

Sodexo named in Top 50 Employer of Veterans list

1 year ago



[Sodexo UK & Ireland](#) has made the GREAT British Employers of Veterans Top 50 list for 2024. The list, in its second year, is compiled by the organisers of the Ex-forces in Business Awards which were held last night.

The list was created to provide a comprehensive guide to the leading companies in which military veterans and other members of the Armed Forces family can build a meaningful career. The 2024 list was the first time employers were ranked in order of achievement.

Sodexo, ranked 17 in the list, employs over 500 veterans across its organisation in all its business segments, roles and grades. Sodexo provides many opportunities to develop and grow in new roles whilst allowing people to draw on the valuable knowledge, skills and experience they have gained in their military careers.

Over 150 Forces Friendly employers applied to be included in the list. A judging panel of 20 veterans assessed the entries and formulated the ranking of the Top 50 Employers of Veterans in the UK. The top 50 employers feature in a dedicated book which was launched on 27 June at the MilFest 2024 conference and provides veterans with valuable information for any veterans seeking their next career move.

Paul Anstey, CEO Government, Sodexo UK & Ireland said: "We are extremely proud and delighted to be included in this list. Supporting the Armed Forces plays a key part of our Social Impact Pledge.

"We recognise the value veterans can bring to our business and continue to focus on providing civilian career opportunities where we can. Our goal is to ensure our people feel like they belong, enable them to act with purpose and to thrive in their careers with us."

The values of veterans and employees with military connections align strongly with Sodexo's company values of service spirit, team spirit and spirit of progress. The transferable skill that veterans bring include:

- A strong work ethic with agility, respect for others, problem-solving and critical thinking skills, integrity and sound judgement
- A calm and considered approach when working under pressure
- Ability to engage and lead or be a part of a team striving to achieve a goal or task
- Specialist areas, training and experience including leadership skills, communications, IT/computer skills, statistical analysis, network security, language skills, first aid, health & safety, personnel management and HGV licences.

Sodexo is committed to supporting the armed forces community and was an early signatory of the Armed Forces Covenant. As a partner to the military for over 30 years Sodexo continually looks to support and provide employment opportunities at every level to those leaving the military.

Sodexo was an early signatory of the Armed Forces Covenant and since 2017 Sodexo has held the Gold Employer Recognition Award by the Ministry of Defence in recognition of its commitment and efforts to support the – Armed Forces community through its strong employment policies. It was one of the first organisations to be awarded gold. Its policies and initiatives include:

- the positive recruitment of ex-military personnel
- the provision of employment opportunities for the spouses of service personnel posted into areas where Sodexo holds a contract
- a flexible approach to granting leave for employees which are members of the Reserves
- an employee Reservist and Military network, Military Connections, giving a voice to those in Sodexo's workforce that are reserves, veterans, families of serving personnel as well as those with a connection or interest in the military. This network provides representation from this unique group to ensure Sodexo's policies and ways of working are inclusive to their needs
- member of the IWFM Veterans in FM network
- a partnership approach to supporting service charities such as SSAFA, the Armed Forces charity, which it has been a partner to for over 15 years and provides valuable support through:
 - sponsorship, volunteering and fundraising activities
 - financial support for the charity's homelessness fund through the Sodexo Stop Hunger Foundation
 - a number of Sodexo employees also participate in SSAFA's mentoring scheme to help individuals transitioning from the military into civilian life
 - Since 2019 Sodexo has supported the charity's Friendly to Forces campaign, aimed at encouraging more UK companies to challenge their perceptions of hiring service leavers

At this year's Ex-forces in Business awards four of Sodexo's employees were shortlisted:

- Sarah Geddes, accommodation cell administrator, Akrotiri (Cyprus) – Lifetime Achievement
- Dale Hegarty, senior continuous improvement manager (food services), defence – Outstanding

Achiever of the Year

- Andy Lowe, service manager Akrotiri (Cyprus) – Business Leader of the Year
- David Smart, deputy director HMP Forest Bank – Team Leader of the Year. Sadly David passed away earlier this year, his nomination is a testament to his dedication, professionalism and inspiring positive energy.