

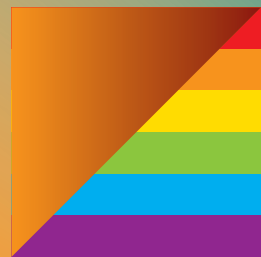
**PRIDE AT
WORK**
CANADA



**FIERTÉ AU
TRAVAIL**
CANADA

Hiring Across All Spectrums: A Report on Broadening Opportunities for LGBTQ2+ Jobseekers

By Pride at Work Canada



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Pride at Work Canada is the leading national not-for-profit confronting LGBTQ2+ inclusion in Canadian workplaces. Through dialogue, education and leadership, we empower organizations to foster a workplace culture that recognizes LGBTQ2+ employees as an important part of a diverse workforce.

Introduction by Colin Druhan, Executive Director

“You seem qualified, but I just don’t think you’re a good fit.” This, or a similar phrase, is one many LGBTQ2+ job seekers report hearing again and again while looking for work. The challenges don’t seem to stop after one gains employment; since over half of people who identify as LGBTQ2+ are not out to everyone they work with. That’s a lot of people going to work every day not talking about their spouses, their families, their kids, who they are, or their lives. When they go to work they are, basically, not themselves.

On Tuesday, November 28, 2017, because of the hard work of many LGBTQ2+ individuals and allies, our community reached a milestone. Prime Minister Justin Trudeau publicly apologized for the treatment of suspected gay civil servants throughout a period from the 1950s to the 1990s known as ‘The Purge.’ As the Prime Minister noted, people were “fired, discharged, or intimidated into resignation. They lost dignity, lost careers, and had their dreams – and indeed, had their lives shattered.” He described the broader impact of this “state-sponsored, systemic oppression” on Canadian culture and our national LGBTQ2+ community. It’s important to understand the history described by

the Prime Minister in his apology as part of the ongoing narrative of LGBTQ2+ rights in Canada and how one is treated in the workplace contributes to their quality of life.

Eleanor Roosevelt, a champion of universal human rights, said that our rights begin “in small places, close to home—so close and so small that they cannot be seen on any map of the world” such as where we live, where we learn and of course “the factory, farm or office” where we work. At Pride at Work Canada we see the challenges faced by people in the workplace because of their gender expression, gender identity and sexual orientation every day. We are also acutely aware of how systems of oppression keep members of our community out of the workforce entirely. While it has been refreshing to see increasing public commitment to LGBTQ2+ inclusion from employers across Canada and around the world, we know that simply throwing open the doors does not mean everyone is received warmly and offered a seat at the table – or in this case, a job.

Understanding the need for employers to get substantive feedback on their strategies

to include LGBTQ2+ people as part of a productive workforce, Pride at Work Canada launched a tool called The LGBT Workplace Inclusion Index in 2013. The Index survey, which over the past several years has been updated and expanded, asks questions about policies, programs and strategies employed by Canadian organizations with a specific focus on the grounds of gender expression, gender identity and sexual orientation and with Canadian human rights and employment legislation in mind. With this information Pride at Work Canada is able to provide recommendations for growth in these areas as well as highlight where employers may find themselves ahead of the pack on certain issues.

While some companies consider diversity and inclusion a “nice to have”, Pride at Work Canada is immensely proud of our National and Regional Partners, all of whom have made a commitment to making LGBTQ2+ inclusion a part of their corporate values and their talent management strategies. As evidenced by the statistics and real-life experiences referenced in this report by its author Jacq Hixson-Vulpe, these efforts not only have an impact on individual workplaces

but on the people who make up our broadly diverse community. This is why we wanted to draw focus to recruitment and hiring for this report on the latest findings from the Index program. At Pride at Work Canada we want employers to actively reach out to LGBTQ2+ communities, but also ensure that the workplaces we are welcomed to are truly inclusive and supportive environments in which everyone can thrive. It is our hope that by continuing to emphasize what Canadian employers are doing right in this regard, and on what fronts they can improve, that we will see more LGBTQ2+ people getting jobs; good jobs with rising incomes. These efforts are how we can truly honor the tragic histories of LGBTQ2+ communities, such as ‘The Purge’ perpetrated by the Government of Canada, and support the ongoing efforts to open up opportunity for each and every one of us who wants a job we can succeed in.

Community Partners: Thinking Across Canada



Community Partners: Thinking Across Canada



Pride at Work Canada connected with LGBTQ2+ community organizations across Canada to help underscore that the experiences of LGBTQ2+ communities are not the same. While there are many similarities, the lives of LGBTQ2+ people in Ontario are different than those in Halifax or Winnipeg. Highlighting these differences reminds us that there is no one solution for supporting LGBTQ2+ communities.

