons who suffer from PTSD have been involved in wartime or a combatant of war. Persons with PTSD or high levels of PTS symptoms often display an impaired role and emotional functioning when being compared to others who have experienced traumatic events within their lives but who do not have PTSD or high symptom levels (Kessler, 200; Kessler, Sonnega, Bromet, Hughes, & Nelson, 1995; Zatzick et al., 1997).

As stated above not all person suffering from PTSD or high levels of PTS have been involved in wartime or a combatant of war. What employers and persons not suffering from PTSD or PTS do not understand is that you do not have to be exposed in wartime or a combatant of war to be diagnosed with these conditions. What needs to be understood is that in addition to being exposed to the traumatic events of war, men and women of the military experience other stressful events and conditions as they serve in faraway countries. Separation from families and communities in a process called deployment all puts excessive stress on military personnel. Military personnel leaving familiar surroundings and a stable social networks is fraught with numerous elements that leads to one being more stressful, these elements are psychological, relationship, economic, and social consequences which are always put aside to deal with the mission of the war (Aldwin, Levenson, & Spiro,1994).

“The persistence of PTSD symptoms in a subgroup of trauma survivors has been explained by individual factors such as incomplete emotional processing (Rachman, 1980), and dysfunctional information-processing of traumatic memories (Horowitz, 1986). More recently, Rachman (2001) revised and updated the concept of emotional

processing to emphasize the importance of cognitive mechanisms in emotional processing (Eid, J., 2002, p.772).

It is a well-known fact that military personnel live or have lived through dangerous situations that causes a great deal of stress that is repeated over and over. The question could be asked where does the stress begins, how does the stress cycle starts? This stress cycle begins with deployment to the theaters of the war and the exposure to various war traumas in the theater, which in turn, could potentially contribute to PTS symptoms and further loss of resources. With the continuous loss of resources, and mixed with the combination of PTS symptoms all contributes to compromised role functioning and poor health. Also, what needs to be taken into consideration when it comes to adding to the stress cycle of a military personnel are major organizational-relevant outcomes such as job burnout, organizational commitment, deployment readiness, and intention to reenlist (Vinokur, Pierce, Lewandowski-Romps, Hobfoll, & Galea, 2011).

IMPACT OF WARS IN AFGHANISTAN AND IRAQ

According to Litz (2007), the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have produced chronic mental health problems that will result in or in part from, trauma of warzone experiences, exposure to the stress, and adversity. Such risks have been discussed and described repeatedly in the media and have absorbed the attention of policy makers and care providers in the Department of Defense and Veterans Affairs.

As a result, there is good reason to be more concerned about the long-term mental health life expectancy associated with the new wars America is fighting than with the toll of other post-Vietnam War operations, such as mission to Somalia (Litz, Orsillo, Friedman, Ehlich, & Batres, 1997) and the 1991 Persian Gulf War (Wolfe, Erickson,

Sharkansky, King & King, 1999). There has been only one comprehensive study that has specifically examined the mental health impact of the wars in Afghanistan, and Iraq known to date (Hoge et al., 2004).

RE-INTEGRATION PROBLEMS

After having been through such dangerous encounters of one's life, those persons who make it home find they have problems reintegrating back into society and a normal life. "An estimated 40% of Iraq-Afghanistan combat veterans who used VA medical services perceived some to extreme overall difficulty in readjusting to civilian life within the past 30 days" (Sayer et al., 2010, p.593). Sayer et al. (2010) explains that soldiers returning home from the wars of Afghanistan and Iraq experience difficulty in social relations, social relations consisting of confiding in others, getting along with their spouse, children, and friends are common with veterans integrating back into society. Veterans also have issues with extreme productivity, including problems with staying employed and completing the tasks needed for home, work or school.

EMPLOYMENT OUTCOMES

PTSD is strongly associated with poor work outcomes among veterans. Using data provided by the National Survey of the Vietnam Generation, Savoca and Rosenheck (2000) found that a lifetime diagnosis of PTSD was associated with nearly a 50% lower probability of the current employment status. Zatzick et al. (1997) found that according to the National Vietnam Veterans Readjustment study, that men diagnosed with PTSD were more than three times as likely to be out of work.

