



SERVING
CAREER-MINDED
MILITARY SPOUSES

GOVERNMENT CONTRACTING: PROFESSIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

What is Government Contracting?

- ⦿ Government buys “stuff” ranging from office supplies to weapons systems
- ⦿ It also buys services, including professional services in a variety of fields
- ⦿ Many firms— large and small-- do business with the government and hire people at the professional levels

Pros of Employment with a Government Contractor

- ⦿ Higher likelihood of being hired without direct DoD experience
- ⦿ Flexible career progression opportunities
- ⦿ Often less bureaucracy
- ⦿ Can be a “bridge” opportunity between non-government employment and a GS position

Drawbacks of Government Contracting

- ⦿ Job security concerns
 - New OMB memo: 15% cuts to service contracts
- ⦿ Job portability may be limited, especially with smaller firms
- ⦿ Pay/benefits can vary widely
 - Many firms hiring “1099s” instead of employees (see next slide for explanation)

Employee vs. 1099 work

- ◎ Some firms hire independent contractors— 1099s— to staff projects instead of hiring direct employees
 - No employer taxes due
 - No benefits required
- ◎ 1099 isn't necessarily a bad option, but make sure:
 - Pay is higher than as an employee to cover tax and benefit deductions
 - Line up back-up plans when contract is over

Where can I find jobs?

◎ Standard Places:

- MSEP website
- Employer websites
- Large job boards (Monster, etc)
- Linked In

◎ Other interesting options

- Ask the small business office or contracting office on your installation about which firms hold large professional service contracts
- Look on fedbizops.gov to find newly awarded contracts
- Network at conferences aimed at businesses
- Ask at informational interviews for GS jobs about contract firms working alongside the GS professionals