
STANDING UP FOR LGBT INCLUSION

A GUIDE FOR SENIOR CHAMPIONS



Stonewall

Acceptance without exception

FOREWORD

We know that if any organisation is to create a truly inclusive work environment, it needs to have committed and active senior champions who are willing to speak up on equality issues. Visible senior champions like you play a crucial role in building an environment where LGBT employees can be themselves and reach their full potential. You help set the culture of your organisation, use your influence to raise important issues, and make key decisions that impact the lives of your LGBT employees.

Whether you're LGBT yourself, or an ally to LGBT people, your role in creating a healthy workplace that celebrates diversity can't be overstated. LGBT senior champions are role models for more junior LGBT employees, sending a powerful message that their identity won't be a barrier to career progression at your organisation. Equally, non-LGBT senior champions send a clear message to the wider staff team that LGBT inclusion is the responsibility of everyone at your organisation.

Stepping up as a senior champion doesn't need to take a lot of time or money, and it will look different in every organisation. It can be as simple as listening to your LGBT employees, advocating for their needs at board level and participating in cross-organisational LGBT campaigns and events.

Perhaps you've been approached by your LGBT network group to become their senior sponsor, or you're simply interested in being more visible in your support for LGBT inclusion. Whatever your motivation, this guide provides practical actions to help you be an active, knowledgeable and visible senior champion for LGBT equality in your organisation.

Thank you for taking this step, and for being part of our vital work to create environments everywhere where LGBT people are accepted without exception.

Ruth Hunt

Chief Executive Officer, Stonewall

WHY ARE YOU IMPORTANT?

CULTURE SETTING – you play a crucial role in setting an example for the rest of your organisation. By stepping up as an active advocate of LGBT equality, you'll demonstrate to your employees that inclusion is central to your organisation's way of working and must be embedded in all behaviours, cultures and practices.

VISIBILITY – you have a powerful opportunity to raise the profile of LGBT inclusion. Internally, your support will give LGBT colleagues confidence to be themselves at work and encourage non-LGBT colleagues to take inclusion seriously. Externally, this visible support will send an equally important message to customers, clients, service users, potential employees and wider communities that LGBT people are welcome and valued at your organisation.

DECISION MAKING – as a senior leader, you're often able to approve important initiatives and influence your senior colleagues' decisions. Whether that's signing off a suitable budget for your LGBT network group or approving gender-neutral facilities in your offices, this support is vital for LGBT employees.

RECOGNITION – you can use your platform to recognise and celebrate your LGBT network group. Stonewall's 2018 Employee Feedback Survey found that while 82% of LGBT employees knew their organisation had an LGBT network group, only 48% had taken part in a network activity in the last year. Not only will your active recognition raise the profile of the network group at all levels of your organisation, but it will ensure that managers allow LGBT employees to fully participate.

" All senior leaders have a duty to lead by example, to role model inclusive behaviours, and make their organisations better places to work – for the benefit of everyone."

- ANDREW SLADE, DIRECTOR GENERAL, ECONOMY, SKILLS AND NATURAL RESOURCES, WELSH GOVERNMENT

" I think it is really important for me to be visible, to show that it is possible to be a chief executive and gay. By being the senior sponsor, I am sending a clear message that our Trust is an environment in which LGBT people can thrive at work rather than one in which they will be marginalised and side-lined in their career. We know that LGBT people will leave a job because the environment is not inclusive, and we know that they will stay in a job specifically because the environment is inclusive. At University Hospitals Birmingham we want a diverse workforce and to retain our talent."

- DAME JULIE MOORE, CHIEF EXECUTIVE, UNIVERSITY HOSPITALS BIRMINGHAM NHS FOUNDATION TRUST

" To my mind it is a duty to use any influence you have to galvanise institutional change. If you have a voice and you care deeply about fighting discrimination and furthering LGBT confidence in the workplace, you should shout as loud as you can and throw caution to the wind."

- NARIND SINGH, PARTNER, CLIFFORD CHANCE

" I believe that supportive organisations which encourage people to be themselves will get the best results. For an industrial technology company like Rolls-Royce this is essential because diversity of thinking brings innovation. As an ally I actively encourage diversity in all its forms."

