

**SPEAKERS' MANUAL**

## OUTLINE

- I. Disclaimer by facilitator - my limitations. (1 minute)
- II. Confidentiality/Time limit on this training - "share the floor" (2 minutes)
- III. Introductions (10 minutes)
  - A. Name, where you work/study
  - B. Where you are from
  - C. Why you want to participate on the Speakers' Bureau
- IV. Icebreaker
  - A. Write down 5 words to describe yourself. (2 minutes)
  - B. Ask 2 other persons you don't know a few non-superficial questions about themselves. ie. What is the hardest thing you've gone through in your life?  
What brings you the greatest joy in life? (5 minutes)
  - C. Write down 5 words to describe each of the two persons you questioned. (2 minutes)
  - D. Share your words (impressions) of the person you questioned. (5 minutes)

The purpose of this exercise was to help you get to know some of your potential co-panelists a little better, to help build trust with those persons, to help acclimate you to potentially personal questions, & to see how people can make assumptions about you quickly.

- V. Groundrules for speaking engagements
  - A. Preparing internally - You need to be emotionally prepared. An analogy is when you come out to family or friends. Your attitude will affect how the person(s) responds/accepts you. Relax, try deep breaths, laugh, meditate, whatever works for you.
  - B. Format - Decide in advance who will be the main facilitator of the group. Meet 15 minutes in advance to discuss any loose ends. Talk normally has an introduction by the facilitator explaining the format, a disclaimer (only represent ourselves), an opening statement (thanks, why we're here, etc.), personal statements by each panelist very important to humanize yourself (max. of 2 minutes), open forum up to questions and answers, closing (tie things together, thanks, offer resources to audience).
  - C. Helpful hints - Don't interrupt, respect others' feelings and comments, don't argue or appear too defensive. Try to use "I" statements. Let audience know that there are no dumb questions. Be sure audience can hear you. Don't be afraid to use humor. Acknowledge we are all homophobic to some extent as we are racist, sexist, ageist, etc., but we can work on improving. Try to encourage all to participate. Don't monopolize the answers

to questions.

D. Closure - Invite any last questions. Tie the discussion together if possible. Pass out brochures, list resources available, at this time. Offer to talk with individuals afterwards.

E. Evaluation - If possible all panelist should get together right afterwards and discuss how the presentation went and offer any constructive criticism.

VI. Definitions of terms (Handout #1) As a group of 3+, get together and add/subtract anything from the definitions you have listed. (5 minutes)

The purpose of this was to stress the need to think quickly, come to some kind of consensus, and to check your listening skills of my instructions.

VII. What is Homophobia/Heterosexism (Handout #2) Video (25 minutes)

VIII. Kinsey Scale/Statistics - Masking tape on floor - find your spot. (2 minutes)

The purpose of this was to invade your privacy and to reinforce the idea of sexual orientation being on a continuum.

IX. Break (5-10 minutes)

X. Question & Answer Exercise - Form two rows of chairs facing each other. Pull # from under your chair. Ask the person directly across from you the question on your handouts (pgs. ) as if you were a member of the audience. Feel free to put emotion into your questioning. Now everyone read to themselves the suggested answer. Any suggestions on improvements both in content and in style of answering? (33 questions) (90 minutes)

XI. Audience participation exercises - For your panel to consider using for smaller audiences. (2 minutes)

XII. Homophobia description, bibliography, Essence magazine article, CACLGBI resources brochure. (3 minutes)

XIII. Speaking Engagement Questionnaire/Interest survey (5 minutes)

XIV. Evaluation - What should I do again? What didn't work? (5 minutes)

## SPEAKERS' BUREAU INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Gay/Lesbian/Bisexual Speakers' Bureau. This manual is your supplement for the training sessions which you will undergo. It will also serve as a reference guide after the training so that you may always feel comfortable with your future speaking engagements. As a trained speaker you will be a representative of both the Chancellor's Advisory Committee on Lesbian, Gay & Bisexual Issues and of the gay, lesbian, and bisexual community of San Diego.