CHAPTER 3

TRAINING MANUAL

The intended method for bringing awareness to an organization or companies who employ veterans is annual training sessions, with the length of time to be determined by organization or company. Ultimately the purpose of this training manual again is to first bring awareness to the workplace as a whole. Secondly, this training manual allows a way for employers to educate their employees on PTSD and the symptoms that accompany PTSD, and how to manage and react if a situation occurs involving an employee who has PTSD in the workplace. Third, the intended outcome of this training manual is to provide a conducive working environment in a diverse workplace.

Why should employers consent to such training for their employees? Who will pay for the training to be implemented and how do employers allot time to conduct training? All are good questions that may come across if an employer is concerned with their budget. Managers or employers will argue that they are under a considerable amount of pressure to increase efficiency within their company by doing more with less. This requires a plan of action that will allow the employer to do better business while motivating their employees to work just as hard.

What employers need to realize is that, yes there is a cost that comes with implementing this training, but there is also a much greater cost if training is not implemented and the awareness of PTSD is not made. Not only for veterans who are employed within a company but those personnel who are not veterans and are suffering from PTSD. The initial implementation of the training will cost the company but the training is developed to be passed on and continued at an organizational level, which will

not cost the company any future funding. From there employers can allot time as they see fit to introduce or continue training on a regular basis, setting aside time for the training is solely up to the company and its schedule. This disorder affects everyone, there is no selection process that randomly pick which individual will suffer from PTSD, and as an employer having training in this area is extremely crucial to the equal opportunity regulations and a safe work environment that an employer is providing for all their employees, everyone benefits from the training if implemented.

As far as veterans, who are the choices of for hiring preference is seemingly amongst companies; employers have to look deeply at the statistics of veterans being hired before not considering PTSD training as an option. Statistics shows that there has been a 4% increase in the number of employees in the United States during fiscal year 2010 (DVAAP). There was a large increase of 10.42% of disabled veterans in the VA's workforce, and a huge increase of 12.09% in recruitment and a 30% increase in the employment community are veterans in the United States (Department of Veteran Affairs). For employers everything stated should have some levy on the decision to implement or not implement training for PTSD in the workplace.

CHAPTER 4

CONCLUSION

Our American soldiers are returning home at a rapid pace since the president Obama order the return of our troops. These same soldiers are returning home and are seeking employment, with all the regulations catered to veterans preference when it comes to job opportunities and the fact that employers are willing to hire veterans because of their discipline and work ethic sets the tone for training of PTSD in the workplace is more valuable than not.

Training of PTSD in the workplace will be beneficial for everyone not just veterans. PTSD training will allow for a better awareness and suspend any negative connotation that comes along with it. Employers will then be adding to the safe working environment which is a must in order to keep happy employees and high production. Training is essential to the performance of a company and its personnel.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

Post-traumatic Stress Disorder and Workplace Diversity Training Manual

Veterans with Combat Experience Returning to the Workforce



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INTRODUCTION

The workplace should be a visual representation of society, which is a mixture of many different culturally diversified ethnic backgrounds, also those with disabilities. It is amazing how many people overlook people with disabilities that are not visible to the human eye. Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder among veterans is being diagnosed at an alarming rate and more and more veterans returning home have this silent disability. It is beneficial for corporations and business to learn from various different diverse backgrounds in order to increase moral, Inclusion, and creativity which will in turn increase our company's internal profit, productivity, moral and revenue. What great honor a company can bestow upon their corporation by honoring veterans with employment. In an attempt to expand our company's growth and our unique competitive knowledge it is important for us to provide a cohesive and enjoyably comfortable work environment for all individuals of different diverse backgrounds. There are three important learning objectives we all must address in order to provide such an environment. One learning objective would be for employees to be able to identify stresses or symptoms that can trigger PTSD. Another learning objective would be to gain knowledge of what is considered discrimination towards someone with PTSD in the workplace. The final learning objective would be to provide information for employees on how to act or respond when in a situation with someone whose PTSD has been triggered. It is easy to hire diversified individuals; the challenge is to provide an environment where everyone feels accepted and comfortable being their true self, without having to feel ostracized or less than because of having PTSD.