Queer, trans, and Two-Spirit people in British Columbia face employment and workplace challenges that include systemic challenges and ignorance in the workplace. These can include HR professionals not being equipped to support LGBT/2S folks, IT systems that are hetero and cisnormative, gossiping and social isolation within the office. Through all of this, the burden is often placed on queer, trans and Two-Spirit folks to educate their workplace peers and supervisors on how to be inclusive. This burden can be made more intense when folks have intersecting identities.

- Community, Vancouver, British Columbia

At the Youth Project we know how vitally important it is to fight homophobia and transphobia in the workplace. Our mandate is to make Nova Scotia a safer, healthier, and happier place for LGBTQ+ youth. Every day we work with young people who experience discrimination in the workplace because of their sexual orientation and gender identity. This can look like anything from mandatory gendered uniforms to harassment and bullying. Often this discrimination is so covert that youth are left with few options for legal recourse. Furthermore, when this discrimination is paired with the increasingly precarious, part-time, and low-waged jobs that are proliferating our economy, it creates additional barriers for LGBTQ+ youth who are just entering the workforce. The result is that many LGBTQ+ youth go back into the closet at work, endure hostile work environments, or find themselves shut out of the job market altogether. If we want to create a better future, we need to make sure that our youth have access to stable, full-time employment that also supports and affirms their identities as LGBTQ+ people.

- Gabriel Enxuga, Youth Project, Halifax, Nova Scotia

LGBT2SQ+ inclusive hiring is vital, not only for the sake of diversity and inclusion, but for the betterment of the business and customer loyalty. Inclusive hiring helps promote a work environment that values the strength of a diverse workforce, extending beyond just that of LGBT2SQ+ employees. However, while there are benefits in hiring a diverse team, some well-intentioned organizations are simply following a trend and lack the proper policies and plans to ensure that diversity is achieved and maintained. The core intention of building a diverse workforce that is effective is lost if an organization approaches diversity and inclusion as simply “checking off a box”. Sexual and gender identity are only aspects of who a person is. Each and every process -- from job postings to staff training, the kind of language we use in employee manuals, and the information human resources gathers must be considered through a lens, which recognizes and includes our LGBT2SQ+ community.

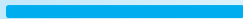
- Muhammad Ahsan, Rainbow Resource Centre, Winnipeg, Manitoba

It is clear that many employers still struggle with recognizing the importance of chosen names and pronouns, effectively supporting an employee transitioning on the job, and eliminating transphobic language and threats from the workplace. But perhaps the largest barrier that we face when trying to access employment is internal to oneself. It takes an incredible amount of courage for a trans person to simply step out in public. For many of us, the idea of entering the workforce is almost unthinkable; the notion of finding a career that matches our skillset is practically impossible.

This is why job fairs and mentorship programs that engage with the trans community, and specifically trans youth, are so valuable. Not only do we have to educate employers about the necessity of a trans-positive workplace, we also have to build the confidence of trans workers so that we are prepared to seize opportunities when they present themselves, and to create our own opportunities where and when there are none.

- Julie Hamara, The 519, Toronto, Ontario

Executive Summary



Executive Summary



Pride at Work Canada is proud to present “Hiring Across All Spectrums”, a report on LGBTQ2+ inclusion in the areas of recruitment and hiring, with a focus on the specific needs of trans and gender-diverse jobseekers. Through our LGBTQ2+ Workplace Inclusion Index program, we at Pride at Work Canada continue to see workplaces struggle with the practical realities of incorporating effective diversity and inclusion strategies in this area. We hope that this report, with accompanying data and guiding recommendations, will continue to support the important work of creating opportunity for the most marginalized members of our community.

“I Need to See Change” is a section of the report that explores the findings from Pride at Work Canada’s Inclusive Hiring Practices Survey. Executed in 2017, this survey targeted members of LGBTQ2+ communities across Canada and reflects the views of over 225 participants. The survey asked about some of the barriers facing individuals when applying for jobs and sought to understand what steps an organization could take to encourage LGBTQ2+ applicants. Overall, we found that LGBTQ2+ individuals continue to feel concerns that they will not be taken seriously because of their appearance and that their involvement in LGBTQ2+ volunteer activities would not be seen as worthwhile. Some respondents reported that they consistently avoid arranging phone calls or interviews because they worry about being misgendered. When asked what steps an employer could take to address some of these concerns, there was an overwhelming desire to see training of leadership and all staff, as well as a statement on all job postings citing that an employer is welcoming of applicants who identify as members of the LGBTQ2+ community.

