

National Bisexual Awareness Week starts on Bisexuality Visibility Day on 24 September and runs until 30 September. It's a good opportunity to educate ourselves about the full LGBT+ spectrum including Bi – who make up an estimated 52% of the LGBT+ community.

Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people who are "out" at work waste less energy hiding aspects of their personalities -- meaning they feel more confident and progress within the company. However, many remain in the closet. A recent YouGov survey in the UK showed that 49% of respondents between the ages of 18-24 identified as not heterosexual, with only 6% reporting as exclusively homosexual. This misunderstanding leads to exclusionary behavior in the workplace: 43% of LGBT people report hearing jokes about bisexuals in the workplace.¹

Understanding the language

BISEXUAL, BI: A person who has the capacity to form enduring physical, romantic, and/ or emotional attractions to those of the same gender or to those of another gender.²

PANSEXUAL, PAN: A person who has the capacity to form enduring physical, romantic, and/or emotional attractions to those of any or all genders. Pansexual people are typically considered part of the bisexual community.²

QUEER: A term people often use to express fluid identities and orientations.³

Bi+ or bisexuality+ includes bi, pan, queer, and fluid sexual orientations.

5 Bisexuality myths/truths

1. Bisexuality+ is just a phase. They're actually gay and just won't admit it./They're actually straight and just want attention.
TRUTH: Bisexuality+ is a real sexual orientation that is an inherent part of a person. Bisexuality+ is part of the LGBT+ spectrum. Bisexual people don't need to identify as gay to be LGBT+. And bi+ people legitimately have a different pattern of attraction than gay people or lesbians.
2. Bisexual+ people just can't make up their minds.
TRUTH: Bisexuality+ is a stable sexual orientation. They are attracted to a person regardless of gender.
3. You aren't bi+ unless you've been in a relationship with both men and women.
TRUTH: Just as a person can be straight before they have been in a relationship, bi+ people are bi+ regardless of their relationship history.
4. Bisexual+ people are less likely to face stigma than LGBT+ people.
TRUTH: Bisexual+ people face stigma from both the heterosexual community and the LGBT+ community.
5. Bisexuality+ doesn't exist.
TRUTH: Bisexuality+ is a real orientation and exists no matter what a person's relationship status. Being partnered with someone of a different sex/gender doesn't mean a bi person is straight, for example. They are still bisexual.

To learn more about the LGBT+ community, consider attending an ERG meeting. Everyone is welcome to attend, with no questions asked. We do not ask anyone to identify their sexual orientation or gender identity. We are happy to build awareness and answer questions for anyone who is interested in attending!

¹ "Cost of the Closet", Human Rights Campaign, 2014.

² GLAAD Bi Media Resource Guide

³ "A Resource Guide to Coming Out as Bisexual", Human Rights Campaign.