Supporting Employment needs for LGBTQ+ Individuals

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Who is the LGBTQ+ Population?

• L = Lesbian
• G = Gay
  • often referring to males, but sometimes used toward all orientations
• B = Bi-sexual
• T = Trans*
• Q = Queer
• + = everyone else
There is a difference between sexual orientation and gender identity.
The Gender-Bread Person

- Gender Identity
- Attraction
- Gender Expression
- Biological Sex
"COMING OUT"..."of the closet."

is the process by which someone...

1. Accepts and identifies with their gender identity and/or sexual orientation; and
2. Shares their identity willingly with others.

Sometimes We talk about coming out as if it were a one time thing. But for most folks coming out is a **series of decisions** – sometimes daily – that LGBTQ people navigate in every new setting they enter. (Most people aren't like Ellen, where they come out once and then the whole world knows.)
People may be “out” in some spaces, and “in” in others.

向 Family 向 Friends 向 Classmates/Coworkers 向 Religious Community

A decision to come out to a person or group is one of safety, comfort, trust, and readiness.

It’s dangerous, unhealthy, and unhelpful to force someone to come out, or to “out” someone else (i.e., disclosing someone’s gender identity or sexual orientation to others without the person’s consent), regardless of your intentions (sometimes people think they’re being helpful, or acting on the person’s behalf to conquer their fears), but...
IF SOMEONE COMES OUT TO YOU...

DON'T:

1. Say "I always knew," or downplay the significance of their sharing with you.
2. Go tell everyone, bragging about your "new trans friend."
3. Forget that they are still the person you knew, befriended, or loved before.
4. Ask probing questions, or cross personal barriers you wouldn't have crossed earlier.
5. Assume you know why they came out to you.

DO:

1. Know this is a sign of huge trust! (Yay!)
2. Check-in on how confidential this is (Do other people know? Is this a secret?)
3. Remember that their gender/sexuality is just one dimension (of many) of who they are.
4. Show interest and curiosity about this part of them that they are sharing with you.
5. Ask them how you can best support them.
The Effects on Health

Research suggests that LGBT individuals face health (physical and mental) disparities linked to societal stigma, discrimination, and denial of their civil and human rights.
Facts about effects of Discrimination

• As compared to people that identify as straight, LGBTQ+ individuals are 3 times more likely to experience a mental health condition.
• LGBTQ+ youth are 4 times more likely to attempt suicide, experience suicidal thoughts, and engage in self-harm, as compared to youths that are straight.
• 38-65% of transgender individuals experience suicidal ideation.
• An estimated 20-30% of LGBTQ+ individuals abuse substances, compared to about 9% of the general population.
• 25% of LGBTQ+ individuals abuse alcohol, compared to 5-10% of the general population.
• 2.5 times more likely to experience depression, anxiety, and substance misuse.

*National Alliance on Mental Illness. (2016). LGBTQ+ health and access to care and coverage for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender individuals in the U.S.
Employment Discrimination based on Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation

Research conducted by The Bureau of National Affairs in 2014

- Decades of documentation shows high levels of discrimination against LGBTQ+ people at work
- Only 25% of LGBTQ+ people are out at work
- Nearly 3/4 of LGBTQ+ people hide their sexual orientation and/or gender identity at work to avoid discrimination
2018 HRC FMLA Survey Highlights

• Only 45% of all survey respondents say that their employer has LGBTQ-inclusive FMLA leave policies.
• 50% cited fear of losing their job.
• 51% were concerned about being sidelined at work (e.g., removed from projects, denied promotion, etc.).
How to Help Another

- Be an ally
- Know the facts
- Ask and listen
- Get them help and take care of yourself
- Learn to Advocate
- Family and community support