The training sessions and this manual serve a threefold purpose:

1. A greater knowledge on how to handle and structure your speaking engagements;
2. A well-rounded knowledge of gay, lesbian, and bisexual concerns and issues;
3. An increased personal comfort as a volunteer and representative.

As volunteers, while you are part of a larger community, you will be speaking as individuals at all times. The training and your involvement as speakers will be a useful and exciting endeavor. Good luck and thank you for your commitment.

## PREPARING INTERNALLY

It takes a special kind of person to go into agencies to talk about lesbian and gay issues. It requires a whole lot of commitment, and not a small amount of courage . . .

In a training like this, you will invariably bring a lot of "who you are" to the encounter. This can be pretty scary. The seemingly incredible opportunity to transform a group's response to lesbian and gay people all appears to rest squarely on your shoulders.

The best advice we can give you is to relax.

It helps to assume that the participants will be your allies. Think about the common ground you share with these people, and see if there is a way you can bring this out in the training.

Some speakers visualize conducting a successful training beforehand. Knowing your material is a great help. You may want to review parts of this manual before leading the training. It is important to be emotionally prepared as well as informationally prepared. What you are mostly bringing to the training is your presence and your ability to be a group facilitator. *Stay centered*, and you'll do fine.

## BEFORE THE ENGAGEMENT

Before leading a speakers' bureau or training session you will want to know as much as you can about your audience. Basic information about the time, place, and type of audience you will have will be provided by the Scheduling Coordinator.

Some questions you might want to be sure are included are:

How many people will be there?

What prompted their request for a presentation?

What is the range of diversity with regard to age, sex, race, sexual orientation, etc.?

You may also want to know about how much experience the group has with lesbian and gay issues. This may influence your decision on what to include in the training. For most groups, however, you can probably expect a widely varying range of familiarity with lesbian and gay issues.

Find out what the group members themselves expect from the training. What issues or problems have they encountered? While you will get their input at the beginning of the training itself, it would be helpful to know as much as possible beforehand, so that you can be better prepared.

## PROGRAM FORMAT

Most speaking engagements will include the following:

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## PROGRAM FORMAT

Most speaking engagements will include the following:

Introduction explaining format of the engagement  
Disclaimer  
Opening statement  
Personal statement  
Question and answer period  
Closing

## HAVING MATERIALS READY

Check to be sure you have:

Your outline or notes  
Any handouts, including brochures and evaluations  
A video, if you are using one  
Visual aids, if you are using any

Be sure you have scripted or are proficient in the following areas:

Disclaimer; you are not representing all gays and lesbians  
Personal statement (so you can become a real person to the audience)

Some things you may want to include are:

Where you grew up, went to high school, college, etc.  
Whether you have sisters, brothers, hobbies, school activities  
Use photographs of your family if appropriate  
Keep it brief; no more than two minutes  
*Avoid negatives* in your introduction!

Keep in mind the ground rules:

Don't interrupt when someone is speaking .  
If you don't agree with someone else's feelings or comments, don't argue with them, but respect each other's individuality and feel free to discuss your own feelings .  
Try to use "I" statements as much as possible .  
Safe learning environment: Let the audience know that no question is a dumb question .  
What is said or discussed in this program is confidential and will not be taken outside of the room .

Make it a safe learning environment:

Consider your appearance .  
Be open, honest and understanding .

Don't just refuse to answer any questions without giving an explanation .

Never return anger for anger received.

Let them know they do not have to share if they don't want to .

Let the group know that you seek to create a safe atmosphere where people can share their feelings comfortably .

## WORKING WITH A PARTNER

If there are more than 2 of you doing a training, be sure to meet at least 15 minutes ahead of time to go over the presentation and set up the room.

There will be times when everyone will participate equally. There will also be times when one person needs to be designated to lead a group in role-playing or to be in charge of visual aids. Be sure you work out these positions ahead of time.

Most of all, you can support each other as a team. You don't have to remember everything. You can back each other up, and when it is all over you have someone to talk with or hug.