In the section “LGBTQ2+ Recruitment and Hiring” we ask employers to think about who they are working with in terms of recruitment and how they support all individuals involved in hiring processes. It is broadly recognized that even the best-intentioned employees bring their own assumptions into their work; therefore it is important to ensure that the firms and individuals we work with are knowledgeable about LGBTQ2+ issues. It is important that recruiters are aware of LGBTQ2+ issues and comfortable using correct and respectful language. In addition, it’s vital for employers to provide hiring managers with proper support to respectfully and accurately engage with LGBTQ2+ current and prospective employees.

The way employers choose to communicate their support of LGBTQ2+ communities is essential and many organizations choose to sponsor Pride events. Celebrating the successes of the community during Pride season is a valuable part of developing a brand that is supportive of the community. However, that messaging needs to be present before and after Pride - all year round. True LGBTQ2+ inclusion requires a continued commitment, which involves meaningful engagement with LGBTQ2+ communities and further structural change.

The final section of this report explores the overall findings from Pride at Work Canada's annual LGBTQ2+ Workplace Inclusion Index, a workplace benchmarking program that has grown and evolved since launching in 2012. With over 30 leading Canadian employers participating on an annual basis, we are able to identify trends in current policy, education, and employee involvement. Through data collected from employers, Pride at Work Canada is able to gain a deeper understanding of what current efforts, such as demographic data collection and community engagement, currently look like.

Finally, we hope you will consider engaging the takeaway document, which highlights the important questions that we would like to see all Canadian employers grapple with as they continue this important and exciting work toward better supporting LGBTQ2+ communities.

“I Need to See Change”: Findings from Pride at Work Canada’s Inclusive Hiring Practices Survey

“I Need to See Change”: Findings from Pride at Work Canada’s Inclusive Hiring Practices Survey



In a 2016 Telus¹ commissioned a study that surveyed 814 Canadians regarding lesbian and gay experiences in the workplace. Of respondents, 37% believed that their workplace was not inclusive of lesbian and gay people, while almost half (45%) believed that the same workplaces were not inclusive of trans people. The 2011 Trans Pulse² study “We’ve Got Work To Do” focused on the lives of trans Ontarians and found that 47% of trans people have a post-secondary education but the vast majority make less than \$15,000 a year with only 37% of trans Ontarians employed full time. These statistics continue to capture a reality known by many LGBTQ2+ people in Canada: LGBTQ2+ communities face discrimination in the workplace and many, trans and gender non-conforming individuals in particular, face barriers to even entering the workforce.

In order to better understand the experiences of LGBTQ2+ job seekers, Pride at Work Canada conducted a cross-Canada survey. With over 225 participants, we were able to understand concerns faced by community members when applying for jobs; going through the interview process; and finally, what makes an LGBTQ2+ person more likely to apply for a job.

¹ Lee, Jane. “One-third of Canadians don’t see their work as LGBTQ inclusive: study” Benefits Canada. July 27th, 2016. <http://www.benefitscanada.com/news/one-third-of-canadians-dont-see-their-workplace-as-lgbtq-inclusive-study-85310>

² Bauer G, Nussbaum N, Travers R, Munro L, Pyne J, Redman N. We’ve Got Work to Do: Workplace Discrimination and Employment Challenges for Trans People in Ontario. Trans PULSE e-Bulletin, 30 May, 2011. 2(1). Downloadable in English or French at <http://www.transpulseproject.ca>.

When asked about concerns with respect to their sexual orientation and/or gender identity when applying for a job...



22%

of respondents felt they wouldn't be taken seriously because of their appearance

“My butch lesbian appearance will be a barrier.”

“I will not fit in to social/organizational norms. I will be exhausted by having to come out repeatedly”

54%

of respondents were concerned whether an organization was LGBTQ2+ positive and had not necessarily done research on that organization

41%

of respondents were concerned if an organization was LGBTQ2+ positive and had done research on that organization

34%

of respondents were concerned they would experience discrimination on multiple aspects of their identity

“I am unaware if the workplace will have bathroom facilities I am comfortable using.”

“I'm concerned about the background checks that I would have to do to switch jobs. If they try to check my university degrees, I have not had an opportunity to update my records and I would have to out myself so that the proper checks can get done.”

8%

of respondents hesitate to arrange phone calls/ interviews because they were worried they would be misgendered

When asked about what steps employers could take, LGBTQ2+ respondents said they would feel more comfortable applying to an organization...



66%

If organizations were to publicize all LGBTQ2+ related policies (such as anti-discrimination policies and transition guidelines)

“Frankly, I need to see change at a fundamental level. Often “LGBT positive” or “Trans Positive” does not mean assigned male at birth positive for trans and non-binary people.”

