

Career Resources for LGBTQ+ Students

The Career Development Center is committed to meeting the needs of students who identify on the LGBTQ+ spectrum and to providing support when navigating the inequities and hurdles of employment pathways. We encourage students to embrace who they are and be their authentic, unapologetic selves. This is an introduction to resources that may be helpful to you. If you are aware of a resource we should consider including, please email career@oregonstate.edu.

Queer and trans people have much to consider when navigating their careers. In addition to finding work you enjoy and excel in; you must discern which workplaces and work cultures will affirm who you are. Part of your exploration is determining what you need out of your employment. For some queer and trans folk – they are willing to work almost anywhere and adapt to the norms, expectations and culture of their workplace. Other queer and trans folk have firm commitments and specific expectations of their workplace related to their gender and sexual identity.

There is much to consider, and this is a lot of work – a workload not shared by your hetero sexual and cisgender peers. Wherever you're at in your career exploration, know that your experiences are shared by many others like you and that you offer a unique set of skills to employers based on your major, your background and your lived experiences.

For more information and to connect and be in community with others, check out the opportunities available with the [OSU Pride Center](#) and [OSU Women and Gender Center](#).

Talking about Identity in the Workplace

It is important to know that you do NOT have to disclose your LGBTQ+ identity at any point in the hiring process. This decision is entirely up to you and how comfortable you feel talking about your sexual orientation, sex or gender expression in a workplace context. If you do choose to disclose, there are generally three opportunities to come out to an employer:

1. On your resume/cover letter/application
2. In an interview
3. After you've start working for the organization

Questions to consider:

- Is the company you're interested in an LGBTQ+ friendly organization?
- Do you feel comfortable disclosing that you are a member of an LGBTQ+ organization?
- Do you talk about previous experiences (internships, clubs, awards, etc.) that relate to LGBTQ+ advocacy or topics?

What should I put on my resume?

Here are examples of how you might describe your LGBTQ+ experience on your resume:

Comfortable disclosing	Lower comfort disclosing
“Treasurer, OSU PRIDE CENTER”	“Treasurer, Diversity Student Campus Group”
“Outstanding Ally to the LGBTQ Community Award Recipient”	“Lavender Graduation Award Recipient”
“LGBTQ+ Journeys Retreat Leader”	“Journeys Retreat Leader”

Resume sample highlighting LGBTQ+ involvement

WORK EXPERIENCE

Internal Coordinator, Pride Center, Oregon State University Sept. 2008 - present

- Hired, trained and provided ongoing supervision of 4 office assistants
- Facilitated weekly meetings to improve staff communication on community issues, campus events, and Pride Center goals and services
- Served as a liaison to the greater OSU community and solicited student feedback on programs
- Created engaging presentations and workshops about the queer community for new incoming students at orientation sessions

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Rainbow Continuum Sept. 2008 - present

- Coordinated recruitment of 20+ volunteers for the annual campus-wide drag show, which draws over 200 people engaging with the LGBTQ community
- Designed marketing fliers and social media content using Adobe Photoshop and Illustrator

Coming “out” in an interview

Regardless of whether you plan to “come out” in the interview stage, the primary focus of the interview should be to sell your skills. That said, the interview is a great time to get some clarification about how supportive the company is to the LGBTQ community.

Questions you can ask an employer in an interview

- “Would you say that your company has a diverse employee base?”
- “Do you offer same-sex benefits?”
- “Does your organization have an LGBTQ support or social group?”

Workplace Protections for LGBTQ+ People

According to the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, “Sex discrimination involves treating someone (an applicant or employee) unfavorably because of that person's sex. Discrimination against an individual because of gender identity, including transgender status, or because of sexual orientation is discrimination because of sex in violation of Title VII... The law forbids discrimination when it comes to any aspect of employment, including hiring, firing, pay, job assignments, promotions, layoff, training,” etc.

Additionally, it is not legal for an LGBTQ person to be harassed in a workplace because of their identity. EEOC says “Harassment can include ‘sexual harassment’ or unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical harassment of a sexual nature. Harassment does not have to be of a sexual nature, however, and can include offensive remarks about a person's sex. For example, it is illegal to harass a woman by making offensive comments about women in general.”

