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THE SPEAKOUT GUIDE TO

**STARTING AN LGBTQ  
EMPLOYEE RESOURCE GROUP**

## What is an Employee Resource Group (ERG)?

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An **Employee Resource Group (ERG)** is a voluntary, employee-led group that fosters a diverse, inclusive workplace aligned with organizational mission, values, goals, business practices, and objectives

# ERG PILLARS

A successful LGBTQ ERG will offer community, learning, recruiting, and outreach

1



## COMMUNITY

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Events and gatherings where employees can meet each other and exchange ideas

2



## LEARNING

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Resources, tools, and training on LGBTQ topics relevant for the workplace

3



## RECRUITING

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Attendance at LGBTQ business conferences and recruiting events to attract LGBTQ talent

4



## OUTREACH

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Partnerships with community organizers and nonprofit organizations that champion LGBTQ causes



# 1 COMMUNITY

Events and gatherings where employees can meet each other and exchange ideas

## COMMUNITY-BUILDING EVENT EXAMPLES

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### MIXERS

Opportunities to meet people from other departments, organizations, or ERGs

### SPEAKER SERIES

LGBTQ thought leaders speaking about their work on behalf of the community

### PANELS

People within the organization speaking about their experiences with LGBTQ topics

### PRIDE

March in your local city's Pride Parade during Pride Month with your ERG

### OFFSITES

Select a full day for membership to convene offsite and discuss strategy / topics

### MISC. EVENTS

Movie screenings, happy hours, lunches, etc.

## 2 LEARNING

Resources, tools, and training on LGBTQ topics relevant for the workplace

### RESOURCES

#### TOOLKITS

Easy-to-read guides on LGBTQ topics (e.g., how to be an ally)

#### ONE PAGERS

One-page overviews on LGBTQ topics (e.g., history, issues) that can be posted around the office

#### VISUAL RESOURCES

Printable pages that can be displayed at employees' desks to show support for the LGBTQ community

### TRAININGS

#### GENERAL TRAINING

Integration of LGBTQ topics into training curricula

#### EXECUTIVE MENTORING

Executive-level training in which ERG leaders guide executives on how to navigate LGBTQ topics

#### ERG LEADER TRAINING

Day-long training session for ERG leaders-in-training with deep-dives on LGBTQ workplace topics

Please visit [speakoutfoundation.net](https://speakoutfoundation.net) to access workplace resources

## 3 RECRUITING

Attendance at LGBTQ business conferences and recruiting events to attract LGBTQ talent

### CONFERENCES

Visibility at LGBTQ business conferences demonstrates corporate commitment to LGBTQ diversity

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- Out & Equal Workplace Summit
  - Out for Undergrad Conference
  - Reaching Out MBA
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### RECRUITING EVENTS

Have ERG representatives present at recruiting events to field any questions about internal diversity efforts and practices

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- Job fairs
  - On-campus events
  - Information sessions
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### COMMUNITY EVENTS

Participate in major LGBTQ community events to signal community support

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- Pride celebrations
  - AIDS walks
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## 4 OUTREACH

Partnerships with community organizers and nonprofit organizations that champion LGBTQ causes

### MENTORSHIP

Partner with local LGBTQ centers and nonprofits to provide career readiness, trainings, and mentorship programs

### VOLUNTEERING

Engage ERG members to volunteer at organizations in need

### FUNDRAISING

Use holidays and other special days to fundraise for LGBTQ-focused nonprofits, engaging ERG members and non-member allies

### SPONSORSHIP

Encourage executive sponsors to join boards of LGBTQ organizations and drive company-wide investment and sponsorship

# ERG LEADERSHIP

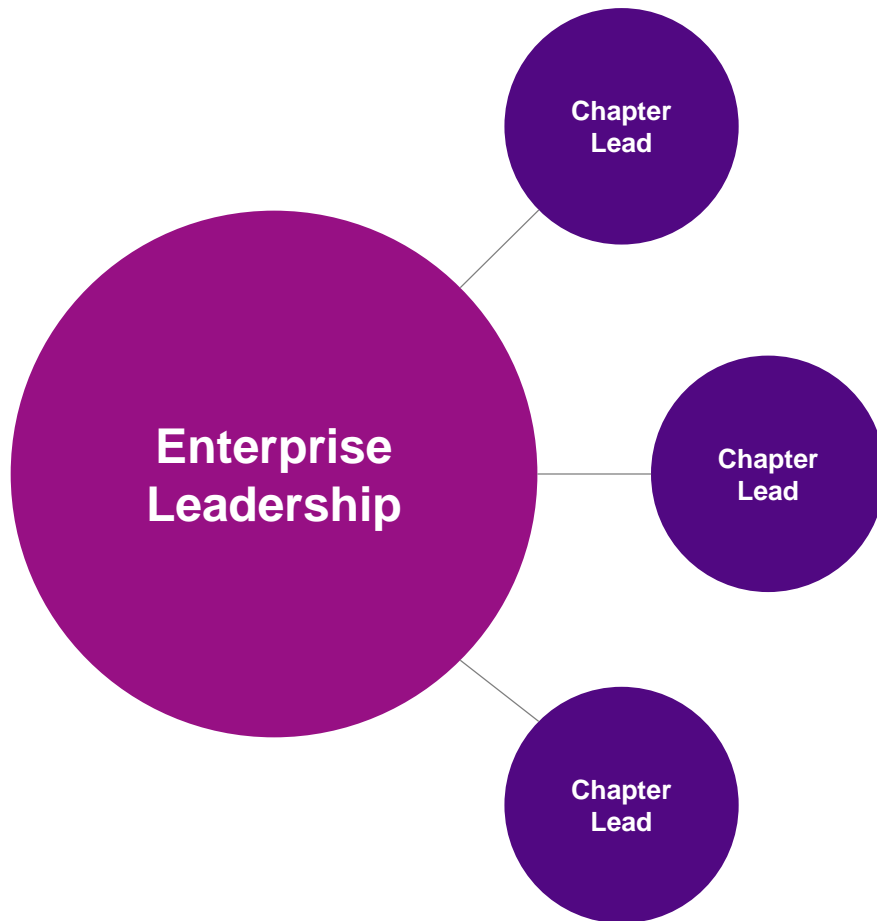
ERGs should have an executive sponsor and a leadership board to coordinate operational activities





# ERG STRUCTURE

Even in large organizations, a singular leadership team with chapter leads for disparate segments / geographies tends to be most effective



## BENEFITS OF A HUB-AND-SPOKE STRUCTURE

- Unified, cross-company strategic vision for the ERG
- Easy ability to leverage executive-level support for the ERG from HQ throughout the organization
- Easy ability to flag issues and direct to leadership
- Easy ability to share best practices and replicate across chapters
- Chapter lead roles provide a clear funnel into enterprise leadership roles

# STARTING AN ERG: TO-DO LIST

- 1** Gather a group of employees interested in creating an ERG
- 2** Secure an executive sponsor
- 3** Pitch the idea to corporate leadership team in tandem with the executive sponsor
- 4** Secure leadership support and funding
- 5** Assign ERG leadership roles
- 6** Begin planning events and creating resources

# THANK YOU!

For more workplace resources, visit [www.speakoutfoundation.net](http://www.speakoutfoundation.net)

## FOLLOW SPEAKOUT

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