

1. Background & Service

- What led you to join the military?
- Which branch did you serve in, and during what time period?
- What was your role or specialty?
- What surprised you most when you first joined?

2. Experience & Meaning

- Was there a moment during your service that changed you as a person?
- What's something civilians often misunderstand about military life?
- What is a memory from your service that still sticks with you today?

3. Challenges (Handle with care)

- What was one of the hardest parts of your service?
- How did your experiences affect you mentally or emotionally?
- What helped you get through the difficult times?

4. Transition to Civilian Life

This is where many listeners deeply connect.

- What was the transition back to civilian life like?
- What was harder than you expected?
- What helped you adjust — or what do you wish you had at the time?

5. Growth, Reflection & Message

End on strength and perspective.

- How has your service shaped who you are today?
- What are you most proud of from your time in uniform?
- What advice would you give to younger service members?
- Is there anything you wish civilians better understood about veterans?

6. How to Ask Follow-Ups (Key Prompts)

- Can you tell me more about that?
- What did that feel like in the moment?
- How did that change you afterward?

7. Closing the Interview

- Thank you for sharing your story with us. Your service — and your voice — matter.
- Offer them the opportunity to share any final thoughts.

8. Important Interviewer Tips

- Don't interrupt emotional moments
- Silence is okay — often powerful
- Never sensationalize trauma
- Treat every story as sacred