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Majority of Heterosexual Americans Believe Job Performance Should Be the Standard for Judging an Employee, Not Gender Identity or Sexual Orientation
Yet Majority of Americans Mistakenly Believe Current Law Prohibits Firing Someone Because they are Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or Transgender

SAN FRANCISCO, CA, WASHINGTON, DC and NEW YORK, NY– October 25, 2011 – According to the 2011 Out & Equal Workplace Survey, nearly three out of four – or 74% - heterosexual adults agree that how an employee performs at his or her job should be the standard for judging an employee, not whether or not they are transgender or if they are gay, lesbian or bisexual. Most of those (approximately 6 out of 10) indicated not merely agreement, but strong agreement with that statement.

The survey also found that a significant majority of Americans mistakenly believe that such protections already exist. The Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA), which would prohibit discrimination against employees on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity, is still working its way through the United States Congress since its introduction in 1994. When asked whether an employer can fire someone because they are gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender, only 8% of all Americans knew that it was legal to do so today under federal law.

“In today’s challenging economic times, it is clear that Americans support workplace anti-discrimination protections that cover all workers, including those who are lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender, so that they are evaluated fairly for the work they do,” said Selisse Berry, Executive Director of Out & Equal Workplace Advocates.

“We are very encouraged by the rise in support for the rights of transgender employees and the fact that a significant majority of Americans believe that it is wrong to fire someone simply for being lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender,” Berry notes. “Protecting the rights of LGBT employees is not only the right thing to do but it is good for business; the results of this survey reinforce that Americans clearly understand that. The fact that people are unaware of the lack of federal employment protections highlights just how important educational events like the Out & Equal Workplace Summit are.”

The 2011 Out & Equal Workplace Survey was conducted online by Harris Interactive® in conjunction with Out & Equal Workplace Advocates and Witeck-Combs Communications, among 2,610 U.S. adults, of whom 2,238 indicated they are heterosexual and 304 self-identified as LGBT. Beginning in 2002, this survey has become a trusted annual barometer of attitudes surrounding LGBT issues in the workplace and is the longest-running national survey of its kind.

The survey also reports 83% of LGBT adults say they are out about their sexual orientation to friends, up from 73% in 2009. 61% of LGBT adults say they are now out to their brothers and sisters, up from only 50% in 2009. By contrast, only 35% of bisexuals* in this year's study note that they are out to their co-workers compared to 60% of gays and 62% of lesbians. The same pattern plays out for those who are open with their bosses and managers with 56% of gay men, 44% of lesbians, and only 21% of bisexuals reporting being out.

Berry continues, "These numbers show us that there is still work to do before people are comfortable being open about their sexual orientation at work. In particular, more needs to be done to ensure that bisexuals can disclose their identities safely. The discrimination that bisexual people face in the workplace is sometimes overlooked or dismissed, and this study demonstrates that it needs to be taken seriously."

The release of this new workplace study comes as Out & Equal kicks off its annual Workplace Summit, considered the world's premier conference on LGBT workplace equality and attracting thousands of participants. The Out & Equal Workplace Summit is being held October 25-28 in Dallas, TX, at the Hilton Anatole. LGBT employees and straight allies, along with human resources and diversity professionals, representing some of the nation's leading companies—a majority from the Fortune 500—are set to participate in this year's summit, focused on achieving workplace equality.

For more information about the Summit or to register, please visit www.outandequal.org.

**TABLE 1
GENDER IDENTITY PROTECTIONS**

According to a United States law, employers may not discriminate in hiring or promoting any person because of their race, nationality, sex and religion, among other characteristics. If your current or most recent employer favored updating this law to also prevent discrimination against people who are transgender, how much would you agree or disagree with that decision?

