



# Workplace Inclusion 101

Beginning steps to making your workplace LGBTQ+ friendly



# Summer Davidson

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Reach OUT Consulting Founder

Summer Davidson Gomez is the founder of Reach OUT Consulting LLC. Summer is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker with 10+ years of experience working with the LGBTQ+ Community. She is an experienced therapist, speaker and trainer focused on increasing empathy and understanding of the LGBTQ+ Community and developing LGBTQ+ Corporate Competency. Summer speaks at numerous conferences about the importance of LGBTQ+ understanding and acceptance. Her personal experiences have made Summer passionate about raising the standard of services and understanding of the LGBTQ+ Community.

# Why is this an important topic for everyone?

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## Understanding LGBTQ+ Inclusion

- **Numbers are not clear**

The exact number of people who are a part of the LGBTQ+ community is hard to estimate.

- **Goes beyond employees**

It also includes friends, families, coworkers, managers, customers, and clients of LGBTQ+ individuals.

- **Organizations may not be aware of the diversity of their workforce**

And if they're not aware they're probably not supporting or protecting their employees

# Why is this an important topic for employers?

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- **Productivity can be impacted by inclusive workplaces**

Openly gay employees are happier and more productive and the gains extend to their coworkers. (1)

- **Retention can become an issue for LGBTQ+ employees**

- 40% reported being bullied at work
- 41% of those left a job due to the bullying
- 72% of full-time employees said they would leave an organization for one they thought was more inclusive. (2)

(1) Ford, Zack, "STUDY: Openly Gay Employees Improve Their Coworkers' Productivity," Think Progress, Aug25, 2011. <https://thinkprogress.org/study-openly-gay-employees-improve-their-coworkers-productivity-bf84ae9d05ba/>

(2) Deloitte, "Seventy-Two Percent of Working Americans Surveyed Would or May Consider Leaving an Organization for One They Think is More Inclusive, Deloitte Poll Finds," news release, June 7, 2017. <https://www2.deloitte.com/us/en/pages/about-deloitte/articles/press-releases/inclusion-survey.html>

# Components of an LGBTQ+ Friendly Workplace

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- 1 LGBTQ+ Inclusive Policies
- 2 LGBTQ+ Signage
- 3 Gender Neutral Language
- 4 Comfort With Pronouns
- 5 Gender Neutral Bathrooms
- 6 Hiring strategies
- 7 Listening and Adapting

# LGBTQ+ Inclusive Policies

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- Include sexual orientation, gender identity and expression in non-discrimination policy
- Ensure gender-neutral benefits

