

Identity & Language Matters

Understanding and respecting LGBTQ+ identity and language

Language shapes how people feel seen, respected, and included. Few areas illustrate this more clearly than the terminology we use around identity. For many colleagues, there's a genuine desire to get it right, paired with an anxiety about getting it wrong. That hesitation is understandable: terminology evolves, words that were once considered slurs have been reclaimed by some communities, and new terms continue to emerge.

This session is designed to cut through that uncertainty. We'll break down key terms, from the familiar to the newer, explore why the language we use at work matters for wellbeing and culture, and equip you with practical, respectful approaches to communication.

The goal isn't perfection; it's confidence, curiosity, and care.

Session Outline

- Build confidence in understanding key terminology, such as lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer as well as emerging terms like FLINTA.
- Why inclusive language matters in the workplace
- Impact on employee wellbeing, engagement, and organisational culture.
- Common misconceptions
- Respectful communication practices
- How to avoid unintentionally harmful language

Facilitator: Polly



Polly was part of the team that set up the first ever Lesbian Visibility Week. And has a real drive and passion around ensuring that queer women and those who are non-binary are better represented in business, music, the arts and sport. She is also an advocate for wellbeing, having founded Pride Swims and Pride in Wellness. Polly is the founder of Out & Wild Festival and Events and a recognised global speaker on LGBTQ+, gender and allyship.

Post a successful corporate career, she has been active in the LGBTQ+ space for over 12 years, including 4 years on the Board of Pride in London. She has grown Out & Wild to be the UK's biggest Festival for LGBTQ+ women, now extending into retreats and day events and attracting attendees from over 20 countries.

Polly has been on the Pride Power and Outstanding Lists and recognised by the European Sponsorship Association for her work.