

# Case Study: Stanley Black & Decker

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Supporting Veterans Through a Strong and Active Employee Resource Group

*StanleyBlack&Decker*

## ➤ Company Overview

Stanley Black & Decker (NYSE:SWK) is the world's largest tool company, with employees that produce innovative, award-winning power tools, hand tools, storage, digital tool solutions, lifestyle products, outdoor products, engineered fasteners and other industrial equipment to support the world's makers, creators, tradespeople and builders. With people and technology at the center of its operating model, Stanley Black & Decker seeks to use innovative approaches, provide extraordinary customer service, use excellent operations and work resiliently to produce 1,000 new products each year that meet customer needs. At present, the company has more than 50,000 employees throughout 60 countries. Dedicated to social responsibility, Stanley Black & Decker is committed to using environmentally sustainable practices; sourcing materials from a diverse supply chain that supports sustainable businesses; and incorporating diversity, equity and inclusion into its company practices and culture.

## ➤ Program Summary

As part of its efforts to advance diversity, equity and inclusion within the workplace, Stanley Black & Decker has several Employee Resource Groups that provide support and community to group members. Specifically, the company's Veterans Network ERG has excelled at attracting veterans who have served in the United States Armed Forces to work at Stanley Black & Decker as well as taken significant steps to support veterans during their time of employment. In addition, the company continues to enhance its ERG through strategic partnerships with external organizations such as The Manufacturing Institute through their Heroes MAKE America initiative.

The Veterans Network ERG began in 2014 when five employees met to discuss how they could support veterans at the company. From there, this ERG has driven initiatives that support veterans within the company through various initiatives. As the ERG has expanded, it created a volunteer board to meet regularly and make decisions about which initiatives and programs would best serve veterans' needs.

### Project Title



Supporting Veterans  
Through a Strong and Active  
Employee Resource Group

### Tags



Resource Group, Veterans

### Complexity



1 out of 3 light bulbs

### Budget



\$ - \$\$

### Location



New Britain, Connecticut

### Launch Time



1-2 Years

## ▶ Program Summary Continued

To best support veterans at Stanley Black & Decker, the ERG aligns its activities to the 4Cs: career, community, culture and commerce. Using elements of the 4Cs to create an inclusive environment for veterans at the company. The ERG created a Veterans Network ERG page on Workplace, a Facebook communication tool for companies that allows employees to interact online. Through Workplace, veterans can engage with each other, learn who else at the company is a veteran, share ideas and stay informed about company events that support veterans. No matter their location in the world, veterans can learn about each other and feel a sense of community.

Knowing the importance of having a diverse Human Resources team, the ERG has been important for supporting recruitment and hiring, which has been beneficial in two ways. First, it informs the HR team about the experiences of veterans and the skills they bring to the company. Second, it helps recruit potential employees, as veterans seeking employment at Stanley Black & Decker can speak with a staff member who is a veteran, share their experiences and receive answers to questions that apply specifically to veterans.

While the company has worked internally to support veterans, it also has developed external partnerships to further enhance its commitment to veterans and their Veterans Network ERG. One of the key external partnerships is with The Manufacturing Institute's Heroes MAKE America initiative. Each quarter, the company interacts with Heroes training participants and the greater military community through Heroes Connect virtual events designed to directly connect the military community to manufacturers that are hiring. During these events, Stanley Black & Decker highlights their company and their many diverse careers that nearly directly align with the military members' skills and leadership training. The partnership not only provides Stanley Black & Decker with a connection to a robust military talent pipeline, but it also provides members of their Veterans Network ERG opportunities to give back to the military community. Several Veterans Network ERG members participate in Heroes MAKE America events to provide insights on their personal transition story, their pathway to a career in manufacturing and lessons learned in their post-military careers.

Many of Stanley Black & Decker's construction partners care about and seek to partner with veterans. As part of this collaboration, Stanley Black & Decker will add the logos of its companies on its NASCAR vehicle, which then participates in key events, such as the NASCAR 9/11 tribute race and Veterans Day race. This not only demonstrates Stanley Black & Decker's and their partners' support of veterans, but it also helps their smaller partners gain visibility from the public.

Finally, the ERG has taken advantage of other partnerships to provide resources to veterans. Through partnering with Helmets to Hardhats, Stanley Black & Decker supplies veterans who are training for careers in construction with the tools and equipment they will need to advance in their professions.

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**With our ERG, we look to recruit and retain veterans at Stanley Black & Decker. We also support our employees who are veterans by finding initiatives that we care about and using those initiatives to help.”**

— Nima Nejad,  
Director, Ecommerce  
Program Management



## ➤ Program Impact

Engagement between veterans at the company has remained the major impact of the Veterans Network ERG. What started as five employees discussing how they can support veterans at initial ERG meetings has turned into a 1,000+ employee community of veterans who self-identified and seek to support each other. Their engagement through Workplace has allowed veterans across the world to engage with each other, share experiences and create a community.

Furthermore, recruitment of veterans has been enhanced significantly at the company. HR members can better dialogue with veterans and answer their questions. Additionally, Stanley Black & Decker has prioritized highlighting veterans' stories on its website, allowing prospective veteran employees to see other veterans excelling in both a corporate and manufacturing atmosphere and, therefore, imagining themselves in a similar role at the company.

## ➤ Steps for Implementation

1. Do your research. Before creating a Veterans Network ERG, research other companies that have done the same. Connect with individuals at those companies for support and guidance.
2. Identify a core group of veteran employees who can serve as founding members of the ERG group. Let that core group drive initiatives and programs.
3. Use Workplace or other social media platforms to further develop a community of veterans at your company. Encourage the sharing of experiences, resources and events/activities.
4. Ensure that there is veteran representation on your HR team. Have Veteran HR members attend career fairs and other community gatherings to engage with prospective employees who are veterans.
5. Develop partnerships with employers who serve veterans to expand the ways in which your company provides resources.

## Best Practices

- ✓ **Start small.** Stanley Black & Decker began its ERG with five individuals who were passionate about providing other veterans with resources and a sense of community. The company allowed those individuals to drive the ERG's initiatives forward, plan events and recruit other veterans to join in their efforts.
- ✓ **Gain the support of executive leadership.** Two of Stanley Black & Decker's executives are very supportive of and involved with the Veterans Network ERG. Having this support within the company helps drive the ERG's initiatives forward, as leadership approves of and assists the ERG with its efforts.
- ✓ **Do not be afraid to ask people to self-identify as veterans.** While the ERG was at first cautious about asking people to self-identify as veterans, after asking employees to self-identify through an online poll, there was an overwhelming response from veterans at the company. Stanley Black & Decker also asked employees to post a picture of themselves or their family members in uniform on social media, providing the ERG with an idea of which employees or employees' family members were veterans. That information has also helped expand the support they offer to their veteran community.