# LGBTQ+ Inclusive Policies

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## Dress Code

- Ensure the dress code is Gender Neutral



# LGBTQ+ Signage

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# Gender Neutral Language

## Forms



- **Instead of:**

- Husband/Wife
- Son/Daughter
- Male/Female

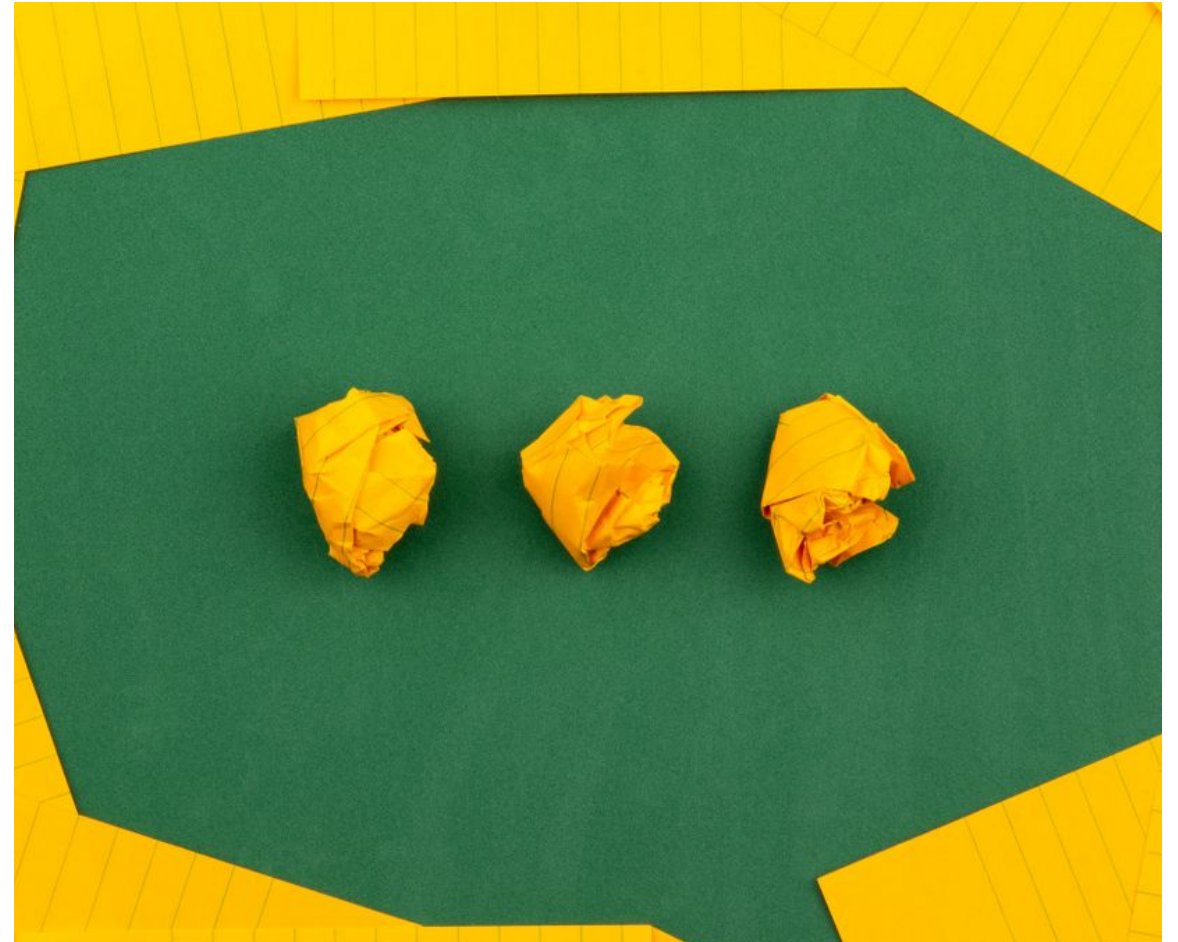
- **Say:**

- Spouse
- Child
- Male/Female/\_\_\_\_\_

# Gender Neutral Language

Verbal

- **Changing the culture**  
Need ongoing trainings
- **Don't be surprised when I correct you**
- **Be comfortable with using and changing pronouns**



# Comfort with Pronouns

Takes training and practice

		Pronouns		
Gender	Binary	she	her	hers
		he	him	his
Gender	Neutral	they	them	their
		ze	zir	zirs
		Or refer to the person by their name		

# Gender Neutral Bathroom

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- All single-stall bathrooms should be gender neutral

# Hiring Strategies

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- Advertise through LGBTQ+ media outlets
- Review your ad wording, to ensure they send the right message

Explicitly mention your commitment to equality and diversity

# Listening and Adapting

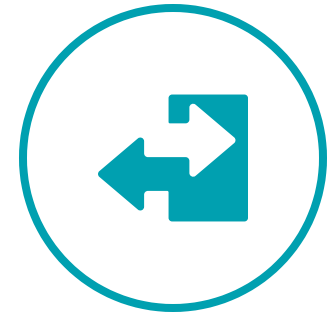
It is an on-going process



Ask people their pronouns



Ask new staff how you can be supportive and what they need.



Be open to changing

# What not to do?

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- **Don't be inconsistent**

You cannot just say you maintain an LGBTQ+ supportive environment if your actions don't prove that.

- **Don't single anyone out or allow exceptions**

- **Forget to follow up to feedback or provide updates**

- **If you make a mistake, don't make a big deal about it – just apologize and move on**

# 5 small actions you can take today

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- Add your pronouns to your email signature
- Put up a safe space sticker
- Introduce yourself to someone with your pronouns
- Learn the difference between sexual orientation and gender identity

Follow @reachOUTlgbtq on Instagram and other great Instagram accounts.



# Resources

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- **Human Rights Campaign (HRC)**

[www.hrc.org](http://www.hrc.org)

- **Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG)**

[www.pflag.org](http://www.pflag.org)

- **Buffer's Open Blog – An Incomplete Guide to Inclusive Language for Startups and Tech – By Courtney Seiter**

<https://open.buffer.com/inclusive-language-tech/>

- **envatotuts+ – How to Make Your Workplace More LGBT Friendly (& Why You Should) – By Andrew Blackman**

<https://business.tutsplus.com/tutorials/make-your-workplace-lgbt-friendly--cms-32756>



# Let's keep in touch!

Contact us if you have any question.  
We would love to hear from you!

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