Base: All adults

	Total	GLBT	Gay/ Lesbian	Hetero- sexual
AGREE (NET)	55%	77%	90%	54%
Strongly agree	40%	70%	84%	38%
Somewhat agree	15%	7%	6%	16%
Neither agree nor disagree	20%	15%	5%	21%
DISAGREE (NET)	11%	6%	3%	11%
Somewhat disagree	5%	5%	1%	4%
Strongly disagree	6%	2%	2%	7%
Not applicable	11%	1%	2%	11%
Decline to answer	3%	1%	-	3%

Note: Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding

**TABLE 2
SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND GENDER IDENTITY LAWS**

Currently under federal law do you think it is legal or illegal for an employer to fire someone because they are gay, lesbian or transgender?

Base: All adults

	Total	GLBT	Gay/ Lesbian	Hetero- sexual
It is illegal	75%	66%	44%	76%
It is legal	8%	25%	42%	7%
Not at all sure	17%	10%	13%	17%

Note: Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding

**TABLE 3
EVALUATING EMPLOYEES ON SEXUAL ORIENTATION**

How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statement?
How an employee does his or her job should be the standard for judging an employee, not their sexual orientation.

Base: All adults

	Total	GLBT	Gay/ Lesbian	Hetero- sexual
AGREE (NET)	74%	88%	94%	74%
Strongly agree	65%	77%	92%	65%
Somewhat agree	9%	11%	1%	9%
Neither agree nor disagree	7%	5%	2%	7%
DISAGREE (NET)	4%	4%	2%	4%
Somewhat disagree	2%	-	-	2%
Strongly disagree	2%	4%	2%	2%
Not applicable	12%	2%	3%	13%
Decline to answer	3%	1%	-	3%

Note: Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding

**TABLE 4
GENDER IDENTITY ISSUES IN THE WORKPLACE**

Transgender is a broad term that applies to people who live all or much of their lives expressing a different gender from their sex at birth. In other words, transgender people simply feel like their assigned sex at birth fails to reflect their true gender. Or said another way, a person that is born female feels that they really should have been born a male and wishes to live openly as a man (or vice versa). How strongly do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?

How an employee performs at their job should be the standard for judging an employee, not whether or not they are transgender.

Base: All adults

	Total	GLBT	Gay/ Lesbian	Hetero- sexual
AGREE (NET)	74%	91%	92%	74%
Strongly agree	62%	82%	89%	61%
Somewhat agree	13%	10%	3%	13%
Neither agree nor disagree	11%	5%	3%	11%
DISAGREE (NET)	5%	2%	3%	5%
Somewhat disagree	2%	*	*	2%
Strongly disagree	3%	1%	3%	3%
Not applicable	6%	1%	2%	6%
Decline to answer	4%	1%	*	4%

Note: Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding

If a person is transgender, and has made the physical transition from a man to a woman, this person should be able to use the women's restroom.

Base: all adults

	Total	GLBT	Gay/ Lesbian	Hetero- sexual
AGREE (NET)	53%	82%	87%	52%
Strongly agree	35%	69%	77%	33%
Somewhat agree	18%	13%	11%	18%
Neither agree nor disagree	22%	11%	7%	23%
DISAGREE (NET)	12%	5%	3%	13%
Somewhat disagree	3%	*	-	4%
Strongly disagree	9%	5%	3%	9%
Not applicable	6%	1%	2%	6%
Decline to answer	7%	2%	1%	7%

Note: Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding

If a person was born female, but now identifies as male, this person should be allowed to wear appropriate clothing for men to work, provided it conforms with dress code policies for men's apparel.

Base: All adults

	Total	GLBT	Gay/ Lesbian	Hetero- sexual
AGREE (NET)	57%	79%	83%	57%
Strongly agree	38%	66%	70%	36%
Somewhat agree	19%	14%	13%	20%
Neither agree nor disagree	20%	13%	8%	20%

DISAGREE (NET)	11%	5%	6%	11%
Somewhat disagree	4%	1%	2%	4%
Strongly disagree	7%	3%	4%	7%
Not applicable	6%	1%	2%	6%
Decline to answer	6%	1%	0	6%

**TABLE 5A
COMING OUT TO VARIOUS PEOPLE – GLBT TOTALS**

In general, do you consider yourself open about your sexual orientation with the following people?

