

'COMING OUT' IN THE JOB SEARCH PROCESS

As LGBTQ students and alumni begin thinking about their internship and career search, there are often challenges or questions that face them in regards to their sexual and/or gender orientation. One of the first questions LGBTQ job seekers may have to face is whether or not to come out in a resume or interview, and there is of course no right answer. It is always a personal choice. Here are some things to consider.

RESUMES

Any mention of an LGBTQ organization or group on your resume should first and foremost be applicable to the position to which you are applying, whether through leadership experience, transferable skills, etc.

Therefore, if you choose to include these experiences, be sure they showcase your skills, qualifications, leadership, or involvement.

Unfortunately, despite an organization's policies or your qualifications, you never know who may be reviewing your resume, and they may not be LGBTQ-friendly. For this reason, some individuals avoid putting any of this information, or coming out, on their resumes.

Remember, it is up to you which information you choose to divulge on your resume, and to which organizations you choose to submit it, so simply keep in mind the pros and cons as you navigate this decision.

INTERVIEWS

If you chose to disclose your involvement with LGBTQ organizations on your resume, the interview will be a chance for you to expound upon the various skills developed and experiences had.

If you chose to keep that information off of your resume, the interview can be a time to find out more about the culture of an organization.

You may want to ask the interviewer about policies or diversity initiatives. The answers may give you an idea of the culture, or make you feel more comfortable disclosing some of your LGBTQ-related leadership experiences. On the other hand, it may reveal negative information about the organization.

Keep in mind, LGBTQ issues may not be a part of any discussion or answer, and you may have to decide whether or not you wish to disclose that information.

*Always remember, if you are seeking a job or internship, the first thing you should be doing on a resume and in an interview is showing the employer that you are a qualified candidate. If you choose not to include the LGBTQ information on your resume, be sure you convince them that they want to hire you before asking direct questions about culture and policy. For more information and resources for LGBTQ job seekers, please visit our website, careers.pitt.edu.