DIAGNOSIS OF DIVERSITY PROBLEM

There is a need to resolve the underlying causes of misinterpretation and discrimination in the workplace when integrating veterans who may have or has Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. In today's business sector it seems that more individuals with hidden disabilities are more likely to be let go or quit a job, due to frustrations with a uncomfortable work environment, which business tend to allege as a form of miscommunication or misunderstanding. These misunderstanding are causing corporations loss in profits, unnecessary lawsuits, and high turnover as well as oppressive work environments and less gratifying job opportunities for veterans with PTSD. This training manual is designed for both employees and business professional to help develop and maintain an inclusive cohesive workplace.

PURPOSE

The goal of this diversity training manual is to develop and provide inclusion and diversity in a diversified work environment with veterans in the workplace, as well as eliminate potential unintentional confrontational comments, gestures, outburst and opinions that individuals with PTSD may interpret as offensive. By the end of the training, individual employees will have experienced what PTSD is and how to be sensitive to personnel with this disability and how personnel may have help contribute to the problem. The objectives are to have each individual employee display they have learned acceptance and understanding of others disabilities. Employees should become knowledgeable of offensive body language, gestures, triggers and connotations. The final

objective would be for the PTSD disability awareness to be increased by participating physically in an experience not their own.

LEARNING CURVE

The identifiable outcomes of the diversity training manual are to increase PTSD awareness so that miscommunication and misunderstandings are lessened in the workplace. The short term timeframes would be 30 minutes to an hour per learning activity and 3 hours per learning objective. The long-term time frame would be bi-monthly and discuss improvements at the monthly meeting for the duration of employment. Once the first 3 learning objectives are completed employees will sit and give their thoughts about how the training either helped or affected them.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

Program- Diversity Training

Course #1- PTSD Awareness

Unit #1- All employees

Learning Objective #1- **Employee's will be able to identify stresses or symptoms that can trigger PTSD.**

Performance Conditions: **Listens to other's opinions and ideas without judging or interrupting ones statement.** A group simulation will be demonstrated to show employees an example. Employees will be asked to share their ideas about a particular topic. While they are expressing their ideas to the group, they will be ignored and

interrupted by someone else imposing their own beliefs and ideas. This will be done to trigger potential symptoms or stresses of PTSD.

Desired Behavior: **Employees will acknowledge and try to relate to others opinions before sharing their own.** Employee will engage and listen to the person sharing their ideas and take notice to the difference in actions by the employee who is speaking.

Evaluation Criteria: **Write down identifiable stresses or symptoms that can be possible triggers different from one's own and how one can relate.** Employee demonstrated knowledge of different symptoms or stresses by giving examples of triggers that related to their own values and experiences. During the second part of the simulation employee did not interrupt the other person speaking. Employee performed all requirements within the allotted time period of 60min. Repeat annually for the duration of employment.