How to Handle Interview Discrimination

Legally, there are interview questions that may not be asked. If you receive a question that makes you uncomfortable and may be illegal, here are a couple of options for responding:

- **If you feel comfortable answering**, you may choose to respond to the question as asked. Consider keeping the answers short and related to your skills and experience only.
- **If you do not feel comfortable answering**, you may decide to redirect or decline to answer. For example, ask the interviewer to help you understand why the question is relevant to the position or answer the parts of it you do feel comfortable with. You may be as graceful or direct with any of these approaches depending on your comfort.

For more information on illegal interview questions and employment discrimination, see:

-[Equal Employment Opportunity Commission](#) (Information and how to file a discrimination complaint against an employer)

-[A U.S. department of labor presentation on illegal or inappropriate interview questions](#) (PDF)

Job or Internship Search Resources

What should I consider when applying to a company?

An LGBTQ-friendly organization is one that proactively and intentionally protects lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer individuals from discrimination. Many of these companies also help organize support groups and social events for the LGBTQ individuals who work for them. Here are some questions to reflect on before applying to any company:

- Is it important to work at an organization that I know is explicitly LGBTQ+ friendly?
- What does working for a diverse company mean to me?
- Is the organization in a community/region known to be hostile to LGBTQ+ individuals?
- Does the organization provide same-sex partner benefits?
- Is there an LGBTQ+ employee resource group?
- Does the organization have at least one gender-neutral restroom?
- Does the organization sponsor or participate in activities or events that support the LGBTQ+ community?

Where can I research LGBTQ+-friendly organizations and regions?

- The Human Right's Campaign has great resources. Learn about legal protections for the LGBTQ+ community in every state by visiting the [HRC's Map of State Laws and Policies](#); identify LGBTQ+-friendly companies based on policies, benefits and trainings, with the [Corporate Equality Index](#); and/or check out the [HRC's best places to work](#).
- Also consider Googling the region using key words such as "LGBTQ organizations" or "LGBTQ+ friendly" and researching school systems for support and policies.

Considerations for Transgender Career Seekers

• Should I use my chosen name on a resume or cover letter?

You are not required to list your legal name on resumes and cover letters. There are several options for listing your name, for example (Legal Name) "John Black"; (Chosen Name) "Janessa Black"; (Initial Format) "J.L. Black". All are appropriate; do what feels right to you.

• Will I have to use my legal name at any point in the job search?

Unless you have made arrangements to change your name, you will need to provide your legal name for background checks, social security and insurance forms. However, most organizations allow you to use your preferred name for company contact information and directories.

• How should I dress for an interview?

When it comes to dressing for an interview, it is important that you present yourself in a fashion that is consistent with your identity and appropriate for the position/industry. It is your choice how you express gender in a workplace context. How you present yourself in an interview will help the employer understand how you plan to express yourself in the daily operations of the job and the pronouns you wish to use.

LGBTQ+ Associations & Resources

Intersectional Organizations:

[Rainbow Alliance of the Deaf](#)

[Asian Pacific Islander Queer Women and Transgender Coalition](#)

[The Center for Black Equity](#)

[Familia: Trans Queer Liberation Movement](#)

[The East Coast Two Spirit Society](#)

Transgender Resources:

[National Center for Transgender Equality](#)

[Trans Employment Program](#)

[Transgender Law Center](#)

[Gender Sanity's Transgender Employment Resources](#)

Science, Health & Medicine:

[National Organization of Gay and Lesbian Scientists and Technical Professionals](#)

[Queer in STEM](#)

[Queer Science: LGBTQ Scientist Discusses Coming Out at Work](#)

[Gay & Lesbian Medical Association](#)

[Gay & Lesbian Veterinary Medical Association](#)

[American Psychological Association Division 44: Society for the Study of LGBTQ Issues](#)

[Association for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Issues in Counseling](#)

Law & Government:

[International Lesbian & Gay Law Association](#)

[Gays and Lesbians in Foreign Affairs Agencies](#)

[The LGBT BAR](#)

Business, Tech & Engineering:

[O4U Marketing; O4U Business; O4U Tech; O4U Engineering](#)

[Reaching Out MBA](#)

Advocacy Organizations:

[Immigration Equality](#)

[Lambda Legal](#)

[Out and Equal](#)

[Trans Student Education Resources](#)

[The Capital Area Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce](#)

[LGBTConnect](#)