

A vertical rainbow gradient background, transitioning from red at the top to purple at the bottom.

SIEMENS

BEING AN ALLY

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ALLYSHIP GUIDE: LGBTQIA+

Contents

What is an Ally?	2
What do Allies do?	3
Top tips	4
A breakdown of terminology	5

This document explains what Allyship is and how you can be an effective Ally. It includes lots of top tips and definitions of language specific to the community.

What is an Ally?

“Allies help to dismantle stereotypes and provide valuable support to individuals in oppressed groups who may not have the power, status, or opportunity to influence institutional and systemic change. To be an Ally is to be an advocate and catalyst for social change, particularly in the face of our society’s “isms” (sexism, racism, ableism, heterosexism, ageism, classism).” - Article written by Na Shai Alexander

Allyship is not...

Allyship is not an identity, nor is it something that can be self-defined.

An Ally is not there to police people or make people feel like they’ve been speaking out of turn, but to educate on language and the impact it has on people facing particular challenges due to who they are.

WHAT DO ALLIES DO?

An Ally creates an environment that is free of discrimination where everybody has the freedom to be themselves irrespective of difference.

1. We listen

The most important part of being an Ally is taking the time to listen. For us to truly understand, we really need to listen to the answers given when we ask questions.

2. We intervene

If you witness discrimination do not stand by. An Ally will challenge oppressive behaviours and call out injustice with absolute commitment.

3. We do not take breaks

Being an Ally is a constant so they cannot switch it on and off. Phobia and injustice do not take breaks. Being an Ally means always being ready to stand up against discrimination.

4. We acknowledge their own privilege

Being an Ally will make you feel uncomfortable to begin with. An Ally will make mistakes. This means confronting your own privilege and understanding your own power so that you can use it and your platforms to amplify the voices of those who need a little help raising theirs.

Here are some practical things that you can do right away...

- Use pronouns on your email sign-offs – he/him, she/her, they/them.
- Add pronouns to name tags.
- Add a rainbow or trans sticker in your car or office window.
- Use gender-neutral bathroom signs if you have single-stall bathrooms.
- Make a habit of not assuming a persons gender or sexual orientation.
- Don't ask personal questions that you wouldn't want someone to ask you.
- Offer readily available resources about LGBTQIA+ issues.
- Understand terminology and various identities.

ACTION TO TAKE...

1. Learn the issues

Speak to people. Often the best way to understand is to listen to individual personal experiences, those that you speak with will often have the best ideas on what improvements could be made in the workplace to create a more inclusive environment. However, self-education is hugely important.

2. Be yourself

For inspiration on how to be an effective Ally you need only reflect on your own personal values. Ask yourself, and your colleagues, how would you like to be treated at work? Supporting the rights of others creates a thriving workspace when people do not have to hide who they really are. Be yourself and inspire the same in those around you.

3. Ask for Advice

Most people will worry about saying the wrong thing and that is completely natural when we do not understand the subject matter in its entirety. When approaching people to answer your questions the key is to really listen and be polite and respectful. Everything is new to everyone at first.

4. Be visible

Make public commitments to show that you are an Ally. Wear a badge or pin and make statements about the importance of equality in the workplace. In doing this you help to influence change.

5. Hold colleagues to account

The most effective thing any Ally can do is to challenge people when they speak out of turn. It is doing this that invokes real change and teaches people to think before they speak.

6. Be natural

There is no right or wrong way to be an Ally. Just showing your support in whichever way you can is enough. Take time to reflect. A good Ally is self-aware.

What does it mean?

Click [here](#) to see Stonewalls entire glossary of terms

Bi

Bi is an umbrella term used to describe a romantic and/or sexual orientation towards more than one gender.

Cisgender or Cis

Someone whose gender identity is the same as the sex they were assigned at birth. Non-trans is also used by some people.

Coming out

When a person first tells someone/others about their orientation and/or gender identity.

Deadnaming

Calling someone by their birth name after they have changed their name. This term is often associated with trans people who have changed their name as part of their transition.

Gay

Refers to a man who has a romantic and/or sexual orientation towards men. Also, a generic term for lesbian and gay sexuality - some women define themselves as gay rather than lesbian. Some non-binary people may also identify with this term.

Gender

Often expressed in terms of masculinity and femininity, gender is largely culturally determined and is assumed from the sex assigned at birth.

Gender identity

A person's innate sense of their own gender, whether male, female or something else (see non-binary below), which may or may not correspond to the sex assigned at birth.

Gender reassignment

Another way of describing a person's transition. To undergo gender reassignment usually means to undergo some sort of medical intervention, but it can also mean changing names, pronouns, dressing differently and living in their self-identified gender.

Homosexual

This might be considered a more medical term used to describe someone who has a romantic and/or sexual orientation towards someone of the same gender. The term 'gay' is now more generally used.

Homophobia

The fear or dislike of someone, based on prejudice or negative attitudes, beliefs or views about lesbian, gay or bi people. Homophobic bullying may be targeted at people who are, or who are perceived to be, lesbian, gay or bi.

Intersex

A term used to describe a person who may have the biological attributes of both sexes or whose biological attributes do not fit with societal assumptions about what constitutes male or female. Intersex people may identify as male, female or non-binary.

Lesbian

Refers to a woman who has a romantic and/or sexual orientation towards women. Some non-binary people may also identify with this term.

LGBTQ+

The acronym for lesbian, gay, bi, trans, queer, questioning and ace.

Non-binary

An umbrella term for people whose gender identity doesn't sit comfortably with 'man' or 'woman'. Non-binary identities are varied and can include people who identify with some aspects of binary identities, while others reject them entirely.

Outed

When a lesbian, gay, bi or trans person's sexual orientation or gender identity is disclosed to someone else without their consent.

Pan

Refers to a person whose romantic and/or sexual attraction towards others is not limited by sex or gender.

Pronoun

Words we use to refer to people's gender in conversation - for example, 'he' or 'she'. Some people may prefer others to refer to them in gender neutral language and use pronouns such as they/their.

Queer

Queer is a term used by those wanting to reject specific labels of romantic orientation, sexual orientation and/or gender identity. It can also be a way of rejecting the perceived norms of the LGBT community (racism, sizeism, ableism etc). Although some LGBT people view the word as a slur, it was reclaimed in the late 80s by the queer community.

Questioning

The process of exploring your own sexual orientation and/or gender identity.

Sex

Assigned to a person on the basis of primary sex characteristics (genitalia) and reproductive functions. Sometimes the terms 'sex' and 'gender' are interchanged to mean 'male' or 'female'.

Sexual orientation

A person's sexual attraction to other people, or lack thereof. Along with romantic orientation, this forms a person's orientation identity.

Trans/transgender

An umbrella term to describe people whose gender is not the same as, or does not sit comfortably with, the sex they were assigned at birth.

For more terminology around trans people see the [Transitioning at Work Policy](#) [here](#)