LEARNING OBJECTIVE

Program- Diversity Training

Course #1- PTSD Awareness

Unit #1- All employees

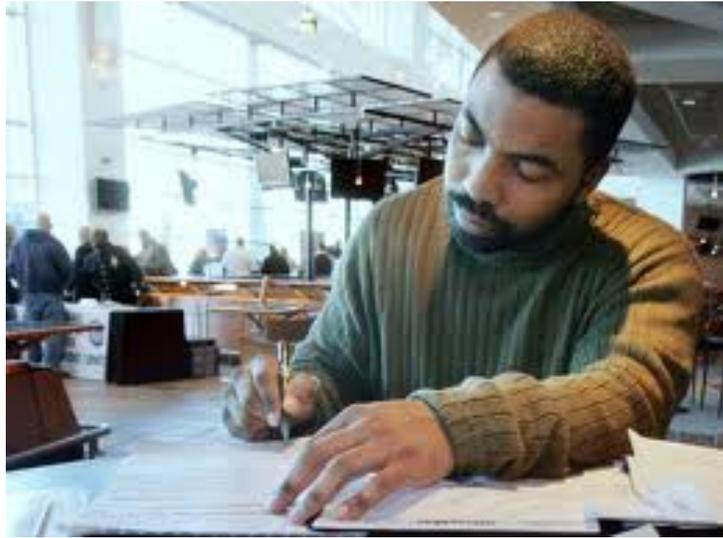
Learning Objective #2- **Employees will be able to gain knowledge of what is considered discriminatory words or actions towards someone with PTSD in the workplace.**

Performance Conditions: **At the training, given a list of common trigger words, noises, terms, and gestures that may be unintentionally offensive to individuals suffering from PTSD.**

Employee will partner with a co-worker and come up with a list of triggers that have a different meaning or connotation by one who is suffering from PTSD. Paired employees will present their list to all employees in the PTSD awareness training. Employees will switch partners until all employees have partnered with everyone present in the training.

Desired Behavior: **Employee will agree to avoid using words that are unintentionally offensive while in an environment with someone suffering from PTSD.**

Evaluation Criteria: **Give feedback on triggers that might have a different meaning to someone with PTSD. Retained and shared words other than their own that have different meanings from someone other than them.** Employee shared words and connotations that have different meanings from another presenters list. Employee performed all tasks within the allotted time period of 60min. Repeat annually for the duration of employment.



LEARNING OBJECTIVE

Program- Diversity Training

Course #1- PTSD Awareness

Unit #1- All employees

Learning Objective #3- **Employees will be able to provide information for employees on how to act or respond when in a situation with someone who's PTSD has been triggered.**

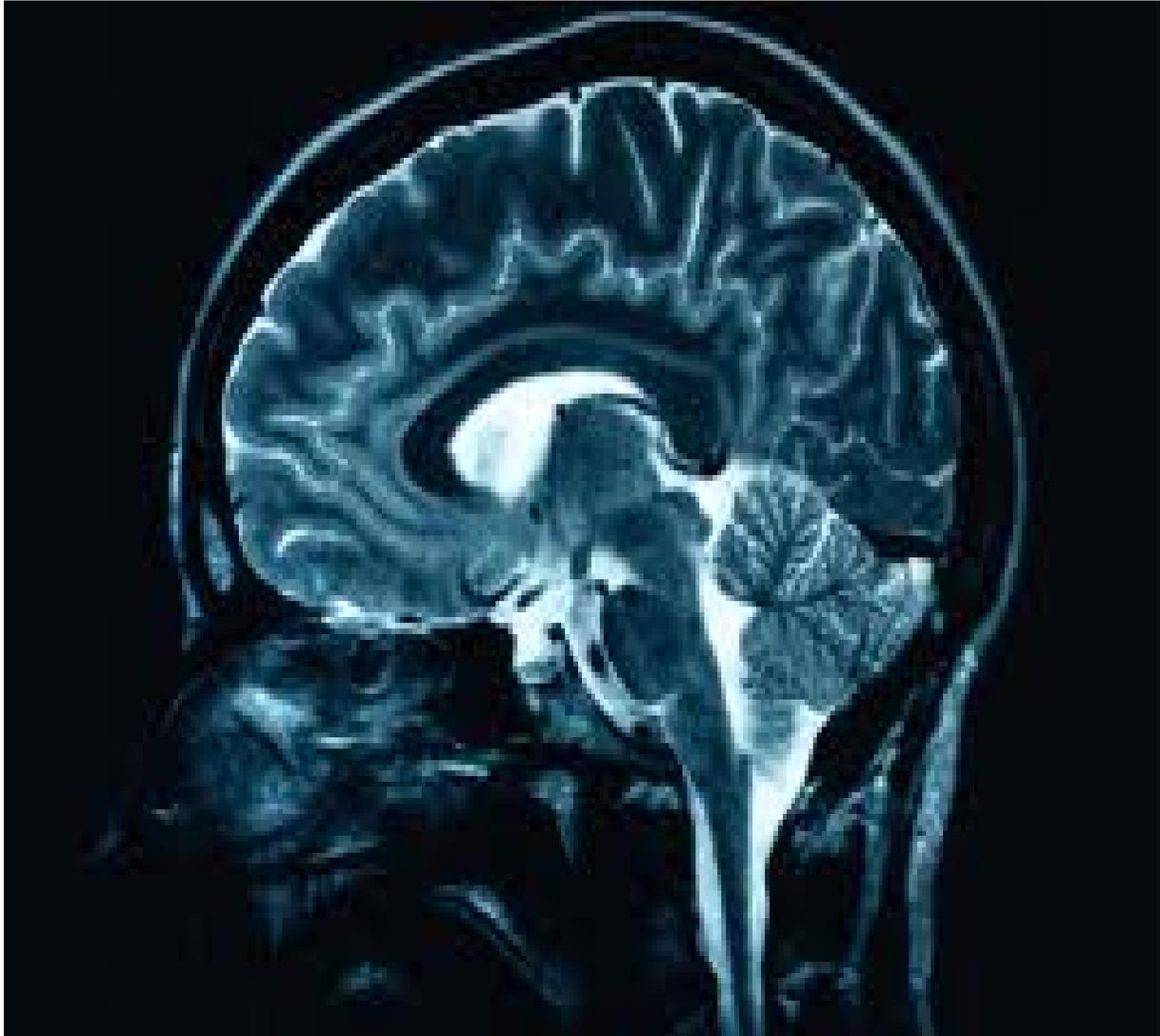
Performance Conditions: **While in the training session, everyone will participate in a scenario, with someone who's PTSD has been triggered and they are having an outburst.**