64%

If organizations explicitly stated that they are LGBTQ2+ friendly on job postings

63%

If leadership and all staff have undergone LGBTQ2+ specific training

42%

If organizations advertised in LGBTQ2+ media

34%

If organizations had a float in a Pride parade or sponsored a Pride Festival

These results demonstrate that LGBTQ2+ communities wish to see inclusive policies, active training of leadership of all staff, as well as explicit statements of inclusion backed up with action. As one participant noted, “I am fortunate in that I am a white cis male, so typically I don’t have any concerns unless I were to apply to an organization that doesn’t have inclusive policies; in that scenario, given the choice, I would withdraw my application.” Many of the concerns noted by participants impacted trans and gender non-conforming communities more intensely.

As the conversation about LGBTQ2+ inclusion continues to grow, it is important to examine how we can support the community as a whole and on the basis of individual identities. While movement is being made for specific parts of this broadly diverse community, we must ensure that all members of our community are equally included on this journey. Pride at Work Canada wants you to ask yourself a few questions:

What does it mean to celebrate and support diverse sexual orientations?

What does it mean to celebrate and support diverse gender identities?

LGBTQ2+ Recruitment & Hiring



LGBTQ2+ Recruitment & Hiring



Employers want to put their best foot forward when it comes to recruiting the best talent. This is why an increasing number of organizations invest in recruitment teams that are diversity savvy and can build dynamic talent acquisition strategies. Hiring managers and recruiters are often a prospective employee's first glimpse into an organization's culture. These people are therefore important representatives, and should ultimately be accurately presenting your organization's values and culture.

These important gatekeepers can be well intentioned but still bring their own biases and understanding of what is considered culturally "professional". Cultural stereotypes of professionalism are often rooted in **heterosexist** and **cissexist** assumptions of how men and women are "supposed" to look in a professional setting.

These cultural stereotypes can make their way in to hiring processes and organizational policies, such as gendered dress codes where men are expected to wear a particular type of professional clothing (this often includes suits, pants, button-up shirts, ties) and women are expected to wear distinctly different attire (blouses, skirts below the knee, etc.). Such

stereotypes do not support diverse gender identities or expressions, but instead limit the types of people who will feel comfortable applying for a job and thus ultimately limiting those who will be able to enter the workforce.

Knowing the important role that recruiters and hiring managers play in our workforce, it is important to provide them the tools they need to challenge their own biases and assumptions about who would be a "good fit" for an organization. Recognizing the specific experiences of trans and non-binary people when it comes to hiring is particularly important and has the greatest potential for positive impact.

Heterosexist: The belief that all people should be straight or want to be straight.

Cissexist: The belief that all people should be cisgender or want to be cisgender.

Recruiters



Recruiters



When thinking about support for recruiters consider:

- **Do the recruiters working with your organization engage in any training around LGBTQ2+ inclusion?**

Ensuring that recruiters engage in specific training about LGBTQ2+ people and their experiences will help ensure that they understand and empathize with the difficulties LGBTQ2+ people face entering and succeeding in the workforce. Increased familiarity with these communities also ensure that individuals who interact with recruiters will be more likely to have positive experiences. Recruiters will be able to use correct and respectful language, which can go a long way in creating positive relationships.

- **Does the external recruiting agency or team actively use LGBTQ2+ inclusive policies in their environment?**

External recruitment is a great area to consider supplier diversity. Ensuring that your organization has a supplier code of conduct, which includes anti-discrimination and harassment policies based on sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression, helps confirm that organizations you may work with align with your fundamental beliefs in LGBTQ2+ inclusion.

Hiring Managers



Hiring Managers



When thinking about support for hiring managers consider:

- **Are hiring managers trained in how to work with a prospective employee whose name and gender have changed through their employment history in a knowledgeable and caring manner?**

Many trans and non-binary people experience high levels of discrimination and therefore have many valid concerns when applying for a job and going through the interview process. For some of these job seekers, changing their name and the pronouns they use may be an integral part of a transition process. Undergoing these processes legally can be very expensive and therefore inaccessible. This means that many trans and non-binary people are unable to change the information on degrees or other certification to reflect their new name and lived identity. Some trans and non-binary people may have left or been forced out of a previous employment situation due to experiences of harassment and discrimination that they faced once they came out. They may be uncomfortable or fear a negative response if they come out to their references.