## GROUP DYNAMICS

Often, we are so involved in leading or participating in a group that we don't step back to observe what is going on in the group, or ascertain why members might be acting the way they are.

Here is some information that may help trainers become better observers, and, as a result, more effective group leaders.

*Content vs. process:* In all group interactions, there are two major ingredients: content and process. When we concentrate on what a group is talking about, we are focusing on content. Content deals with the subject matter. In our case, content would be increasing the group's understanding of and sensitivity to gays and lesbians. Process is concerned with what is happening between and to participants in the group. Group process may include morale, feeling, participation, influence, conflict . . . If we observe process, we may discover that some individuals are uncomfortable when certain issues are raised.

In most interactions, the focus is on content. We usually pay very little attention to process, even when it is the major cause of ineffective group action.

*Participation:* One of the most important aspects of group process is the pattern of verbal participation. Who talks? For how long? How often? (Notice this among trainers as well.) Are the same participants asking all of the questions? Who do people look at when they talk?

*Group atmosphere:* Do people seem involved and interested? Do any members provoke or annoy others? If you can, notice the process level, particularly when your partner is primary leader.

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## GUIDELINES FOR FACILITATING THE GROUP

Be as open, honest, and spontaneous as you can be.

Make sure the audience can hear you.

Take deep breaths now and then. Notice your feelings. If you are nervous or anxious, you may want to share this with the group.

Remember what a powerful tool your sense of humor is!

Emphasize you are speaking as an individual.

If you use terms your audience might not understand, explain them.

Review your speakers' manual.

Bring up myths, stereotypes, etc., but be careful. Assure people that we all have prejudices, but that we are also capable of change.

Acknowledge that we are all homophobic to some extent, just as we all struggle with racism, sexism, ageism, etc. Don't be too discouraged if participants express disgust, hostility, ignorance, etc. We have all been there!

If someone makes a homophobic or sexist remark, try not to overreact.

Avoid arguments, intellectual or otherwise.

Offer direction to the discussion:

Bring themes together and summarize when appropriate.

Maintain the focus of discussion when it begins to drift: "So what you're telling us is . . .", "What we've heard from several people so far is . . ."

Encourage participation:

Try to allow everyone an opportunity to be heard.

Be sensitive to the needs of participants.

If a participant seems to be feeling vulnerable, give that person your support.

Intervene if someone is attacking or otherwise breaking the ground rules.

Watch time and pacing of the discussion. Follow the "energy" of a discussion, but make sure there is time for later agenda items.

## DURING THE QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Personal sharing can be an extremely effective way of raising consciousness about lesbian/gay issues. Instead of engaging in abstract discussions, sharing from the heart brings the subject to a very human, accessible level. To help prepare this section of the training, we strongly suggest you read the list of typical questions and answers. Helpful hints:

Decide which trainer will recognize members of the audience and direct the flow during the questions.

Encourage the participants to ask any questions they want: "There is no such thing as a stupid question. And if you ask me a question that is too difficult for me, I'll let you know."

At least one of the trainers should emphasize that you are speaking as individuals, not as representatives of all lesbians and gay men.

Don't spend all your time on one question. Make sure to leave enough time for many questions. Your answers should not be any longer than 1-2 minutes, unless otherwise appropriate. Be sensitive to the other trainer. Don't monopolize; make sure your partner has a chance to present their views. Don't feel, however, that both trainers must speak on each question. Often one response is sufficient.

Reemphasize the diversity of our community when questions imply a monolithic "gay culture." Be yourself. Answer questions honestly, but do not feel compelled to answer every question. Some might feel too personal; others might require information you don't have. Even in these cases thank the person for asking the question.

Try to have a dialogue with the group. Feel free to ask questions of the group when appropriate. Maintain eye contact with the person who is asking the question as well as with the group.

Be prepared for questions about sex and sexuality. If you do not want to talk about your own sex life, that is okay, but you must be able to discuss sex in general terms.

When asked a question, listen to make certain you know what is being asked; check out what you have heard.

Repeat the question or paraphrase it. There are two reasons for this: to be sure you got the question right, and to be sure the audience has heard the question.

