LGBTQ+ Workplace Equity Toolkit

Participant's Guide

Pride in the Triangle

Pride in the Triangle

Pride in the Triangle (PITT) is a collaboration of Triangle area LGBTQ+ employees, consultants, and allies from companies in all sectors. We come together to network, share best practices, and work on LGBTQ+ issues in our companies and across North Carolina. We envision a more inclusive and equitable work environment for LGBTQ+ people and are working collaboratively to make that vision a reality.

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Introductions, Set Up and Rationale

Training Goal and Objectives

Goal: To increase organizational effectiveness by creating a more inclusive and equitable work environment for LGBTQ+ colleagues.

Objectives: At the end of this training, participants will be able to:
- Explain the rationale for LGBTQ+ workplace equity training
- Define relevant terminology and concepts
- Articulate the business case for LGBTQ+ workplace equity
- Express empathy for LGBTQ+ colleagues
- Demonstrate awareness of biases and act in solidarity with LGBTQ+ colleagues
- Describe particular concerns LGBTQ+ employees can experience and steps to address them
- Make a commitment to take action to promote inclusion and equity for LGBTQ+ colleagues

Group Agreements

- Care for ourselves and each other
- Begin and end on time
- Speak our truth using "I" statements
- Honor confidentiality
- Listen actively with the intent to learn
- Agree or disagree respectfully
- Recognize positive intentions; address impact
- Maintain one conversation
- Make space for each person's contributions
- Take risks and stretch beyond our comfort zones
- Strive to accept discomfort as catalytic to growth
- Accept lack of closure
- Switch devices to vibrate and put away
- Stay present; resist multi-tasking
- Others: _____

Rationale for Having This Training

Three Component of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Training:

- Heart:

- Mind:

- Action:

The Concept of the Naïve Offender

Naïve offenders include all of us, who on occasion unintentionally make an error in some aspect of diversity and inclusion. People may have good intentions but say or do something offensive to their colleagues. Impact may be different from intent. Frequently, these missteps come from a lack of knowledge.

Tying to Organizational Vision, Mission, and Values

Terminology and Concepts

Diversity: Characteristics that make individuals and groups unique and different from each other, including identity markers, personalities, ways of thinking, ideas, and perspectives. A **diverse workplace** includes a mix of coworkers with different socially-relevant identities and experiences working together.

Identity markers may include: race, ethnicity, national origin, indigenous heritage, religion, language, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, marital and family status, age, educational level, socioeconomic level, dis/ability, geographic location, political affiliation, citizenship and veteran status. **Characteristics may include**: personality type and diversity of thought.

Inclusion: Actions to create an environment in which everyone is and feels welcomed, respected, valued, and supported to fully participate.

Equity: Fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement for all people, while identifying and shifting power structures, eliminating systemic barriers, and providing needed resources to ensure the full agency, participation, and benefit of people who have experienced discrimination and oppression.

The Importance of Belonging

- Diversity

- Inclusion

- Belonging

Everyone is part of the diversity mix and has their own unique set of characteristics

- Primary: those attributes with which we are born that are our immutable characteristics

- Secondary: those attributes due to how and where we were raised and life and social circumstances and decisions, such as: our education, getting married, having children, joining the military

- Organizational: diversity based on our place and longevity in our organization

- Cultural: includes items such as our communication style, views on authority, and ways of thinking and processing information that often come into play at work