- **Are hiring managers aware of how to interact with all prospective employees in a positive way with regard to communication?**

Understanding how to positively engage LGBTQ2+ communities means having an understanding of the most accurate and up-to-date language. But it also means questioning some fundamental stereotypes and misunderstandings about gender. Ensuring that hiring managers are supported in evaluating the ways they communicate can help avoid incorrect and hurtful, as well as problematic, assumptions. Providing hiring managers with proper and frequent training will

13%

of Index participants provide in targeted person training around LGBTQ2+ issues prior to hiring

19%

of Index participants provide targeted online training around LGBT issues prior to hiring

56%

of Index participants provide a general LGBT training for all staff

help ensure respectful communications, which can go a long way in recruiting and maintaining LGBTQ2+ talent. Examples may include: the assumption that all women have higher voices and all men have lower voices when answering the phone, or using gendered titles such as Mr. or Ms. in e-mail communication before understanding how someone likes to be addressed.

- **Does your organization keep hiring managers up to date on LGBTQ2+ relevant policies?**

Some LGBTQ2+ people may inquire about anti-discrimination and harassment policies and/or transition support policies prior to accepting a job or interview from an organization. Understanding how an organization will support them and prevent harassment can be very important to members of LGBTQ2+ communities. As proven in numerous contemporary studies, many LGBTQ2+ people continue to face discrimination and harassment in the workplace. This only intensifies when we consider the experiences of trans and non-binary people, specifically, who are often forced out of or denied access to jobs.

- **Does your organization see involvement in LGBTQ2+ initiatives as a positive thing?**

Some LGBTQ2+ people are concerned when working on their resumes as it is not a given that an organization will see involvement in LGBTQ2+ initiatives as a positive thing. In fact, many people (LGBTQ2+ and allies) fear that it may be counted against them, as there may be concerns of “cultural fit”. If your hiring managers are unable to recognize the benefit of working with and for LGBTQ2+ communities, it is important to address these issues through policy and training.

69%

of Index participants provide training around organizational policy

41%

of respondents said that they research an organization's LGBTQ2+ related policies before undergoing the interview process

“Some of my work history is in LGBT organizations, so when I apply for jobs outside of those types of orgs, I wonder if I should include or hide those parts of my experiences, because I'm not sure if the organization is LGBT positive”

Targeted Outreach



Targeted Outreach



It's not just about where your job postings appear, but what you're messaging to prospective employees. Many organizations and recruiters are concerned about how to exercise targeted outreach, not necessarily how to attract LGBTQ2+ talent. This is a great opportunity for organizations to think about how they connect with local and national LGBTQ2+ organizations.

Things to consider when exploring possibilities for targeted outreach to LGBTQ2+ communities:

- Does your organization have a positive relationship with community-based organizations that support LGBTQ2+ communities?
- Does your organization participate in LGBTQ2+ specific career fairs?
- Does your organization make their commitment to LGBTQ2+ inclusion clear when at all career fairs?
- Do the people representing your organization at career fairs have knowledge around LGBTQ2+ communities?

49%

of respondents would apply for a position if the organization, reached out through LGBTQ2+ community organizations

When it comes to applying for jobs, many LGBTQ2+ people want to see an organization demonstrate its relationship to their communities. This relationship can be demonstrated through the use of respectful and correct language, representatives that can speak to LGBTQ2+ inclusion in your specific organization, as well as an image (i.e., a rainbow flag or trans flag).

Many LGBTQ2+ positive community centres recognize the importance of connecting LGBTQ2+ communities with safe and inclusive employment and either have, or are open to having, job fairs. LGBTQ2+ specific career fairs can be a great point to access these communities. As mentioned above, ensure that all representatives are comfortable using respectful and correct language and are aware of inclusive policies and campaigns. When thinking about how to support new employees, creating LGBTQ2+ specific mentoring programs can help retain and promote LGBTQ2+ communities within an organization. Getting involved in these activities as an exhibitor or sponsor doesn't just attract talent, it provides valuable face time with community members for the recruitment team and provides an opportunity for job seekers to provide feedback.

- Does your organization state that it encourages submissions from a diverse candidate pool, explicitly stating that LGBTQ2+ communities are included?
- Does your organization explicitly state it is LGBTQ2+ positive?
- Does your organization back up that statement with action?

Many LGBTQ2+ people note specifically that they feel more confident applying for a position if a job posting encourages submissions from diverse communities and mentions their community specifically. This can act as a way of demonstrating an organization's broader commitment to diversity and inclusion. However, these statements should only be included on a job posting if it is also backed up by active work towards structural LGBTQ2+ inclusion that can be found through such things as inclusive policies and targeted training to all staff.