Base: All LGBT adults

		Yes	
Close Friends			
	GLBT 2011	%	83
	GLBT 2010	%	76
	GLBT 2009	%	73
Brothers and sisters		%	
	GLBT 2011	%	61
	GLBT 2010	%	52
	GLBT 2009	%	50
Parents		%	
	GLBT 2011	%	55
	GLBT 2010	%	50
	GLBT 2009	%	46
Acquaintances/casual friends			
	GLBT 2011	%	52
	GLBT 2010	%	52
	GLBT 2009	%	49
Other relatives (such as grandparents, cousins)			
	GLBT 2011	%	48
	GLBT 2010	%	38
	GLBT 2009	%	42
Co-workers/Colleagues		%	
	GLBT 2011	%	48
	GLBT 2010	%	42
	GLBT 2009	%	41
Boss/Managers		%	
	GLBT 2011	%	40
	GLBT 2010	%	36
	GLBT 2009	%	34
Human Resources staff where you work			
	GLBT 2011	%	26
Church, synagogue or other place of worship (if attended regularly)			
	GLBT 2011	%	22
	GLBT 2010	%	19
	GLBT 2009	%	17
Another person not mentioned			
	GLBT 2011	%	37
	GLBT 2010	%	27
	GLBT 2009	%	30
None			
	GLBT 2011	%	8
	GLBT 2010	%	13
	GLBT 2009	%	21

Note: Multiple responses accepted

**TABLE 5B
COMING OUT TO VARIOUS PEOPLE – LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL***

In general, do you consider yourself open about your sexual orientation with the following people?

Base: All LGBT adults

	2009	2010	2011
	%	%	%
Close Friends			
Lesbian	99	95	94
Gay	93	90	94
Bisexual	64	63	79
Brothers and sisters			
Lesbian	89	87	82
Gay	76	70	74
Bisexual	25	25	38
Parents			
Lesbian	79	72	69
Gay	71	62	72
Bisexual	24	35	34
Acquaintances/casual friends			
Lesbian	73	75	55
Gay	75	65	69
Bisexual	30	36	36
Other relatives (such as grandparents, cousins)			
Lesbian	68	59	65
Gay	58	55	57
Bisexual	29	17	34
Co-workers/Colleagues			
Lesbian	67	74	62
Gay	70	57	60
Bisexual	19	20	35
Boss/Managers			
Lesbian	52	59	44
Gay	59	46	56
Bisexual	16	15	21
Human Resources staff where you work			
Lesbian	NA	NA	30
Gay	NA	NA	36
Bisexual	NA	NA	19
Church, synagogue or other place of worship (if attended regularly)			
Lesbian	31	23	15
Gay	25	25	25
Bisexual	9	8	22
Another person not mentioned			
Lesbian	32	32	43
Gay	39	26	42
Bisexual	26	29	35
None			
Lesbian	-	5	4
Gay	5	6	2
Bisexual	24	22	15

Note: Multiple responses accepted; NA indicates the question was not asked

*Base size for bisexuals is small, please use caution when interpreting findings

About Out & Equal Workplace Advocates

Out & Equal Workplace Summit is the largest national nonprofit organization devoted exclusively to LGBT workplace Equality. Every year, the organization hosts the annual Out & Equal Workplace Summit that is devoted to furthering workplace equality. This year's Summit will bring together nearly 2,000 LGBT employees, allies, human resources professionals, LGBT workplace advocates and other committed to achieving equality in the workplace. This year's speaker lineup is impressive, including Sharon L. Allen, Deloitte's Board Chair, John Berry, the highest-ranking LGBT official in President Barack Obama's administration as the Director of the U.S. Office of Personnel Management, Kevin Brockman, Executive Vice President of Global Communications for Disney-ABC, and Kenji Yoshino, author of "Covering: The Hidden Assault on Our Civil Rights."