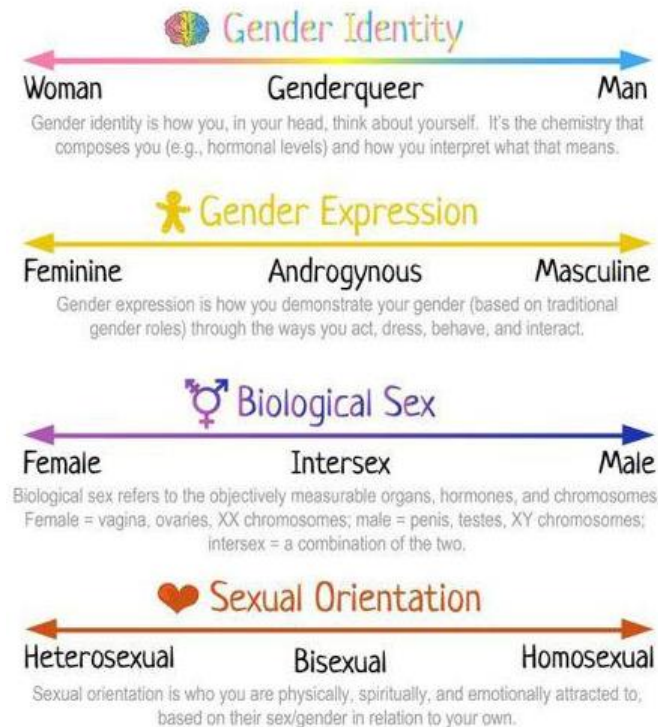**LGBTQ+ Terminology: See Appendix**

Proper vs. Outdated and Offensive Terms

Group	Proper Term	Outdated/ Unacceptable	Offensive
LGBTQ+ Same-gender couple	Gay, LGBTQ+, Lesbian Sexual orientation Partner, Spouse Significant Other Husband /Wife	Homosexual	Dyke, F-word Queer (1) Sexual Preference "Lifestyle" Room-mate, friend
Transgender people	Transgender, Transperson	Transvestite Transexual	Not using their chosen name or pronoun, trannie, she-male, shim
Intersexed people	Intersexed	Hermaphrodite	She-male
Gender non-binary people	Genderqueer, Gender non-binary/fluid/nonconforming/ expansive, two-spirited		Shim

(1) Dyke and queer may be offensive to some LGBTQ+ people, but some people have re-claimed and embraced the terms (2) New salutation gaining some acceptance: Mx.

Gender and Sexuality

Gender Identity
Woman — Genderqueer — Man
Gender identity is how you, in your head, think about yourself. It's the chemistry that composes you (e.g., hormonal levels) and how you interpret what that means.

Gender Expression
Feminine — Androgynous — Masculine
Gender expression is how you demonstrate your gender (based on traditional gender roles) through the ways you act, dress, behave, and interact.

Biological Sex
Female — Intersex — Male
Biological sex refers to the objectively measurable organs, hormones, and chromosomes. Female = vagina, ovaries, XX chromosomes; male = penis, testes, XY chromosomes; intersex = a combination of the two.

Sexual Orientation
Heterosexual — Bisexual — Homosexual
Sexual orientation is who you are physically, spiritually, and emotionally attracted to, based on their sex/gender in relation to your own.

Transgender: An umbrella term for people whose gender identities, expressions, and/or behaviors are different from those typically associated with people with their assigned sex at birth.

Use of Pronouns

- Third-person pronouns in English: She/her/hers, they/their/theirs, he/him/his, etc.
- People often make incorrect assumptions about a person's gender
- Transgender, gender non-conforming, and nonbinary people use pronouns other than those they were assigned at birth
- Being "misgendered" is disturbing, exhausting, and can even cause intense feelings of dysphoria
- Using correct pronouns is an important and easy way to show respect
- You can model providing your pronouns during introductions
- Pronouns, like gender, can be fluid and change over time
- Many workplaces encourage employees to include their pronouns and use gender-neutral language in job descriptions to avoid gender bias

Intersectionality: A framework for conceptualizing a person, group of people, or social issue that takes into account people's complex, overlapping identities and relative power, privilege, and marginalization to gain a more nuanced understanding of their lived experiences and needs.

A critical approach to equity, diversity, and inclusion.

(Adapted from Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw © 2019 Global Citizens, LCC for use by Pride in the Triangle)

Ally: A person with relative privilege and power who builds trusting relationships and acts in solidarity and with accountability to people and/or groups with marginalized identities without detracting from their power and voices.

Business Case for LGBTQ+ Equity

Importance of Talking about LGBTQ+ in the Workplace

Challenges LGBTQ+ people face in the workplace

- Being fired for being LGBTQ+ instead of for performance and action-based reasons

- Avoidance or ostracizing by team members

- Impact on work assignments, performance evaluations, and promotions by management

- Stress and negative impact on engagement due to "covering"

- Inequality of benefits or lack of recognition of family

LGBTQ+ equity in organizations matters strategically for:

Recruiting

Retention and Performance

Diversity of Ideas and Talent

Marketing / Sales / Customer Service

Social Responsibility and Community Reputation

In addition, we can demonstrate a financial business case for supporting LGBTQ+ workplace equity:

- Productivity Gain

- Recruiting / Training Savings

- Revenue

Unconscious Bias and Solidarity

Solidarity: is expressing support for a group of people. The word is used most often to describe a sense of unity with people who have been deprived of their rights in some way.