Employee will help in developing an environment that represents a calm environment that will help calm the employee down and help the employee through their outburst by utilizing all acquired knowledge from additional learning activities.

Desired Behavior: **Employee will learn how to control a situation when there is an employee suffering from a PTSD outburst.**

Evaluation Criteria: **Represented and demonstrated the correct reaction and follow up to a PTSD outburst or witness to discrimination to someone with PTSD.** Employees who are not part of the scenario will help create an offensive environment in order to honor the other validity of the scenario and show that they are actually paying attention to the culture in question. Employee performed all duties within the allotted timeframe of 15 minutes per scenario, repeating this process until every employee has played the lead in the scenario.





(Ressler, L. 2012. Combat Vets, Trauma and PTSD-Part 1)

APPROACH

LEARNING MODULE #1

Program- Diversity Training

Course #1- PTSD Awareness

Unit #1- All employees

Learning Objective #1- **Identify stresses or symptoms that can trigger PTSD.**

Performance Conditions: **Listens to others opinions and ideas without judging or interrupting ones statement.** A group simulation will be demonstrated to show employees an example. Employees will be asked to share their ideas about a particular topic. While they are expressing their ideas to the group, they will be ignored and interrupted by someone else imposing their own beliefs and ideas. This will be done to trigger potential symptoms or stresses of PTSD.

Desired Behavior: **Employees will acknowledge and try to relate to others opinions before sharing their own.** Employee will engage and listen to the person sharing their ideas and take notice to the difference in actions by the employee who is speaking.

Evaluation Criteria: **Write down identifiable stresses or symptoms that can be possible triggers, different from one's own and how one can relate.** Employee demonstrated knowledge of different symptoms or stresses by giving examples of triggers that related to their own values and experiences. During the second part of the simulation employee did not interrupt the other person speaking. Employee performed all requirements within the allotted time period of 60 minutes. Repeat annually for the duration of employment.

