Research Roundup is a digest of the best in LGBTQ+ research from Out Leadership and our partner organizations. In each issue, we highlight specific topics, bring together intersectional research, and outline tactical action steps for leaders.

**Issue 1: LGBTQ+ Discrimination in the Workplace**

**Issue Highlights & Actions Leaders Can Take:**

1. **LGBTQ+ workplace discrimination drives ALL talent out the door**
   
   Ensure policies around recruitment, retention, onboarding, and discrimination are explicitly LGBTQ+ inclusive, knowing that LGBTQ+ and ally talent look for those signals of organizational commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion.

2. **Intersectionality compounds workplace discrimination**
   
   The LGBTQ+ community is not a monolith. Ensure your organizational leadership and employees commit to diverse representation in their LGBTQ+ groups, and collaboration across minority ERG/BRGs.

3. **Religious beliefs drive the majority of discrimination in the workplace**
   
   Valuing religious diversity and ensuring LGBTQ+ employees’ safety are not mutually exclusive. Ensure that religiously motivated discrimination is stopped, as it is illegal and toxic to a workplace culture.

4. **Leaders can drive business by advocating for LGBTQ+ equality**
   
   Champion the business case for LGBTQ+ diversity and work towards improving organizational culture.

*Out Leadership uses the acronym LGBTQ+ across our work, which may not reflect the original terminology in cited publications.*
Discrimination & Discomfort Drive Talent Out the Door

1 in 10 LGBTQ+ employees experienced discrimination at work in the last year.¹

52% of LGBTQ+ employees channel at least 30% of their time at work into hiding or downplaying their sexual orientation or gender identity.²

The workplace is a microcosm for society as a whole. Although we have progress to celebrate, discrimination is still stunting success for all LGBTQ+ talent. When leaders make informed and thoughtful change, we see and feel the impact.

Jane Barry-Moran
Director of Research & Program Strategy

More than 1 in 3 LGBTQ+ employees have left because of mistreatment at a job.³

Out Leadership found that 31% of employees are willing to take a paycut to move to a more inclusive place.⁴

57% of LGBTQ+ individuals are not out at work.
#1 reason: not wanting to make others uncomfortable.⁵

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72% of allies say they are more likely to take a job at a company that is supportive of LGBTQ+ employees.7

Discrimination creates talent loss, damages brand, and decreases innovation. Valuing diversity drives retention.

Employee Retention & Organizational Commitment to Diversity: Employees likely to seek a new employer based on DEI values6

There is no such thing as a single-issue struggle because we do not live single-issue lives.

Audre Lorde
Poet, Activist, #OutLEADER

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Religion is the single largest reason LGBTQ+ people experience discrimination in our country and around the world - and it’s a false choice that we’ve created. Over half of LGBTQ+ Americans consider themselves religious. It’s not putting religion against LGBTQ+ people, but discrimination has impact on businesses, the legal system, and the well-being of the LGBTQ+ community.

- Todd Sears, Founder & CEO of Out Leadership

Black and Latino/a LGBTQ+ individuals are more likely to experience discrimination than their straight/cisgender colleagues of color.

This leads to compounded:
- Minority Stress
- Negative Health Outcomes
- Underemployment
- Mental Health Diagnoses

The Covid-19 pandemic has intensified these compounding experiences of inequity.

This graph represents the % of individuals who experienced job loss during the first 6 months of the pandemic.

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In a year marked both by unprecedented support for LGBTQ+ people by the federal government and unparalleled opposition to transgender rights by state legislatures, the Williams Institute's data informed real-world solutions.

Actions for Leaders:

- Drive LGBTQ+ equality through business, utilizing the diversity of background, thought, innate resiliency, and skills that the LGBTQ+ community brings.
- Tailor recruitment and retention practices to understand the diversity of all employees.
- Ensure inclusive policies and language across HR, recruitment and retention, and marketing materials (take Out Leadership's private diagnostic tool, OL-IQ, to identify potential gaps).
- Educate leaders on the allyship imperative.
- Value LGBTQ+ talent through mentorship programs, specific development programs, and targeted retention practices.

“Out in a year marked both by unprecedented support for LGBTQ+ people by the federal government and unparalleled opposition to transgender rights by state legislatures, the Williams Institute's data informed real-world solutions.”

The Williams Institute

Non-Profit Partners

This publication couldn’t happen without the great work of researchers at our partner organizations, specifically:

- UCLA School of Law Williams Institute
- COLOR OF CHANGE
- COQUAL
- MAP movement advancement project
- Center for American Progress

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Special Thanks:

We cannot do any of our work without the support of our 95 member companies:

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Endnotes

1. The Williams Institute: https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/publications/lgbt-workplace-discrimination/
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Project Team:

Todd Sears Founder & CEO
Jane Barry-Moran Director of Research & Program Strategy
Marco Martinot COO/CFO
Cameron Wu Junior Associate
Stephen Smith Head of Marketing
Michael Paterson Executive Creative Director

Disclaimer: Out Leadership has made all efforts to ensure that the information contained within this guide is accurate and up to date as of January 15, 2022. This guide is provided for educational and informational purposes only, and should not be construed as legal advice. The information is not guaranteed to be correct, complete, or current. If you would like to suggest an edit to this guide, please contact info@outleadership.com.

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