

LRR FOCUS: "Do's and Don'ts for Members who are Closeted and Members who are Out."

DO confront homophobic jokes and attitudes wherever they strike. Closeted gays have very good hearing. If you let a comment or joke slip by within hearing range you can be assured that your credibility with that worker is destroyed.

DO always integrate lesbian/gay issues into the overall mission of the union. If you talk about gay issues only when you are talking to people you "think" are supportive, you have missed an opportunity. "Truly, We are Everywhere."

DO learn to speak without assumption of heterosexuality. When talking to members—closeted members are made uncomfortable and "out" members will be made angry.

DON'T try to guess who is and who isn't.

DON'T advance strategies for lesbian/gay union leaders. That is not your job—it is ours.

DON'T assume who would be willing to be a spokesperson for lesbian/gay issues. Being "out" is a very personal decision. It is often done in stages—don't push.