Compliment the questioner: "Good question . . ." etc.

Answer what has been asked. Avoid the temptation to go off on your own agenda.

Try not to take personally hostile remarks or verbal attacks. Don't allow yourself to be put on the defensive.

Use lots of examples, anecdotes and stories to clarify your points.

Once again: A sense of humor can be a trainer's best friend. Don't lose it!

## POTENTIALLY DIFFICULT SITUATIONS

### *Hostility towards another participant*

Occasionally, feelings may get heated between participants. Sticking to the ground rules and our sensitivity as facilitators will minimize the possibility of this happening. But if it does . . .

Maintain the safe learning environment by restating the ground rules. Remind participants that we don't allow crosstalk or trashing to take place.

Keep the focus on issues, not personalities.

### *Silence*

Trainers frequently assume that silence is a bad thing. This is not always the case. Sometimes participants are merely reflecting on what has just been said. In this case you may want to wait a

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minute (it will seem like an hour!) and then ask the participants about their immediate thoughts or feelings: "How do people feel about what has been said?"

In other cases, you might get a the sense that the silence indicates that something is not working. Maybe the group is stuck and looking for direction.

If you think that the silence stems from a lack of interest in the topic, move to an issue mentioned previously but not discussed, suggest a new subject, or ask for suggestions.

### *Monopolizing*

Occasionally, you will encounter a group in which one or two of the members monopolize the discussion. In this case, you may want to gently intervene and encourage other participants to join the discussion.

### *Hostility*

There are not set rules for handling hostility during the training. You must use your best judgment. Hostility towards the trainer can be a symptom of a host of emotions such as anger, fear (which is often the result of ignorance), or feeling hurt. It is frequently a direct expression of insecurity arising from these basic emotional issues.

Above and beyond all else, your own well-being is your top priority. If things are becoming too strained, do what you need to do to take care of yourself and don't worry about how well or poorly the engagement will turn out. Try to remember not to return anger for anger; it would be better to end the engagement.

## CLOSURE

With a training such as ours, it is important to bring closure to the event, so that people leave with a sense of completion for the moment, even if they are not "finished" with the issues.

Processes during the training may have raised sensitive areas for some people. This is a good opportunity to see how people are feeling about the training. Invite participants to share anything they wish about the experience, including any unresolved feelings they may have.

At some point, make sure that you thank the group for inviting you, for showing up, being honest, and for talking about some hard issues.

Often it is more effective to give out handouts after the formal group closing. Looking at the handouts tends to pull people away from participating in the group. This is also the time to hand out the evaluations and collect them to give back to the Scheduling Coordinator.

## AFTER THE ENGAGEMENT

Trainers should spend a little time together after the engagement. During this time you might want to discuss what happened and how you feel the presentation went.

You may also want to take a few minutes to fill out your surveys of the presentation while it is still fresh in your mind. If not here, then as soon as possible.

Most engagements are emotionally demanding. Being with other trainers, away from the "scene of the engagement" can provide you with some support and a nice transition time before going back to the "real" world..

## HANDOUT #1

### DEFINITIONS

Reprinted and adapted with the permission of San Francisco's Community United Against Violence, Lesbian/Gay Speakers' Bureau

**HOMOSEXUALITY:** Sexual attraction and/or behavior with the same sex. It is normal, has no known cause, and is not an illness.

**BISEXUALITY:** Sexual attraction to and/or behavior with both sexes. It is normal, has no known cause, and is not an illness.

**HETEROSEXUALITY:** Sexual attraction to and/or behavior with the other sex. It is normal, has no known cause, and is not an illness.

**HETEROSEXISM:** Promoting a heterosexual lifestyle; believing heterosexuality to be superior to other lifestyles.

**HOMOPHOBIA:** The fear and intolerance of homosexuality, bisexuality, lesbians, and gay men. Homophobia is the disease, not homosexuality, and it is the root of antigay violence.