- WARRICK MATTHEWS, EXECUTIVE VICE-PRESIDENT – CONTROL SYSTEMS, ROLLS-ROYCE

" I've worked in the Civil Service for over 10 years and have had the privilege of being part of a number of very successful staff-led LGBT+ Allies networks. As an openly gay man, being part of such networks helped to develop my confidence which, in turn, has helped make work more enjoyable and supported my career development. Now that I'm in a senior role I want to help develop the confidence of others so that they can achieve whatever ambitions they may have."

- DOMINIC HOULIHAN, DIRECTOR OF PEOPLE, PLACES AND SERVICES, INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY OFFICE

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

STARTING OUT

Low-cost, low-time actions that any leader can carry out to make a difference at their organisation:

LEARN ABOUT LGBT ISSUES – by reading [Stonewall's research](#), reading articles online and attending events in your sector.

MEET WITH YOUR LGBT NETWORK GROUP – to learn about the lived experiences of your LGBT employees.

COMMUNICATE YOUR COMMITMENT IN ALL-STAFF COMMUNICATIONS – authentically talk about your personal journey as an LGBT champion, for example in intranet blogs or internal newsletters.

WRITE A STATEMENT OF SUPPORT – for new staff induction and training materials, to help reassure LGBT employees that they can be themselves, and engage non-LGBT staff in inclusion.

SUPPORT LGBT EVENTS – by promoting LGBT network group initiatives, for example around Pride, Trans Day of Visibility or the International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia (IDAHOBT).

RAISE AWARENESS AMONG YOUR PEERS – by speaking about the importance of your LGBT inclusion strategies in senior management meetings and ensuring that any work is embedded across all teams.

REVIEW AND SHARE MONITORING REPORTS – many diversity and inclusion teams will monitor employees' sexual orientation and gender identity to understand how many LGBT employees there are, what level of the organisation they're at and how satisfied they are with their jobs. Make sure that this data is reviewed at board level and that appropriate action is taken in response to it.

HELP SECURE APPROPRIATE RESOURCES FOR YOUR LGBT NETWORK GROUP – push for your network group to receive appropriate support from your HR team and budgets to allow them to deliver on their plans. While LGBT employees should be given opportunities to inform your inclusion strategy, it's important to ensure that they're not expected to deliver all of this work.

“ If your organisation has a staff network group, I would recommend that you work closely with them to show your support, and also get involved with any activities they may host. If there is no network group, I would encourage you to explore setting this up to ensure LGBT colleagues have a forum to discuss matters relevant to them – it can make a massive difference. ”

- DAVID CASEY, BUSINESS MANAGER, CROWN OFFICE AND PROCURATOR FISCAL SERVICE

UNDERSTANDING AND REPRESENTING ALL LGBT COMMUNITIES

The experiences of people within the LGBT community vary significantly. Often, trans and bi communities are particularly underrepresented in workplace initiatives, despite very different experiences of discrimination.

LGBT people, like everyone else, have many parts to their identity – for example they may be of faith, disabled or a person of colour. The experiences of LGBT people can vary significantly because of these multiple identities. For example, Stonewall's [LGBT in Britain Work Report](#) (2018) found that 10 per cent of black, Asian and minority ethnic LGBT staff had been physically attacked by colleagues or customers in the last year because of their sexual orientation and/or gender identity, compared to three per cent of white LGBT staff.

It's important to learn about the nuances of LGBT experiences and explicitly represent diverse groups when championing LGBT inclusion at your organisation. Seek out the lived experiences of a wide range of LGBT employees and remember that one person's experience can vary greatly from another's.

If you're LGBT yourself, avoid making assumptions based on your own experience – your personal journey may not be indicative of the entire inclusion culture at your organisation.

ROLE MODELLING INCLUSION

While there are many active steps you should take to show your support for LGBT equality, one of the simplest things you can do is role model inclusive behaviours in your everyday work. This includes listening to different points of view, inviting feedback from employees and challenging discrimination whenever you see it. These behaviours will demonstrate to all employees that inclusivity is both a serious expectation and a key trait for success at your organisation.

“ Often, it's too easy to be distracted by budget and blame a lack of funds on restricting activity. In my experience the most powerful impacts are delivered by low or zero cost role model events.”