Unconscious Bias: refers to the attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions in an unconscious manner.

Stereotyping: is having a preconceived, standardized, group-shared idea about the alleged essential nature of a whole category of persons without regard to individual differences within the category.

Microaggressions / Microinequities: Brief, commonplace verbal, behavioral and/or environmental slights, indignities, and insults, whether unintentional or intentional, that communicate negative perceptions about someone based solely on their socially-marginalized group membership.

Levels of Support and Allyship

- Hostile
- Neutral
- Tolerant
- Affirming
- Advocating

Being an ally

- Allies believe that all people regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression should be treated equally with dignity and respect
- An ally is not expected to have all the answers to LGBTQ+ issues but maintains a commitment to learning and educating others to foster an inclusive environment for everyone
- "An ally is a person with relative privilege and power who builds trusting relationships and acts in solidarity and with accountability with people and/or groups with marginalized identities without detracting from their power and voices"
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Doing a Self-Check

- If someone were to come out to you as LGBTQ+, what would your first thought be?
- How would you feel if your child came out to you as LGBTQ+? Or a sibling or close cousin?
- How would you feel about seeing a health care provider you believed was the same gender as you and LGBTQ+?
- Have you ever been to an LGBTQ+ social event? Public march?
- Can you name three historical figures who were lesbian, gay, or bisexual?
- Can you name three historical figures who were transgender?
- Can you think of three historical figures who were LGBTQ+ people of color?
- Have you ever laughed at or made a joke at the expense of LGBTQ+ people?
- Have you ever stood up for an LGBTQ+ person who was being harassed? Why or why not?
- If you do not identify as LGBTQ+, how would you feel if people thought you were LGBTQ+?

Being an Ally in Action

- Be visible
- Educate yourself about available resources online and in the community
- Share the resources readily (don't wait to make them visible until someone comes out to you)
- Use inclusive language, examples, and make sure programs you plan are inclusive
- Avoid making assumptions about sexual orientation or gender identity based on someone's gender expression
- Attend and support LGBTQ+ community events

Having Challenging Conversations

- Do not do it when you are angry. It could be experienced as you lashing out.
- Be gentle and vulnerable.
- Share a story and become relatable.
- Do not expect immediate agreement. Someone may need time to think about it.
- Try to tie it to the business case: "This is best for our organization and for your professional growth."

Bystander Intervention: The act of recognizing a potentially harmful interaction or situation for a person from a marginalized identity and choosing to intervene in a way that is intended to positively influence the outcome.

Having Challenging Conversations

Three roles: commenter, responder, and observer
Tips the observer can suggest after watching are on the next page.

Scenario 1: COMMENTER: "I am so tired of José (or substitute other locally-appropriate name) hitting us over the head talking about his husband. I don't go around telling everyone I'm straight. And that photo of him on his desk with his husband makes me sick every time I pass his desk and see it. I really do find it offensive and I may go to someone in HR and ask that the photo be removed."

Scenario 2: COMMENTER: "Did you hear that Aya (or substitute other locally-appropriate name) was just promoted to be the Vice President of Marketing? I bet they promoted her into the position because she is both a lesbian and a woman. A double whammy for equal opportunity quotas. I wonder if she even has the necessary skills to manage this area. You know, because of what I believe, I don't think I could work for a lesbian."

Scenarios 3: COMMENTER: "Did you meet the new employee Terry (or substitute other locally-appropriate name) down the hall? I cannot tell if he or she is a man or a woman and don't know how I should refer to him or her in conversation. Can you help me with this?"

Scenarios 4: COMMENTER: "Did you hear that Rhonda (or substitute other locally-appropriate name) was elected vice president of our company's Black (or African American – or substitute the term you use within your company's nomenclature) employee resource group? Do you think they realize she's out about being a bisexual? Black people are so homophobic, I cannot imagine a black group electing an out LGBTQ person to any kind of leadership position."

