Out in the Job Search

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN SCHOOL OF INFORMATION
CAREER DEVELOPMENT OFFICE
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Identity Management

- How out do you want to be?
- It’s a personal decision to make.
- For some, sexual orientation is an integral part of their identity and it would seem false to be closeted in the workplace.
- Others might prefer to maintain separation between their personal and professional lives.
- There is no “right” answer – you must decide what is best for you.
Identity Management

- Evaluate what’s important to you:
  - Is it important for you to be yourself in the process and find supportive employers?
  - What has been your level of involvement within LGBT activities and the community?
  - Is it important for you to work at a particular organization and not be out so that you do not have to worry about potential discrimination?
  - Are most of your friends, peers and support networks LGBT-connected?
  - Do you prefer to keep your private life private, or do you want to be able to discuss your personal life with coworkers?
  - If you have a partner, is he or she out in most situations?
Finding LGBT Friendly Employers

- After deciding whether you will be most comfortable being out or not, it’s time to research organizations.
- You may want to identify safe and affirming organizations that will provide you the benefits and support necessary for happy and productive work.

**Resources:**
- Human Rights Campaign – Source of info on workplace and corporate attitudes and policies surrounding sexual orientation.
- Worknet Employer Database – Provides information on companies with nondiscrimination policies, domestic partner benefits and LGBTQ employee groups.
- The Queer Resources Directory
- WorkplaceDiversity.com
Finding LGBT Friendly Employers

Another way to identify potential employers, is to find job postings and organizations that value and target diverse employees.

Resources:
- National Consortium of Directors of GLBT Resources in Higher Education – Includes job listings for college and university positions.
- HireDiversity.com – An employment service for LGBT workers.
- Idealist.org – Job posting website that allows you to search by “LGBT” as an area of focus.
- LGBTCareerLink.com
- ProGayJobs.com
Resume Writing

- Should LGBT-related activities be included on your resume?
- As with listing any previous experience, think about the relevancy to the position you’re applying for.
- Weigh the pros and cons of including any potentially controversial group affiliation, such as political or religious activities.
- Put the emphasis on accomplishments that are relevant to the employer.
Resume Writing

**Strategies**

- Use an acronym – for example “LGBA” rather than Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual Alliance – but be prepared to explain it in an interview.

- List the organization as an “Anti-Discrimination Organization,” and then document your accomplishments from this experience.

- Use a “functional” resume that groups accomplishments together according to function/skill, rather than by organization name.
Interviewing

- Think ahead about how out you are ultimately willing to be during the interview process.
- Research an organization’s policies and climate ahead of time, to help inform your decision.
- Keep in mind you rarely know the attitudes of an interviewer ahead of time.
Interviewing

- Strategies:
  - If you have listed LGBT-related activities on your resume, be prepared to talk about your experiences.
  - If you have excluded “gay-related” experiences from your resume, you might not even mention them during the interview.
  - You could “test the waters” by asking an interviewer about the organization’s diversity initiatives – does the recruiter’s reply include mention of issues pertaining to sexual orientation?
  - Many people decide to wait to come up until after receiving a job offer, or after starting a new job – the decisions is yours!
Legal Issues

- Part of your career and future planning should be an awareness of legal protections in certain parts of the country.

- Resources:
  - Lambda Legal
  - National Gay & Lesbian Task Force
  - American Civil Liberties Union
  - Transgender Law and Policy Institute
  - PrideAtWork.org
On-Campus Resources

- Meet with anyone in the CDO to further consider what approach makes most sense for you.
- Visit the Spectrum Center.