- **BARRIE CAIRNS, VICE PRESIDENT, CHIEF CONTROLS OFFICE, BARCLAYS**

“ I met with the co-chairs of PRISM, our LGBT network group, shortly after being appointed, to hear of their issues and experiences first hand, and to learn how I can personally support them and enable my staff to do so too. The network was very welcoming and encouraging, which helped enormously. Like a lot of people I have spoken to, I wanted to make sure I was using language and terminology that was helpful. This is where it is really useful to have a 'safe space' to be able to ask open questions.”

- **ANDREW SLADE, DIRECTOR GENERAL, ECONOMY, SKILLS AND NATURAL RESOURCES, WELSH GOVERNMENT**

NEXT STEPS

Initiatives that take a little more time commitment, while easily building on work you've already done:

PERIODICALLY ATTEND LGBT NETWORK GROUP

MEETINGS – to find out how you can support their work. If you don't have a LGBT network group, consider setting up a focus group where LGBT employees can share their experiences with you.

VISIBLY PARTICIPATE IN NETWORK GROUP EVENTS

– be led by the network group in terms of the role they want you to take, for example making opening remarks or simply showing up and speaking to attendees.

ENSURE EMPLOYEES ARE ALLOWED ATTEND

NETWORK GROUP EVENTS – by speaking to senior leaders and managers about the importance of permitting this time away from their main roles.

ATTEND LGBT CONFERENCES AND TRAINING

SESSIONS – either internally, in your sector, or in your region. Stonewall's leading LGBT workplace conferences bring together experts and leaders from across Britain. For more information, visit: www.stonewall.org.uk/workplace-conferences

SPEAK ABOUT LGBT INCLUSION AT INTERNAL

EVENTS – beyond network group events, for example at all-staff meetings or away days. Use this as an opportunity to encourage leadership on LGBT inclusion from employees at all levels of your organisation.

MENTOR OTHER SENIOR LEADERS

– to ensure that an understanding of LGBT issues doesn't just sit with you. This can be particularly effective at the very top levels of an organisation, for example mentoring the CEO.

“ I help our LGBT network group, Prism, to develop its strategy and shout about the amazing work they do. My advice for a new senior sponsor would be to be very open, confidently and visibly show your support! A great way we do this is through the Prism pin badge that members wear. This is an excellent conversation starter amongst my peers. Listen and learn, seek advice, but overall be yourself and be genuine.”

WARRICK MATTHEWS, EXECUTIVE VICE-PRESIDENT – CONTROL SYSTEMS, ROLLS-ROYCE

“ If you are not a member of the LGBT community then be careful not to make assumptions or plans based on your own understanding. Take the time to speak regularly with your LGBT colleagues to understand the challenges they face, and support and encourage them to find the best solutions for your organisation to promote LGBT inclusion. The best ideas will come from them, but they need your visible support. When you provide that support, ensure that you offer them the opportunity to share the platform with you and help them find their own voice within your organisation.”

RUTH MCQUAID, PROCURATOR FISCAL, LOCAL COURT, WEST SCOTLAND, CROWN OFFICE AND PROCURATOR FISCAL SERVICE

“ The main challenge at first was nervousness around what others within the firm would think about my involvement in the work we do in this area. It turns out this was a personal misconception – I have the full support of the people whose opinions matter to me and I've realised negative perceptions are irrelevant.”

NARIND SINGH, PARTNER, CLIFFORD CHANCE

GOING ABOVE AND BEYOND

Initiatives that are more systematic and require a greater time commitment but can make a huge difference to the culture of your organisation:

RECRUIT OTHER SENIOR CHAMPIONS – to increase the diversity of voices in support of LGBT inclusion from across different areas of the organisation and ensure that support is systematic and sustainable. You should particularly consider the need for regional champions to better reach geographically dispersed employees.

CO-ORDINATE REVERSE MENTORING – to allow other senior leaders to hear directly from LGBT employees about their lived experiences. This should be carefully co-ordinated with your network group and be part of broader training, so that LGBT employees don't feel it's solely their responsibility to educate senior colleagues.

SET UP A SENIOR CHAMPION APPRAISAL SYSTEM – to periodically gather feedback from your LGBT network group on your support as a senior leader and what you can do to improve.

