



# STEPHEN HARTLEY

## STEPHEN HARTLEY'S SUCCESS STORY

### ABOUT

Stephen Hartley is a Veteran who spent 12 years in the Army. In the latter half of his military career, he was a 92 Fox, petroleum specialist, in the Quarter Master Corps. He was a platoon sergeant for a "three five platoon," where he led over 70 soldiers that provided combat service support in the form of refueling for helicopters and for vehicles.

His platoon also tested all the fuel for the Army National Guard, the Marine Reserves, and the Coast Guard Apache and Blackhawk helicopters that were at the airfield.

After several years of active duty service, even though he wanted to stay in, he was forced to medically retire due to the epileptic seizures he experienced.

### RELAUNCH STATS

Length of Career Break  1 year

Nature of Career Break  Military service, upskilling

Time to Relaunch  1 year

### CAREER TRAJECTORY

Pre-Break Employer and Job Title

Platoon Sergeant (E-6)  
U.S. Army

Employer and Job Title at Point of Relaunch

Consultant  
Century Automotive Group

Current Employer and Job Title

Program Coordinator  
Still Serving Veterans

### SINCE YOUR TRANSITION OUT OF THE MILITARY WAS UNEXPECTED, HOW DID YOU DETERMINE WHAT LIES AHEAD?

The first step I took was to go back to school full time. Looking back, I think I always had a heart of a teacher as mentoring and teaching were my core responsibilities in the army too. So I graduated with a degree in history and did a short student teaching stint in public schools. I spent the next year connecting with my network when one of my friends encouraged me to consider selling automobiles. I learned a bit more about the trade, went to a local dealership and convinced them to give me an opportunity. Even though I enjoyed the work and was successful, I eventually got tired of the long hours necessary for the job. Life came full circle when I stepped into the office of an organization that had provided me assistance previously-Still Serving Veterans. "As luck would have it," they were hiring for a guide to coordinate the employment side of the business. My skills were a match! I now serve our Veterans and their families by assisting them in obtaining meaningful employment and helping them attain the benefits that they have earned from their service.

### WHAT ADVICE DO YOU HAVE FOR OTHER VETERANS NAVIGATING CAREER CONTINUITY?

Honor your values. Realize that you hold the solution to many problems you face; the answer is not in extrinsic situations.

When you find yourself stressed, find constructive and healthy ways to take care of your mental and physical health.

Explore your strengths and find something that you're good at. Think back to when you were young and the things you liked to do; where others said you excelled. Find the skills you possess that are marketable; if you aren't sure what those are, learn something basic that can earn you some money.

Stay in good physical shape. You don't have to be a professional athlete or anything, but engage in physical activity on a regular basis. It clears your head and keeps you fit. There's a reason why the military wants you to do PT (exercise) in the morning. Sound body, sound mind, sound spirit.

To read Stephen's full success story, visit [iRelaunch's Success Story Archive!](#)