



**Want to Be an Ally (Or Help One Out?):
Straight for Equality in the Workplace**

Background:

Corporate America has led the way to create policies to protect lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ+) employees from discrimination and harassment. In fact, in 2022, 93% of Fortune 500 companies included sexual orientation and 91% included gender identity in their nondiscrimination policies.

However, this commitment to inclusive policy has not translated into critical culture change in the workplace. For example roughly half of LGBTQ+ people report they have not disclosed their sexual orientation or gender identity at work. Research demonstrates how the experiences of people who are LGBTQ+, perceptions of workplace climate, and recent political realities affect their ability to do their jobs safely and effectively.

In order to experience full inclusion and equality at work, allies must be engaged in the effort to create real culture change. But identifying as an ally isn't always easy. And even among those who do identify as allies, what "support" looks like at work often isn't clear. This learning session will answer that question and develop workplace environments that are moving Straight for Equality.

Content Overview:

Leveraging PFLAG's nearly 50 years of experience as the nation's original ally organization, this session will:

- Review the LGBTQ+ basics including a brief history of PFLAG, the creation of the Straight for Equality program and core terminology
- Characterize who allies are, understand their journey to becoming visible and vocal, and set basic expectations for ally behavior in the workplace
- Make the business and marketplace case for why LGBTQ+ inclusion is a relevant issue for all companies by examining current research illustrating the progress – and challenges – that people who are LGBTQ+ experience
- Identify and discuss the individual barriers that allies face that may create roadblocks to demonstrating their support – and being visible and vocal allies – for their colleagues who identify as LGBTQ+
- Discuss concrete, straightforward ideas about how to overcome barriers, express support, and change the places that we work

Recommended Session Length:	90 minutes (in-person), 60 minutes (online)
Target Audience:	General audience, no prior knowledge of LGBTQ+ issues required.
Participant Materials:	<i>the guide to being a straight ally</i> (fourth edition), online resource page
Additional Information:	Customized learning options for HR Professionals, Recruiters, C-Suite, etc. are available. The Straight for Equality program also offers more advanced learning sessions on a variety of topics including one on engaging allies for the transgender and nonbinary community.

For more information on this session, contact Mackenzie Harte (they/them), Learning & Inclusion Coordinator, by e-mailing maharte@pflag.org or calling (202) 467-5411.

Updated January 2022