**NORMAL:** Natural (homosexuality occurs throughout nature); not a disease, defect, or disorder (the American Psychiatric Association, 1973); conforms to longstanding expectations (cultures throughout history have had the full continuum of orientations); and statistically common (Kinsey found some homosexuality in 50% of adult men, 28% of women, 60% of boys and 33% of girls; many now believe the female figures would equal the male).

**SEXUAL ORIENTATION:** The deepseated direction of one's sexual attraction toward the same sex (homosexual), other sex (heterosexual), or both sexes (bisexual). Sexual orientation is a continuum, not a set of absolutely different categories.

**GAY:** Men and women who accept their homosexual orientation and identify (define themselves) as gay. There are gay people in every sector of society.

**LESBIAN:** Gay woman. Most prefer the term "lesbian" because it gives gay women an identity independent from men. There is a growing diversity of lesbian lifestyles and culture.

**BI:** A slang term for people who accept their bisexual orientation and identify (define themselves) as bi. Bis are starting to organize; they face immense misunderstanding.

**STRAIGHT:** A slang term for people who accept their heterosexual orientation and identify (define themselves) as heterosexual. Many people dislike the term "straight."

**IN THE CLOSET:** Being secret about one's sexual orientation; frequently necessary given widespread discrimination and antigay violence, but causing its own psychic pain.

**COMING OUT:** The process of becoming aware of one's sexual orientation, accepting it, acting on it, and telling others about it. A neverending process.

**TRANVESTITE:** Men and women who enjoy wearing the clothes of and appearing as the other sex. Most are heterosexual. Some gay people enjoy drag as costume and as an expression of humor.

**TRANSSEXUAL:** Men and women who feel they have the wrong set of sexual organs. Many transsexuals have sex-change operations. There is no connection between transsexuality and homosexuality. Transsexuals may be gay, bisexual, or straight.

**MASCULINITY/FEMININITY:** Sex role stereotypes, totally differing from culture to culture, which get arbitrarily imposed on men and women, denying our true androgyny (similarities) and individuality. Gay and lesbian people are no more masculine or feminine than other people.

*Prepared 12/11/84 by sexologist R. Hunter Morey, MSW, IHS, CUAV Consultant, primary author of Demystifying Homosexuality: a Teaching Guide about Lesbians and Gay Men.*

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## HANDOUT #2

### WHAT IS HOMOPHOBIA/HETEROSEXISM?

*Adapted by Rape Crisis Center of West Contra Costa County, CA, from Lesbians: a Consciousness Raising Kit, by the Boston Lesbian Task Force*

- \* Expecting a lesbian to change her public identity or affectional habits or mode of dress to work on "feminist" issues
- \* Looking at a lesbian or gay man and automatically thinking of their sexuality rather than seeing them as whole, complete persons
- \* Failing to be supportive when your gay/lesbian friend is sad about a quarrel or breakup
- \* Changing your seat in a meeting because a gay/lesbian person sits in the chair next to yours
- \* Thinking you can "spot one"
- \* Using the term "lesbian" or "gay" as accusatory
- \* Not asking about your gay/lesbian friend's lover, although you regularly ask "How is your husband or wife?" when you run into a heterosexual friend
- \* Kissing an old friend but being afraid to shake hands with a gay/lesbian friend
- \* Thinking that if a gay/lesbian person touches you they are making sexual advances
- \* Stereotyping lesbians as "man-haters," separatists, or radicals, or using those terms accusingly
- \* Feeling repulsed by public displays of affection between lesbians or gay men, but accepting the same affectional displays between heterosexuals
- \* Wondering which one is the "man"/"woman" in a lesbian/gay couple
- \* Feeling that lesbian/gay people are too outspoken about gay rights
- \* Assuming that everyone you meet is probably heterosexual
- \* Being outspoken about lesbian/gay rights but making sure everyone knows you are straight
- \* Feeling that a lesbian is just a woman who can't find a man

- \* Avoiding mentioning to friends that you are involved with a women's organization because you are afraid they will think you are a lesbian
- \* Not confronting a heterosexist remark for fear of being identified with gay men or lesbians

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