

Guidelines for Trainers

By Brian McNaught

Since 1986, when I began training corporate and government leaders and employees on LGBTQ issues in the workplace, I received dozens of inquiries from people who also wanted to be a trainer on lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer issues. Both Chubb and Merck brought me in to do a “train the trainer” with their employee resource groups (ERGs), and I provided the same training at “Sex Camp,” the Annual Workshop on Sexuality at Thornfield. I created these guidelines to help make the potential trainer optimally successful. I offer those time-tested guidelines here for your use.

Become Comfortable with All Aspects of Sexuality

* Read “*Sex Camp*.” It’s an excellent and easy-to-read primer, free on this site.

Know Yourself

* What is your motivation for doing this work?

Creat a Support Group

*It can be lonely work. It’s personally rewarding, but also exhausting, and you’re usually on your own. Create a support group of peers with whom you can share triumphs and disappointments.

Know Your Facts. Admit When You Don’t Know

*Familiarize yourself with sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, various religious perspectives, the opposition, the law, business trends, policies of other organizations.

Know Your Host

*Know the organization’s history, number of employees, ethnic and religious make-up, competition, history of diversity efforts in training policies, methods of settling disputes, union policies, history of LGBTQ-related problems, feelings of LGBTQ members on the work culture.

Know Your Goals

*What do you hope to achieve? What does your host hope to achieve? What is reasonable to expect?

Know Your Audience

*What’s their workload? How common is it for them to attend such presentations? What’s the profile of attendees? Are they engineers, P.R., H.R., Legal, white, Baptist,

etc.? Will your audience vary from presentation to presentation?

Be Prepared and Don't Panic

*Ask for what you want - an introduction by a senior manager, water, a wireless mic, name tags, easels, new markers, Power Point. Arrive early. Be prepared to set up the room. Anticipate the unexpected - plane delays, room changes, no lights, no sound, competing sound, no introduction, no attendees, late start, no hotel reservations, late ride to site.

Involve Local LGBTQ Employees

*Have them speak as part of the training/presentation. Give them guidance on how to achieve success, e.g., "Tell your story. Give personal perspective on environment. Give examples of unwelcoming words and behaviors. Tell colleagues how they can be supportive."

Read Evaluations

Don't personalize negative comments. Learn from both positive and negative feedback.

Check Back In With Your Host

*Were they pleased with the results? Were their needs met?