SET UP A MENTORING SCHEME – to aid the career development of junior LGBT employees. For more information about career development initiatives, read [the employee lifecycle: engaging and supporting LGBT employees throughout their journey](#).

" No matter what our roles, we all have time pressures, deadlines and commitments. Finding time to support any network can be challenging. However, I've learnt that we prioritise those things that are important – so I made my commitment to the LGBT+ Allies network important. I set a Diversity and Inclusion objective which was agreed by our Chief Executive and agreed objectives with our LGBT+ network steering group. Doing so made sure I found the time to support the network."

- DOMINIC HOULIHAN, DIRECTOR OF PEOPLE, PLACES AND SERVICES, INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY OFFICE

BUILD A NETWORK WITH OTHER SENIOR CHAMPIONS IN YOUR REGION OR SECTOR – to learn what other leaders do, share best practice, and collectively achieve systematic change.

DRIVE SUPPORT FOR LOCAL COMMUNITY GROUPS – for example by sponsoring or providing volunteers for local LGBT groups, Prides and charities.

SPEAKING ABOUT LGBT INCLUSION EXTERNALLY – with the media, at conferences, and at community events. This is a particularly powerful way to demonstrate your commitment to prospective employees, customers and service users.

HARNESS THE EXTERNAL INFLUENCE OF YOUR ORGANISATION – by engaging with wider LGBT developments and advocating for equality regionally and nationally.

" I am a great believer in two-way mentoring, allowing me to gain insights and different perspectives from employees across the organisation and supporting them in their careers. I now have my first LGBT mentee and I'm looking to develop this network inside and outside the business."

- WARRICK MATTHEWS, EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT – CONTROL SYSTEMS, ROLLS-ROYCE

" I see the impact of our initiatives in our recruitment process. I speak to all our new entrants about our commitment to LGBT equality and many have come forward and stated that they were encouraged to join our organisation because of our public commitment to inclusion. I have also seen an increase in the number of staff who have come out in the last few years, and who have been willing to take on a visible role as an LGBT ambassador or as a member of one of our sheriffdom equality networks."

- RUTH MCQUAID, PROCURATOR FISCAL, LOCAL COURT, WEST SCOTLAND, CROWN OFFICE AND PROCURATOR FISCAL SERVICE

MORE FROM STONEWALL

DIVERSITY CHAMPIONS PROGRAMME

Diversity Champions is Britain's leading programme for ensuring all LGBT people are accepted without exception in the workplace. Join today and receive expert guidance on how to create an equal environment for LGBT staff and service users. We'll review your policies, give you access to networking with over 700 organisations, and support you every step of the way.

For more information about joining the programme, visit: www.stonewall.org.uk/dc

LGBT LEADERSHIP PROGRAMMES

Stonewall's flagship empowerment programme builds an understanding of how participants' LGBT identity has impacted their leadership journey and their ability to drive positive change. In a uniquely supportive environment, participants explore what it means to be an authentic and inclusive leader and how harnessing this potential benefits individuals, workplaces and communities.

For more information about offering this opportunity to your LGBT senior champions, visit: www.stonewall.org.uk/workplace-conferences or contact: empowerment@stonewall.org.uk

FURTHER RESOURCES

Stonewall produces a range of best-practice guides and research to help you create inclusive and accepting environments for your staff and service users. For the full range of resources, visit: www.stonewall.org.uk/workplace-resources

ALLIES PROGRAMMES

Stonewall's allies programme empowers non-LGBT individuals from all levels of an organisation to be active LGBT allies. It equips them with the confidence, knowledge and skills to create inclusive cultures and positively impact the lives of LGBT people.

We also deliver trans-specific allies programmes, empowering LGB and non-LGBT individuals to bring about positive change in their workplaces and communities for trans and non-binary people.

For more information about our in-house and open programmes, contact: www.stonewall.org.uk/workplace-conferences

WORKPLACE CONFERENCES

Held annually in Cardiff, Edinburgh, Manchester and London, Stonewall workplace conferences are Britain's leading events on LGBT workplace inclusion. Experts bring our guides to life and help you adapt them for your organisation. Sessions cover a range of topics including service delivery, working with limited resources and supporting trans staff and service users.

For more information, visit: www.stonewall.org.uk/workplace-conferences