

"Rainbow washing or pink washing" is a hot topic of discussion with when major pride events show up each year and organisations and corporates often with the best intent decide to get involved. So what is Rainbow washing, are you doing it, and how do you avoid it?


Firstly, if you have taken the Pride Pledge we hope your commitment is authentic, but we can always step back and think about what more can be done.


Rainbow washing is when companies use rainbow colors on logos, products, websites and more to signal support for LGBTTQIAP+ communities, but the issue isn't the colors themselves; it's that companies sometimes use rainbow colors to win the business of queer communities and allies alike without actually furthering equity and inclusion for individuals in their organisation. Ever worked somewhere like this?


When pride festivals end, the flags come down, logos change back, but nothing else changes. Sound familiar?! So, how can you avoid being accused of Rainbow washing? It's actually quite simple!


Taking the Pride Pledge can be one of the first steps you can take and being visible with the Pride Pledge material. We can support you in a range of ways as we work with organisations on being rainbow inclusive 365 days a year- not just during pride events. Here are some key tips and for many of you, reminders!


 Gain an authentic commitment to LGBTTQIAP+ inclusion all year round from the top levels of the organisation (Board, CEO, exec team) - Leadership matters!

 Creating a rainbow inclusion plan with clear objectives and sharing this with employees and external stakeholders

 Creating a rainbow network of employees who are engaged in and involved in the development pride related events, marketing, products, and policy to ensure it is authentic

 Updating all your policies to ensure that your LGBTTQIAP+ inclusive, including things like gender neutral bathrooms, gender inclusive uniforms, use of pronouns, and updated systems, forms and process to be fully gender inclusive

 Implementing Rainbow Awareness training for all people leaders and other key staff to build understanding, support and allyship

 Set up measurement and reporting systems - i.e., employee engagement surveys to capture your LGBTTQIAP+ voices, listen to these and put in place strategies to ensure you your rainbow employees are feeling safe and included at work (reach out to us if you would like some help on this!)

🌈 Support rainbow organisations all year round that are actually doing work to make a difference - put your money where it matters!

🌈 Celebrate a number of days of significance throughout the year e.g. trans awareness week, IDAHOBIT day, Pink Shirt Day, Bisexual awareness week and so many more - this shows that rainbow inclusion is more than just a week or a month, it's part of your ongoing commitment

🌈 complete a Stocktake on an annual basis like the Pride Pledge Rainbow Inclusion Stocktake to measure how you are doing, your gaps, and help inform ongoing future plans and take an honest look at your progress.

These are just a few suggestions to remind us of the basics. If you haven't checked out our "Steps to Rainbow Inclusion" guide, then download it now from the Pride Pledge resources page. It's FREE and covers all the basics.

Of course, reach out to us, we are here to help if you need any support internally or externally and here's to more rainbows!

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