Tips for the Role Play Scenario Discussions

Scenario 1:
- Share your workplace policy of respect for all people.
- Remind the person that they talk about what they did last weekend with their spouse and their family, and it is natural for Joe to likewise share about his significant other. He is just being his natural self.
- Discuss what that person may have on their own desk – photos of family, pets, hobbies etc.
- Encourage them to sit down and have a conversation with José person to person and simply get to know him … perhaps they have some common interests.

Scenario 2:
- Share your workplace policy that people are promoted based on merit and not based on race, age, gender of other diversity characteristics.
- Discuss unconscious bias and stereotypes and encourage the person to take a look at the promotion announcement to understand Aya's skills, achievements and background.
- Perhaps discuss their own feeling – why would they not be able to work for a lesbian if they have the skills and are a good manager. Should that really matter?

Scenario 3
- Share about gender identity and expression and help them understand gender fluid people and transgender people, but also share that we should not make assumptions or guesses about people.
- Encourage the person asking to act natural around the person and treat them respectfully as they would any other co-worker. Encourage the person to get to know the new employee as a fellow human being.
- Show they how they may want to introduce themselves to the person … sharing their own name and pronouns in an introduction. Also share with the person that some people may use the pronoun "they" since they may not want to identify as solely male or female.

Scenario 4
- Share with the person the concept of intersectionality, that all of use have our own unique mix of complex overlapping identities.
- Also share that LGBTQ people exist across every culture and race.
- Share that they may have made a stereotypical assumption that all Black people are anti-LGBTQ. The Black communities are very diverse and just like all other races and communities, has plenty of LGBTQ affirming leaders and organizations.

Being an Ally to Trans Folks

- Call them by their name and use their gender pronoun – normally the gender they are "presenting" in. Ask if you're unsure.
- Recognize that we all make mistakes.
- Include them fully in all corporate and everyday social activities. Invite them to lunch and breaks as usual.
- Continue to use the same professional treatment. This person still has the same valuable skills and expertise / or is a paying customer
- Be an up-stander, not a by-stander
- Be genuinely kind and personable

Names and Pronouns

Pronouns: They / Them / Theirs   She / Her / Hers   He / Him / His

- Mistakes with names and pronouns are something trans people expect to have to deal with, unfortunately.
- When you make a mistake, apologize, correct yourself, and move on.
- If you have difficulty remembering their correct pronouns, practice before seeing the person.
- Even if you are not doing it intentionally and the trans person knows this, it is still painful

What if someone comes out to you?

- Offer support but don't assume they need help
- Be a role model of acceptance
- Appreciate the person's courage
- Listen! Listen! Listen!
- Assure and respect confidentiality
- Ask questions that demonstrate your understanding, acceptance, compassion:
    - ❑ Have you been able to tell anyone else?
    - ❑ Has this been a secret you have had to keep from others, or have you told other people?
    - ❑ Do you feel safe here? Supported by your fellow employees and the leadership?
    - ❑ Do you need help of any kind? Resources or someone to listen?
    - ❑ Have I ever offended you unknowingly?

What not to say:
- I knew it! I thought so!   (this makes it about you, not them)
- Are you sure? Maybe it's just a phase, it will pass. (assumes the person does not know who they are)
- You just haven't found a good woman / man (assumes everyone is straight or should be)
- Shhh, don't tell anyone (assumes there is something bad about being LGBTQ)

(Source: glsen.org)

Responding to anti-LGBTQ+ Behavior

- Address the name-calling, bullying and harassment immediately
- Name the behavior – describe what you saw and that it is unacceptable
- Use it as a teachable moment (or create one)
- Support the targeted person
- Hold others accountable

(Source: glsen.org)

Case Studies

Questions to discuss and answer for each case study:

- What are the particular concerns for LGBTQ+ employees?

- What initial steps should company leaders take to address these concerns?

- What can you do in your current company role to support LGBTQ+ employees and create a more inclusive and equitable workplace?