In addition to the annual Workplace Summit, Out & Equal offers: Building Bridges Diversity Training specific to LGBT workplace issues; a growing network of regional affiliates that includes New York City, Dallas/Fort Worth, San Francisco, Chicago, Rocky Mountain, Arizona, Washington, DC, Southern California, Philadelphia, Kansas City, Portland, and Seattle; provides support to LGBT employee resource groups; offers the monthly Town Call speaker series webinars; a national quarterly newsletter; its unique career development website LGBCareerLink; and the annual Executive Forum.

Out & Equal is headquartered in San Francisco, Calif. Out & Equal champions safe and equitable workplaces for LGBT. The organization advocates building and strengthening successful organizations that value all employees, customers and communities.

For more information, including how to register for the Summit, visit www.outandequal.org.

Methodology

Harris Interactive conducted the study online within the United States between September 12 and 19, 2011, among 2,610 adults (ages 18 and over), of whom 2,238 indicated they are heterosexual and 304 self-identified as gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender (including an over-sample of lesbian and gay adults). Figures for age, sex, race, education, region and income were weighted where necessary to bring them into line with their actual proportions in the population. In addition, the results for the gay and lesbian sample were weighted separately based on profiles of the gay and lesbian population that Harris Interactive has compiled through many different online surveys. Propensity score weighting also was used to adjust for respondents' propensity to be online.

All sample surveys and polls, whether or not they use probability sampling, are subject to multiple sources of error which are most often not possible to quantify or estimate, including sampling error, coverage error, error associated with nonresponse, error associated with question wording and response options, and post-survey weighting and adjustments. Therefore, Harris Interactive avoids the words "margin of error" as they are misleading. All that can be calculated are different possible sampling errors with different probabilities for pure, unweighted, random samples with 100% response rates. These are only theoretical because no published polls come close to this ideal.

Respondents for this survey were selected from among those who have agreed to participate in Harris Interactive surveys. The data have been weighted to reflect the composition of the adult population. Because the sample is based on those who agreed to participate in the Harris Interactive panel, no estimates of theoretical sampling error can be calculated.

About Witeck-Combs Communications, Inc.

Witeck-Combs Communications, Inc. is the nation's premier marketing communications and consulting firm, specializing in developing and implementing effective strategies reaching the gay and lesbian consumer market. With over 16 years experience in this unique market, Witeck-Combs Communications not only serves as a bridge between corporate America and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender

consumers (LGBT), but also provides counsel to countless non-profit organizations that aim to educate the public on gay and lesbian issues or to better reach their LGBT membership.

In April 2003, American Demographics magazine identified Bob Witeck and Wes Combs as two of 25 experts over the last 25 years who have made significant contributions to the fields of demographics, market research, media and trendspotting for their path breaking work on the gay and lesbian market, and in 2006 Bob Witeck and Wes Combs co-authored Business Inside Out: Capturing Millions of Brand Loyal Gay Consumers (Kaplan Publishing), considered the first-ever book on marketing insights, practical tips and strategies targeting the LGBT market. They have appeared in worldwide media outlets including Fortune, CNBC, CNN, Reuters, Associated Press, Ad Age, New York Times and Washington Post. For more information, visit www.witeckcombs.com.

About Harris Interactive

Harris Interactive is one of the world's leading custom market research firms, leveraging research, technology, and business acumen to transform relevant insight into actionable foresight. Known widely for the Harris Poll and for pioneering innovative research methodologies, Harris offers expertise in a wide range of industries including healthcare, technology, public affairs, energy, telecommunications, financial services, insurance, media, retail, restaurant, and consumer package goods. Serving clients in over 215 countries and territories through our North American and European offices and a network of independent market research firms, Harris specializes in delivering research solutions that help us – and our clients – stay ahead of what's next. For more information, please visit www.harrisinteractive.com.

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