Learning Activities

1. Play an interruption game 30 minutes.
2. Complete a listen and recall activity 30 minutes.

ACTIVITES OF LEARNING MODULE #1

1. *Interruption Game*

1. Ask each employee to think of something that is important to them. Tell each employee to form a 2 minutes discussion as to why it is personally important to them that they should not be triggered by this particular stressor.
2. Inform all employees that they are to present in front of everyone else.
3. Encourage employees who are not presenting to interrupt or ignore the presenter.

(This activity will allow every employee to see how it feels to be ignored when sharing something of personal importance or value.)



ACTIVITIES FOR LEARNING MODULE #1

2. *Listen and Recall activity*

1. Ask employees to form a group of 3 and take turns describing stressors or symptoms that trigger irritation that are important to them.
2. Employees are to listen only when their other members are talking. Employees can only talk when it is their turn, allowing everyone to be heard without interruption.
3. Inform employees that they are no longer allowed to talk to each other.
4. Ask employees to write down as much as they can remember about the other 2 employee's symptoms and stressors and which of these go with each employee in the group.
5. Have individual employees recall what they have learned about the other stressors and symptoms in their group and share it with the whole training group as a whole. The remaining two members will disclose if the one presenting was right or wrong.



LEARNING MODULE #2

Program- Diversity Training

Course #1- PTSD Awareness

Unit #1- All employees

Learning Objective #2- **Employees will gain knowledge of what is considered discriminatory words or actions towards someone with PTSD in the workplace.**

Performance Conditions: **At the training, given a list of common trigger words, noises, terms, and gestures that may be unintentionally offensive to individuals suffering from PTSD.**

Employee will partner with a co-worker and come up with a list of triggers that have a different meaning or connotation by one who is suffering from PTSD. Paired employees will present their

list to all employees in the PTSD awareness training. Employees will switch partners until all employees have partnered with everyone present in the training.

Desired Behavior: Employee will agree to avoid using words that are unintentionally offensive while in an environment with someone suffering from PTSD.

Evaluation Criteria: Give feedback on triggers that might have a different meaning to someone with PTSD. Retained and shared words other than their own that have different meanings from someone other than them. Employee shared words and connotations that have different meanings from another presenters list. Employee performed all tasks within the allotted time period of 60min. Repeat annually for the duration of employment.

Learning Activities

1. Read over the list of triggers that may be offensive to individuals with PTSD.
2. Complete a list of one's own triggers with different meanings, 30.

OFFENSIVE TRIGGERS



1. Loud noises (Banging, sounds that are similar to gun shots)
2. Screaming, Yelling or Speaking loud
3. Surrounded by a large crowd of people.
4. Heat stress
5. Unanticipated quick movement from someone.
6. Someone standing behind a person with PTSD triggering anxiety.
7. Being around a specific culture.
8. Arguing.
9. Excessive physical activity.
10. Being called names (vegetable, meathead, and retard).
11. Unwanted touching.
12. Invasion of personal space.

(Mayo Clinic, (2011). Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD): Symptoms.

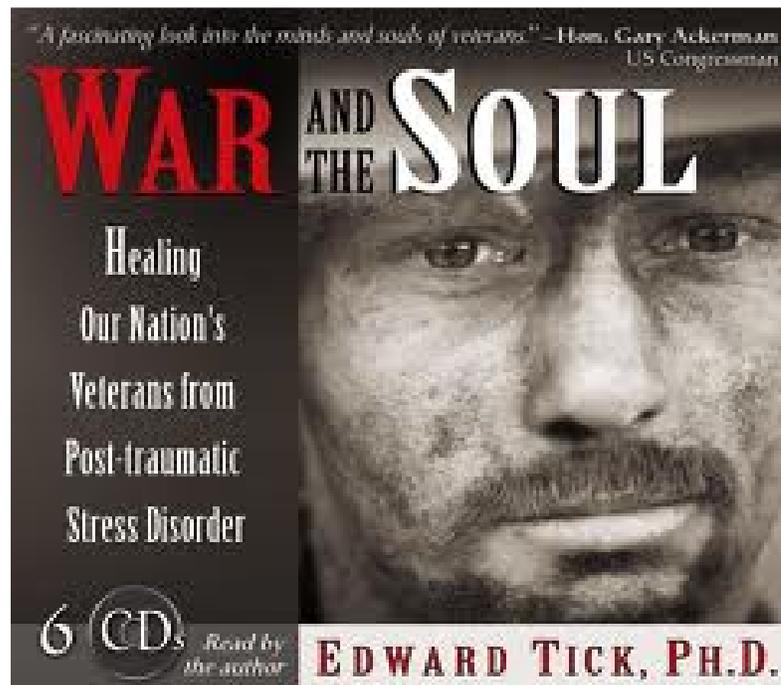
www.mayoclinic.com).