Case 1 – Possible Employee Discrimination: Over the past year, numerous LGBTQ+ employees have registered anonymous complaints about feeling excluded as well as experiencing microaggressions and perceived discrimination by their coworkers, including supervisors.

Case 2 – Policies and Procedures: Several LGBTQ+ employees have raised concerns with Human Resources that the company's benefits package discriminates against LGBTQ+ employees because it does not equitably cover same-gender partners and family members not related by marriage or biology, such as their partner's children by a previous relationship.

Case 3 – Partners and Vendors: Recently, several of your company's partners and vendors have been featured in the news for their opposition to LGBTQ+ people's rights. Some LGBTQ+ employees and customers have asked company leaders to stop doing business with them.

Case 4 – Client Relations: A leader at lead of one of your company's largest clients recently complained to your company's CEO about the team assigned to them because it included LGBTQ+ people who made them "feel uncomfortable."

Case 5 - Branding and Marketing: Your company's website and marketing materials include information about your progressive polices on sexual orientation and gender identity and expression and images of same-gender couples. Recently, several anti-LGBTQ+ organizations with considerable influence have complained to your CEO and threatened to mount a boycott against your company unless you retract them.

Case 6 - Cultural Context: Your company recently formed Pride (LGBTQ+) employee resource groups (ERGs) in several socially-conservative settings. One of the Pride ERG chairs, a lesbian, was outed to her family and community by a local reporter when they aired her interview about the Pride ERG. She is now being harassed and threatened by some of her neighbors and on social media.

Case 7 - Recruiting and Hiring: Several different employees have complained to your company's Human Resources department about losing out on top qualified candidates who were repeatedly addressed by the incorrect gender during the screening and interviewing process.

Next Steps and Conclusion

LGBTQ+ Workplace Equity

Commitments and Action Steps Worksheet

Commitment

By _____ [date], in my current role, I commit to do the following to advance LGBTQ+ inclusion and equity in my workplace.

_____
_____

Action steps

 I will take the following 3-5 action steps to follow through on my commitment to advance LGBTQ+ inclusion and equity in my workplace.

_____
_____
_____
_____

Accountability

My accountability buddy and I will support each other in following through with our commitments by:

_____
_____
_____

Accountability Buddy Check in

First meeting date and time: _____

Appendix: LGBTQ+ Terminology and Definitions*

Ally	A person with relative privilege and power who builds trusting relationships and acts in solidarity and with accountability with people and/or groups with marginalized identities without detracting from their power and voices.
Androgynous	A person with a neutral or ambiguous social role who presents with masculine and feminine characteristics
Asexual	A person who is not sexually attracted to anyone or does not have a sexual orientation
Bicurious	Curiosity about having sexual relations with a same gender person
Biological Sex	A medical term designating a certain combination of gonads, chromosomes, external gender organs, secondary sex characteristics and hormonal balances. This term is often subdivided into male and female without recognizing the existence of intersexed bodies.
Biphobia	The fear of, discrimination against or hatred of bisexuals. Biphobia can exist within the LGBTQ+ community, as well as in the general society.
Bisexual	A person who is emotionally, physically and/or sexually attracted to people of their own and other genders.
Blending (also: Passing)	A person's ability to be regarded at a glance to be a <u>cisgender</u> man or a cisgender woman or an LGB person's ability to be regarded as heterosexual.
Butch	A person who identifies themselves as masculine, whether it be physically, mentally and/or emotionally. "Butch" is sometimes used as a derogatory term for lesbians, but it can also be claimed as an affirmative identity label.
Cisgender	A person whose gender identity is in alignment with their sex assigned at birth; a person who is not transgender.

