

<b>ASSESSING</b>			✓
<b>OUR</b>		✓	
<b>ORGANIZATIONS</b>			✓

Getting started with the conversation about lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) issues can feel overwhelming. A solid first step is to assess where the organization is starting in relation to their individual and organizational knowledge, attitudes and behaviors regarding LGBTQ equality.

This assessment tool is useful in identifying the gaps and opportunities to strengthening an organization's commitment to LGBTQ equality. In identifying opportunities within existing work, an organization can deepen the understanding and skills of staff, leadership and membership around LGBTQ equality and issues.



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# Assessing Our Organizations <sup>4</sup>



90 minutes

## SUMMARY

This assessment tool is useful in identifying the gaps and opportunities to strengthening an organization's commitment to LGBTQ equality.

## GOALS

- Examine key aspects of the organization that are relevant to supporting LGBTQ rights and issues
- Identify strengths and weaknesses of the organization relevant to inclusion and responsiveness towards LGBTQ constituents and members
- Identify opportunities within existing work that can be used to deepen the understanding and skills of staff, leadership and membership around LGBTQ equality and issues

## MATERIALS

- Copies of "Assessing Our Organizations" Worksheets, p. 4-5
- Flip chart with worksheet written up
- Green, yellow and red markers

## AGENDA OUTLINE

EXERCISE	FORMAT	TIME
Introductions & Instructions	Presentation	10 minutes
Assessment Tool	One on one	35 minutes
Report Back	Large group discussion	45 minutes

## ► Introductions & Instructions (10 minutes)

### *Presentation*

This session is an opportunity for the participants to take a closer look at their organization and take stock of where the organization is around incorporating LGBTQ issues into the work.

Review the organization on five main points:

**Program** – What issues does the organization work on, and where can LGBTQ issues be incorporated?

**Power** – Who makes decisions within the organization?

**Policies** – Do the policies of the organization support LGBTQ individuals and incorporate values around LGBTQ equality?

**Culture** – Does the culture of the organization reflect LGBTQ individuals?

**People** – Who are the people within the organization, and do they have the skills needed to support LGBTQ equality?

Distribute worksheet to each participant. Depending on the mix of people in the audience participants can be divided into whatever small groups make the most sense: by staff/board/membership, by committees, by programs, etc.

<sup>4</sup> The Organizational Assessment Tool was developed by the Gender Justice Program at Western States Center. It builds on a tool developed by South Asian Network, Q-Team, Vote for Equality (a project of the LA GLBTQ Center), and the UCLA Downtown Labor Center, as well as materials from changeworks.

# Assessing Our Organizations (continued)

## ► **Assessment Tool (35 minutes)**

### *One on One*

Have each small group spend 35 minutes answering three questions in each of the areas outlined on the worksheet. For each question, they will mark it either red, yellow or green, according to how they assess the organization is doing.

- Red Light: Organization has not gone there
- Yellow Light: Organization has started conversations about this or taken some first steps
- Green Light: Organization is fully on board and has completed this action

## ► **Report Back (45 minutes)**

### *Large Group Discussion*

#### **Trainer Asks:**

- “Which areas is the organization strong on?”
- “Where are the areas where the organization needs to do more work?”
- “Are there areas that the organization needs to start on? What steps come first?”

#### **Trainer Points:**

- Summarize the areas of strengths as signs that the group is not starting from scratch.
- Summarize opportunities for work as exciting possibilities for strengthening the current work the organization is doing.
- If there is time, share the story or case study of one or two groups who went through this process. Emphasize the differences in starting points and outcomes, and how groups need to start where they are at.

# Assessing Our Organizations

This Organizational Assessment — an adaptation of a longer self-evaluation tool created for groups to look at their organizations around race — offers a place to start. This sampling of questions is designed to help organizations examine and change the ways they currently deal with the issues and experiences of LGBTQ people of color, as well places to start looking within the organization for some first steps.

**Directions:** For each question, choose one of the following:

- Red Light: Organization has not gone there
- Yellow Light: Organization has started conversations about this or taken some first steps
- Green Light: Organization is fully on board and has completed this action

	RED LIGHT	YELLOW LIGHT	GREEN LIGHT
<b>PROGRAM</b>			
1) Does your organization talk about LGBTQ issues in general?			
2) Does your organization talk about its issues in ways that include potential LGBTQ constituents, and how they are disproportionately impacted by the issues you work on?			
3) Do you identify programmatic goals that reflect the ways you seek your work to impact LGBTQ members and constituents?			
4) Does your organization advocate for the inclusion of LGBTQ issues when working in coalition or partnership with other groups?			
5) Is the cultural experience of LGBTQ people in your community acknowledged and integrated into your program work?			
<b>POWER</b>			
1) Is your organization accountable to and seek leadership from LGBTQ individuals and/or organizations within your own community?			
2) Does your organization have openly LGBTQ board members?			
3) Are there institutionalized ways that you support and build up the capacity and leadership of your LGBTQ staff, members and board members?			
4) Does your organization's budget reflect its commitment to this work? Is your organization dedicating financial resources (via program and staff time) to this work?			

	RED LIGHT	YELLOW LIGHT	GREEN LIGHT
<b>POLICIES</b>			
1) Does your organization have anti-discrimination policies that explicitly prohibit harassment of LGBTQ members of the organization?			
2) Is family defined in ways which support LGBTQ families in personnel policies (i.e. being able to care for a same sex partner as part of sick leave)?			
3) Does the employee benefits package incorporate the needs of LGBTQ staff members (i.e. domestic partner benefits and insurance, transgender health care coverage)?			
4) Does your organization have gender accessible bathrooms?			
<b>PEOPLE</b>			
1) Is gender identity and sexual orientation part of the diversity that your organization seeks among its staff, leadership and members?			
2) Does your organization have openly LGBTQ identified staff members of color?			
3) Are staff and key leaders trained to address issues of homophobia and gender oppression as they arise in work with members?			
4) Are there regular trainings and discussions at the member, staff and board level about dismantling homophobia and gender oppression?			
5) Are staff, members and Board members evaluated and given feedback on how skilled they are in responding to gender oppression and advancing LGBTQ equality, especially as they connect with programmatic goals?			
<b>CULTURE</b>			
1) Does the organization have LGBTQ identified members of color that are public about their sexual orientation or gender identity?			
2) Are ceremonies and cultural events mindful of LGBTQ people of color?			
3) Do people in leadership positions participate in and support discussion of power and oppression issues, especially around LGBTQ issues?			
4) Are the families and experiences of LGBTQ members and constituents reflected, affirmed and welcomed in the ways your organization come together as a community?			