



The Care & Feeding of Straight Allies at Work: What LGBTAs Need to Know to Effectively Engage New Allies

Background:

The LGBT – and engaged ally – community has made tremendous progress in the workplace, from changing policies to gaining greater acceptance than ever before. However, when it comes to maintaining momentum to change hearts, minds (and in some cases, even laws), finding and engaging new allies remains a challenge.

There are a number of causes of this sometimes seemingly uphill battle: For some, there is a lingering perception that LGBT Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) are for LGBT people only, causing potential straight allies to avoid becoming more involved to advance equality. For others, the fear of being assumed to be LGBT themselves is a paralyzing concern. Some simply feel that they don't have the tools that they need to be effective advocates.

In *The Care & Feeding of Straight Allies at Work*, we'll look at the common challenges ERG members encounter in trying to attract, educate, and engage new allies in their organizations.

Content Overview:

- Understand and discuss the challenges in the very definition of “straight ally” and how looking at the concept a new way can broaden the discussion.
- Examine the coming out process of straight allies and seeing how members of LGBT ERGs can help in this process as a way to create new allies at work.
- Talk about what we're learning about effective strategies to educate potential allies about LGBT issues and apply them to the work that ERGs are doing.
- Identify and learn how to avoid the pitfalls in ally engagement in the workplace.
- Learn the top five rules for creating effective plans to invite, educate, and engage new allies.
- Participate in a discussion about how to connect these learnings to the work being done in your organization in a strategic way.

Session Length: 90 minutes

Target Audience: LGBTs and more advanced ally members of network groups

Participant Materials Provided: *the guide to being a straight ally* and related materials

Note: An advanced version of this session is available.

For more information on this session, contact Jamie Henkel, Equality and Diversity Partnerships Manager, by e-mailing jhenkel@pflag.org or call (202) 467-8180 ext. 210.