Communicating to LGBTQ2+ Communities: Structural and Institutional Commitments

Communicating to LGBTQ2+ Communities: Structural and Institutional Commitments



The increased visibility of Pride festivals across Canada and around the world has been integral to various movements to advance the rights of LGBTQ2+ people. Without corporate sponsorship many events simply could not take place. This is why the business community's attention to LGBTQ2+ consumers and their spending habits has been especially important, with many companies publicizing their policies not to fire employees because they identify as members of LGBTQ2+ communities as a primary method of attracting employees and customers in jurisdictions with no employment protections on the grounds of gender expression, gender identity or sexual orientation.


Commitment to LGBTQ2+ inclusion can be demonstrated during Pride Month, recognized globally each June, and by participating in Pride parades as they take place across the country throughout the spring and summer months. However, many LGBTQ2+ people look for a deeper commitment from companies when it comes to inclusion. The meaningful actions that LGBTQ2+ people look for when they consider applying to an organization or choosing where to spend their money are the inclusive policies, training, and community engagement through inclusive hiring practices and opportunities for feedback, which back up parade floats and sponsorship activations.

A major part of this commitment is in understanding the diversity that exists in LGBTQ2+ communities. Recognizing the needs of trans people is very different from addressing the needs of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and queer people who identify as cisgender. Because trans and non-binary people are vastly underrepresented in the workforce, the issues facing trans and non-binary communities entering the work force are often not addressed in overarching conversations around LGBTQ2+ inclusion, as there are fewer members of this community to flag challenges based on their personal experience.

It is also key for employers to recognize the experiences of LGBTQ2+ people as intersectional (e.g., the experiences of a black queer identified trans woman will be different than experiences of a black straight cis woman, which will be different than an Indigenous Two-Spirit person). Understanding the diversity of intersecting identities will help an organization attract and

retain diverse talent through creating authentic and inclusive spaces. This understanding can sometimes only be achieved by looking outside of the organization itself. Employers looking to their employee resource groups (ERGs) for advice and guidance may be limited by the representation of the group itself, which can not be representative of some of the most marginalized members within the LGBTQ2+ community.

2017 LGBTQ2+ Workplace Inclusion Index Overall Findings



2017 LGBTQ2+ Workplace Inclusion Index

Overall Findings



Understanding LGBTQ2+ on a holistic level is integral for broader change. While this year's Index report focuses on hiring and recruitment, there is still so much that we need to consider as we move forward in the LGBTQ2+ Diversity & Inclusion space. The following sections outline the successes and gaps identified through the Pride at Work Canada LGBTQ2+ Workplace Inclusion Index available to our partners. The Index examines aspects of work environments such as policies and procedures, employee resource groups, support from executive leadership, data collection, and training.

Policy & Procedure

Good At:

1. Ensuring sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression are all included in anti-discrimination/harassment policies

Sexual orientation has been interpreted as a protected ground in the Canadian Human Rights Act since 1992. It was added as an explicitly-stated ground by Parliament in 1996. Since 2012, Canada's provinces and territories have been adding either one or both additional grounds of gender identity and gender expression to provincial human rights legislation. In June 2017 gender identity and gender expression were added as explicitly-stated protected grounds to the Canadian Human Rights Act. Ensuring that anti-discrimination and harassment policies are reflective of grounds stated in human rights legislations not only helps organizations potentially avoid liability but it also ensures that all inclusion work is supported at a fundamental level of policy.

69%

of Index participants review policy on a regular basis (e.g., on a bi-annual basis)

69%

of Index participants explicitly state gender identity and gender expression as protected grounds

Policy changes can also extend into a review of gendered language.

Consider reviewing things like parental and bereavement leave

Ensuring that policy uses gender-neutral language helps reflect and encompass diverse gender identities.

These types of changes recognize that there are people who do not identify on the gender binary as either a woman or a man.

2. Gender Neutral Washrooms

Everyone should be able to use the washroom in peace, without fear of abuse or harassment. For some members of LGBTQ2+ communities, this means having access to gender neutral or all-gender washrooms and changing facilities. For other members this means having access to washrooms that respect and reflect their lived identity. Trans women have a right to use the women's washroom. Trans men have a right to use the men's washroom, regardless of how other people read them. Trans and non-binary people should never be expected or required to use a gender-neutral washroom or single-stall space. It is the right of the individual to define themselves and therefore their right to access whichever washroom they feel is appropriate.

19%

of Index participants use gender neutral language in all relevant policies

Using gender neutral "they" can be helpful. *Ps. They is, and always has been, an acceptable singular use pronoun. So no need to concern those grammar and communication folks!*



63%

of Index participants have all gender washrooms available

In an effort to seek out more diverse applicants, TD has a dedicated staff member to recruit LGBT talent to the organization. Recognizing that inclusion is a holistic endeavor, in 2009 TD developed workplace transition guidelines. Over the past two years, TD developed a video to help raise awareness of the experiences of the trans community as well as adopting gender-neutral washrooms for new and renovated retail locations. As part of a concerted effort to hire more trans community members, TD joined in Toronto's first annual Transgender Job Fair.