ACTIVITIES OF LEARNING MODULE #2

1. *Words with Different Meanings*

1. Employees will be given a list of 5-7 words that are potential triggers for someone with PTSD.
2. Ask employees to review the words and write down the number to the words that they are unaware of as offensive to others. (This will allow the trainer to see what needs to be focused on for future activities.)
3. Encourage employees to refrain from using such words.

ACTIVITIES OF LEARNING MODULE #2



(Tick, E. (2005). War and Soul: Healing our Nation's Veterans from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder)

2. Your Own Words with Different Meanings

1. Employees are to be paired with a fellow employee.
2. Both partners are to develop a list of words, gestures, and connotations (These words and gestures do not have to be offensive).
3. Each group will present their list.
4. All employees will be encouraged at the end to add their personal irritation words, gestures that they suffer from or words that may encourage positive emotions towards someone with PTSD to the words presented by their co-workers.

LEARNING MODULE #3

Program- Diversity Training

Course #1- PTSD Awareness

Unit #1- All employees

Learning Objective #3- **To provide information for employees on how to act or respond when in a situation with someone who's PTSD has been triggered.**

Performance Conditions: **While in the training session, everyone will participate in a scenario, with someone who's PTSD has been triggered and they are having an outburst.**

Employee will help in developing an environment that represents a calm environment that will help calm the employee down and help the employee through their outburst by utilizing all acquired knowledge from additional learning activities.

Desired Behavior: **Employee will learn how to control a situation when there is an employee suffering from a PTSD outburst.**

Evaluation Criteria: **Represented and demonstrated the correct reaction and follow up to a PTSD outburst or witness to discrimination against someone with PTSD.** Employees who are not part of the scenario will help create an offensive environment in order to honor the other validity of the scenario and show that they are actually paying attention to the culture in question. Employee performed all duties within the allotted timeframe of 15 minutes per scenario, repeating this process until every employee has played the lead in the scenario.

Learning Activities

1. Research policies on discrimination of people with PTSD.
2. Research and identify cases of PTSD incidences in the workplace.
3. Participate in the designed scenario presented.

ACTIVITIES OF LEARNING MODULE #3

1. Identify PTSD triggered environment

1. Employees will participate in a scenario of a PTSD outburst.
2. Employees will be told to find out as much information about policies of discrimination against PTSD.
3. Employees should be encouraged to find positive encouragement techniques that can be of significant help if this scenario actually happens.

4. Based on the information employees remember about PTSD, they will develop an environment that represents calm, inoffensive and encouraging in nature.



Remarks:

Attainment:

The learner has attained all of the first 3 objectives of the Diversity Training and is encourage continuing additional training to increase awareness and promote inclusion.

Instructor's Signature

Date

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder Diversity Training

This is to certify that:

Has fulfilled the three learning objectives

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder Awareness

Date

Instructor

VITA

Graduate School
Southern Illinois University

Keilin Hopkins-Bey

k_hopkinsbey@yahoo.com

Southern Illinois University Carbondale
Bachelor of Arts, Administrative of Justice

Research Paper Title:

VETERAN'S IN THE WORKPLACE: A TRAINING MANUAL ON RECOGNIZING
AN REACTING TO EMPLOYEE'S WITH PTSD

Major Professor: Dr. Randolph Burnside