Cisgenderism/Cissexism	The assumption that all people are or should be cisgender in a way that invalidates people's own understandings of their genders and bodies, including misgendering, pathologizing, and binarizing people.
Cisnormativity	The assumption that people normally or naturally remain in the gender they were assigned at birth.
Coming out	A personal, individual process by which a person accepts and validates their sexual orientation and gender identity. They may choose to share their identities or remain private.
Covering	When members of the non-dominant culture hide, downplay, or change their identities or aspects of their identities in an attempt to appear to fit in better with the dominant culture.
Drag/Drag queen	The theatrical performance of one or multiple genders as a member of another gender.
Dyke	A term referring to a masculine lesbian. While this term is claimed in an affirmative manner by some (not necessarily masculine) lesbians to refer to themselves, it is largely regarded as derogatory.
Fag hag	A term used to describe women who prefer the social company of gay men. While this term is claimed in an affirmative manner by some, it is largely regarded as derogatory.
Family of choice	Persons an individual sees as significant in his or her life. It may include none, all, or some members of his or her family of origin. In addition, it may include individuals such as significant others or partners, friends, coworkers, etc.
Femme	A feminine-identified person of any gender or sex
Gay	1. A term used in some settings to represent males who are attracted to males in a romantic, erotic, and/or emotional sense. Not all men who engage in same-gendered sexual relations identify as gay. 2. A term used to refer to the LGBTQ+ community as a whole or as an individual identity label for anyone who does not identify as heterosexual. This can be perceived to be sexist by women and exclusive of non-binary people.

Gender expression	How a person demonstrates their gender through the way they act, dress, behave and interact
Gender identity	The gender that a person feels they are in their core. This is unique to each person may or may not correspond with their sex assigned at birth or social conventions.
Genderqueer	A person who does not subscribe to conventional gender distinctions
Heteronormative	Individual and institutional assumptions that everyone is heterosexual and that heterosexuality is superior to homosexuality and bisexuality
Heterosexual	A term used to describe someone who has primary emotional and sexual attraction to people of another gender. Also: "straight"
Heterosexism	Preference for heterosexuals and prejudice or discrimination against LGB people based on the assumption that heterosexuality is the normal sexual orientation.
Homophobia	The irrational fear or dislike of homosexuals or bisexual individuals
Homosexual*	A term to describe someone who has primary emotional and sexual attraction to people of the same gender. This term is overly clinical, largely outdated, and sometimes considered offensive. Also: queer, LGB
Internalized homophobia	LGB people's internalized self-hatred and acceptance of heterosexism and the negative messages that the dominant group perpetuates against LGB individuals
Intersex	A person having the characteristics of male and female biological organs or genitalia; may include chromosomal and hormonal conditions. Also: hermaphrodite (outdated term)
Lesbian	A term used to describe female-identified people attracted romantically, erotically and/or emotionally to other female-identified people

LGBTQ+	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and "+" meaning additional, related terms
Misgender	Referring to someone, especially a transgender person, using a word, especially a pronoun or form of address, that does not correctly reflect the gender with which they identify.
MSM	Men who have sex with men and may or may not identify as gay
Non-binary	Umbrella term for descriptions of genders that fall between or beyond the gender binary – for example: gender neutral, genderfluid, agender, pangender, androgynous, and genderqueer.
Out/of the closet	Refers to varying degrees of being open about one's LGBTQ+ identities
Pansexual	Not limited in sexual choice with regard to biological sex, gender or gender identity
Passing	A person's ability to be regarded at a glance to be a cisgender man or a cisgender woman or an LGB person's ability to be regarded as heterosexual
Poly/amorous	The philosophy or state of being in love or romantically involved with more than one person at the same time
Queer	Historically a negative term to describe lesbian and gay people, "queer" has been reclaimed by some people as a positive term describing all those who do not conform to rigid notions of gender and sexuality.
Questioning	People who are in the process of exploring their sexual orientation and/or gender identity.
Sexual orientation	A term used to describe someone's primary emotional and sexual attraction to people of one's gender or other genders and one's conscious or subconscious decision to define this attraction.
Straight	Heterosexual
Stud	An African American and/or Latina masculine lesbian. Also: "butch" or "aggressive"

Trans/gender	A term used to describe someone whose gender identity is not congruent with his or her biological sex, regardless of the status of surgical and hormonal gender reassignment processes. Refers to a continuum of gender expressions, identities and roles that expand the dominant cultural understanding of what it means to be female or male. May be heterosexual, bisexual or homosexual.
Transphobia	The irrational fear of those who are gender variant and/or the inability to deal with gender ambiguity.
Transvestite*	An outdated term to describe someone who dresses in clothing generally identified with people of other genders. Preferred terms are drag queen/king or in drag.
WSW	Women who have sex with women and may or may not identify as lesbian
*Outdated and potentially offensive terms	