To Improve:

1. Gender transition guidelines

Creating transition guidelines, which outline how your organization will support an employee who wishes to transition on the job, can help demonstrate a commitment to supporting trans employees. Guidelines should never be set in stone, but open to understanding the individual needs of each person in transition.

44%

of Index participants have formal transition guidelines in place

IBM continues to support trans and gender diverse employees through a global gender transition engagement framework, as well as providing benefits coverage in Canada, USA, UK, India, and most recently in Brazil to help with the costs of a variety of transition related treatment options. Globally, IBM has supported dozens of employees in transitioning and living their authentic lives.

2. Benefits provided for any gender-related surgeries

While many parts of gender confirmation surgeries are covered by most provincial and territorial healthcare, there are costs associated with medical transitioning that are not covered (such costs include access to electrolysis, which many people feel is integral to their transition). Addressing these needs with benefits providers can support the already changing landscape in employee packages.

31%

of Index participants have benefits packages which cover medical transition related procedures

Manulife offers employees a flexible benefits plan, disability coverage and wellness programs, ensuring they are supported through their transition

Index Participant ERGs



75%

provide networking opportunities

75%

are aware of local LGBTQ2+ resources and provide referrals

75%

support local LGBTQ2+ community organizations



69%

have an online presence through organizational social media



69%

provide educational opportunities for all employees



63%

advise on business development/service delivery



63%

actively engage learning opportunities to expand their scope

Executive Sponsors and Employee Resource Groups (ERGs)

Good At:

1. ERGs operational in a range of activities

ERGs can be a great way to provide space for representation for LGBTQ2+ issues in the workplace as well as providing networking opportunities for LGBTQ2+ community members and their allies. ERGs are best utilized as think tanks in addition to social networking events. These bodies can help drive internal change and give input on business plans and development.

To Improve:

1. Messaging from leadership

Positive messaging from leadership around LGBTQ2+ inclusion tells employees about what types of behaviour and mindset are acceptable and expected in the workplace. It also provides an opportunity for LGBTQ2+ people to see themselves and their issues reflected at leadership levels.

69%

of Index participants have an active LGBT ERG with a defined role, budget, and terms of reference

56%

Executive sponsors to LGBT ERGs communicated to all employees a strong leadership message on the importance of LGBT inclusion in the workplace

EY has embedded LGBTQA initiatives into their 2020 global strategy with such goals as

- “leveraging LGBTQA professionals to establish and deepen client relationships”,
- “developing LGBTQA talent through internal networking, skill building workshops and leadership opportunities”
- “working together with our established LGBTQA networks to strengthen our efforts abroad and at home”

Progress towards these goals are tracked and evaluated by a steering committee which is supported by Executive leadership

Training, Education, and Support

Good At:

1. Providing LGBTQ2+ inclusivity training as part of a larger e-learning curriculum

Many organizations provide a wide range of training on topics , and many organizations take an opportunity to discuss LGBTQ2+ issues within these larger educational opportunities. This method can be a great way to introduce a topic, but it often leaves questions unanswered and does not provide the direct support that a manager or HR staff might require.

69%
of Index participants provide training around stereotypes and language, as well as organizational policy

To Improve:

1. LGBTQ2+ specific inclusivity training that is tailored and targeted

Providing LGBTQ2+ specific training which is tailored to the participants (i.e., frontline staff have different needs than senior leadership). The needs of LGBTQ2+ communities are unique and require specific and tailored training to ensure that people managers, frontline staff, executive leaders, and all staff in between are aware of how to use proper language, respectfully engage, and challenge discriminatory language and behaviors.

63%
of Index participants provide training around unconscious bias



13%

of Index participants host trainings specifically relating to sexual orientation



2%

of Index participants have held trainings specifically relating to gender identity and gender expression



31%

of Index participants have a training rate of 75-100% whereas 25% have a training rate of 45% or less

Data Collection

Good At:

1. Ensuring that when general data is collected, it is clear that information will be kept confidential

Data collection is a great way to understand the demographics of an organization, yet proper steps to ensure confidentiality must be practiced.

To Improve:

1. Collecting data around gender identity and NOT sex

When collecting data around employees' identities, it is important to use accurate and respectful information. Unless there is a legally bona fide reason, collecting sex information is not required. Organizations should consider collecting gender identity information. Providing a blank field is considered best practice, otherwise a check list of terms, which include woman, man, cisgender, trans, non-binary, etc., while allowing individuals to self select multiple boxes is a next best option.

