



Straight for Equality in the Workplace Intensive: Learning Session Overview

Background:

Corporate America is leading the way in creating lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT)-friendly and inclusive environments. From policies to practices, more organizations are working to ensure that equality and inclusion prevail in the workplace. In fact, in 2016, 93% of Fortune 500 companies include sexual orientation in their nondiscrimination policies and 75% include gender identity.

However, policies have not necessarily translated into critical culture change in the workplace, and this fact remains a difficult reality for LGBT people, their families, and allies. Roughly half of LGBT people report that they are not out at work, and research on their perceptions of how supportive their workplace climates are reveal dismal news.

In order to experience full inclusion and equality at work, GLBT people need the help of allies who are engaged in the effort to create change. But identifying as a straight ally isn't always easy. And even among many who do identify as allies, what "support" looks like at work often isn't clear. This session will help change that trend and develop more workplaces that are focused Straight for Equality.

Content Overview:

This session covers the materials addressed in the 90-minute version of the class, but offers a specific focus for high-level management to understand the challenges of culture change around this issue at work and how they can become effective leaders in this effort.

Additional objectives in this version of the class include:

- Understanding the origin of individual views on LGBT issues and the role unconscious bias often plays in our responsiveness to this issue
- Revealing the powerful role that organizational leaders play in creating culture change and developing inclusive workplaces for LGBT employees
- Developing strategies that straight allies can use to help change perceptions that cast people in a negative light and keep us from being fully inclusive
- Creating tactics for LGBT people to let down their own guards, become workplace resources for allies, and to build trust in their co-workers
- Addressing specific organizational challenges and providing support in overcoming barriers to full workplace inclusion, whether in the office or in field locations

Session Length: Three hours

Target Audience: Higher level management in organizations with a broad range of knowledge of LGBT issues.

Participant Materials Provided: *the guide to being a straight ally* and related materials, *equality literacy 101*.

Note: See 90-minute session description for core objectives.

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.