81%

of Index participants clearly state that all information provided will be kept confidential while

56% state what the data collection will be used for

Sex is a category that is assigned at birth and it is thought of as a binary of male or female

Supplier Diversity

Good At:

1. Sourcing diverse suppliers

Many organizations realize the importance in supporting and sourcing diverse suppliers. This support ensures that LGBTQ2+ entrepreneurs and small businesses continue to thrive and grow.

50%

of Index participants actively encourage diverse supplier bids/seek out diverse applicants

To Improve:

1. Ensuring suppliers' values are in alignment with organizational values of LGBTQ2+ inclusion

Considering supplier diversity is an essential step when sourcing outside contracts, but also ensuring that a potential supplier organization's code of conduct aligns with your organizational values is also important. This ensures that all suppliers align with your organizations mandate and values around LGBTQ2+ inclusion.

44%

of Index participants do not check a supplier's code of conduct

External and Community Engagement

Good At:

1. Sponsoring events

Many organizations see the positive impact of being involved in sponsoring large-scale events, such as Pride. This can look like providing volunteer hours as part of an employee's workday or through financial sponsorship.

81%

of Index participants support employee participation in LGBTQ2+ specific events

To Improve:

1. Consulting with relevant LGBTQ2+ stakeholders

Meaningful engagement with LGBTQ2+ communities can go beyond sponsorship of events and volunteer hours. Accessing LGBTQ2+ communities' members through active ERGs or open calls can create opportunities for LGBTQ2+ stakeholders to provide feedback around policy changes, educational opportunities, service provision, or other relevant conversations.

69%

of Index participants have sponsored LGBTQ2+ community events

“In order to better understand who their employees are and how they live, Scotiabank has undergone a review of language used in their HR system. In consultation with LGBTQ2+ community organizations in North and South America, Scotiabank now collects employee information based on gender identity and includes categories such as agender, bigender, pangender, and trans and has accurately translated these into three languages.”

Pink Plateau

Good At:

1. Placing LGBTQ2+ people in leadership roles

As the world changes, more and more people are comfortable being out at work, and this is reflected in the slowly changing demographics of individuals in senior leadership. Some members of LGBTQ2+ communities are finding themselves more properly represented in executive roles.

To Improve:

1. Understanding LGBTQ2+ communities in leadership through an intersectional lens


As we see advancement in LGBTQ2+ communities, this advancement is often seen the most with white cisgender gays and lesbians. LGBTQ2+ diversity and inclusion work must take a broader lens to understand that race, gender, ability, and all aspects of someone's identity must be respected and included in all conversations.

69%

of Index participants have
out senior leaders at the
executive level

Questions to Consider: Broadening Opportunities for LGBTQ2+ Jobseekers

These pages are to help you think about inclusive recruitment and hiring practices. Print them and bring them along with you!



Questions to Consider

	Yes	No	How can this be changed? What are the barriers to changing this?
1/ What does it mean to celebrate and support diverse sexual orientations?			
2/ What does it mean to celebrate and support diverse gender identities?			
3/ Do the recruiters working with your organization engage in any training around LGBTQ2+ inclusion?			
4/ Does the external recruiting agency or team actively use LGBTQ2+ inclusive policies in their environment?			
5/ Are hiring managers trained in how to work with a prospective employee whose name and gender have changed through their employment history in a knowledgeable and caring manner?			
6/ Are hiring managers aware of how to interact with all prospective employees in a positive way with regard to communication? <i>Examples may include: the assumption that all women have higher voices and all men have lower voices when answering the phone, or using gendered titles such as Mr. or Ms. in e-mail communication before understanding how someone likes to be addressed.</i>			

Questions to Consider (Con.)

	Yes	No	How can this be changed? What are the barriers to changing this?
7/ Does your organization keep hiring managers up to date on LGBTQ2+ relevant policies?			
8/ Does your organization keep hiring managers up to date on LGBTQ2+ relevant policies?			
9/ Does your organization have a positive relationship with community-based organizations that support LGBTQ2+ communities?			
10/ Does your organization participate in LGBTQ2+ specific career fairs?			
11/ Does your organization make their commitment to LGBTQ2+ inclusion clear when at all career fairs?			
12/ Do the people representing your organization at career fairs have knowledge around LGBTQ2+ communities?			
13/ Does your organization state that it encourages submission from a diverse candidate pool, explicitly stating that LGBTQ2+ communities are included?			

Questions to Consider (Con.)

	Yes	No	How can this be changed? What are the barriers to changing this?
¹⁴ / Does your organization explicitly state it is LGBTQ2+ positive?			
¹⁵ / Does your organization back up that statement with action?			

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