

What ails the **HIRING** of **LGBTQ+** **DEVELOPERS?**

Higher attrition:

39% recruiters said Rainbow group has more job drop-outs

Unavailability of skills:

Skilled coders difficult to find, said 48% recruiters

Lack of peer support:

52% companies don't have exclusive LGBTQ+ groups



55% India Inc. companies struggle to find skilled

LGBTQ+

DEVELOPERS



- Attrition higher in LGBTQ+ developers v/s programmers from other genders
- Upskilling opportunities (49%) and career growth (35%) most trusted tools to retain LGBTQ+ tech talent
- COVID-19 accelerated focus on policies and programmes for LGBTQ+ developers

When the Section 377 of the Indian Penal Code was reviewed in 2018, many corporates had celebrated the legal recognition of LGBTQ+ rights. Four years on, and hundreds of Pride celebrations later, only a few things have moved on the ground for the Rainbow workforce (popularly called the LGBTQ+ or queer workforce). For starters, attrition among this gender group is higher when compared to the job drop-out rate among men and women. Second, finding the right tech talent is still a big roadblock.

India's biggest community of 4.2 million software developers - TechGig - set out to study the opportunities and challenges for the developers from the Rainbow group. Here's a detailed study, written by Yojana Sharma and designed by Rishi Kumar.

Decoding workplace reality for Rainbow workforce
In 2018, India Inc. celebrated the legalisation of gay rights with complete zest, and a slew of announcements and sops were introduced in these four years to nurture the queer talent at work floors. From 100% scholarships to mandated inclusion in jobs, company sponsored upskilling opportunities to welfare assistance- all kinds of initiatives are in place to onboard gender-diverse talent, advocated chiefly by the tech companies. A report

by research firm Ipsos suggests that about 3% of the Indian population identifies as LGBTQ+. Those actively working would be about 50% of this pool; hence tapping into this niche group is cumbersome. Result: While most firms include LGBTQ+ population, specially-abled and women in their diversity bracket, but only 18% are able to find the queer workforce. Hence they focus on nurturing women and specially-abled talent to cope up with this loss, found TechGig survey of 568 tech recruiters from India Inc. firms.

Among these recruiters, most (59%) were working in the IT/Telecom sector, followed by 19% respondents who belonged to Retail sector and 13% were employed in the Automobiles sector. The other survey takers were from the Healthcare (5%), BPM (4%), and other sectors. Gender-wise, most recruiters (64%) were male, and 36% were females. Most (54% respondents) had an experience of 2 years or less in recruiting developers, and 23% had been hiring developers for five years at least.

Here are the major findings from the 'TechGig Gender Diversity Study 2022':

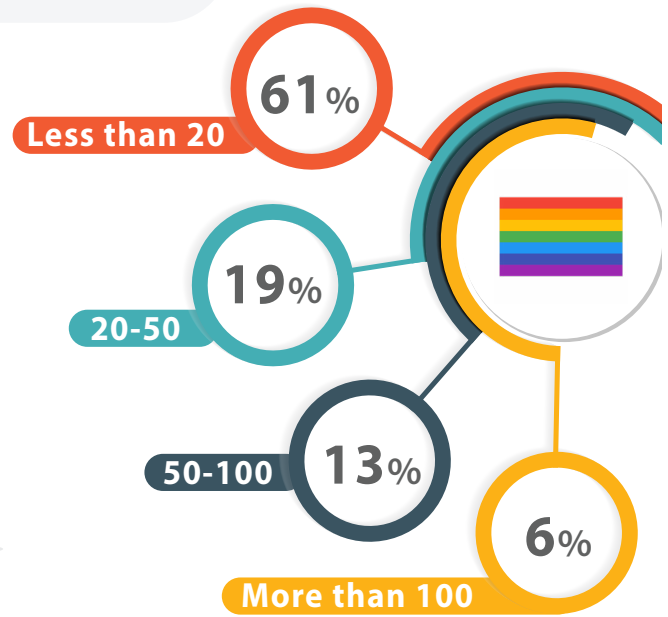
Highest attrition among developers from Rainbow group, 77% firms go out of way to retain them
The survey asked about the attrition trends among



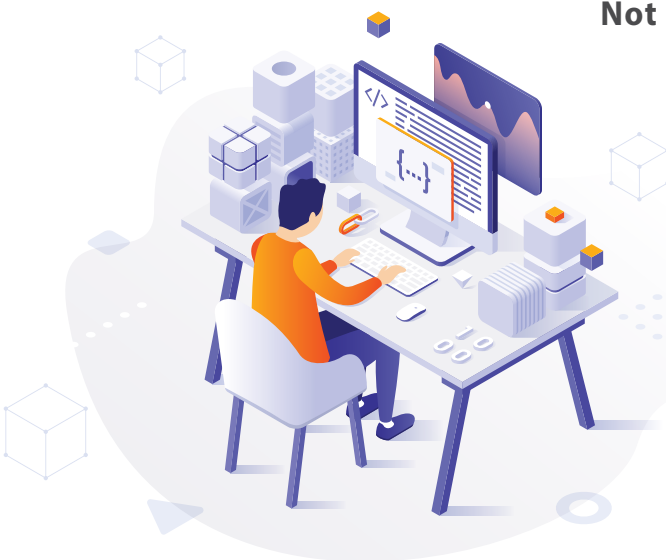
DECODED: India Inc's biggest challenges when hiring LGBTQ+ developers

TechGig surveyed 568 tech recruiters to understand their present mandate when hiring developers from the Rainbow workforce. Here are the results:

What is the present population of LGBTQ+ developers in your workforce?



What is the biggest challenge when hiring LGBTQ+ developers?

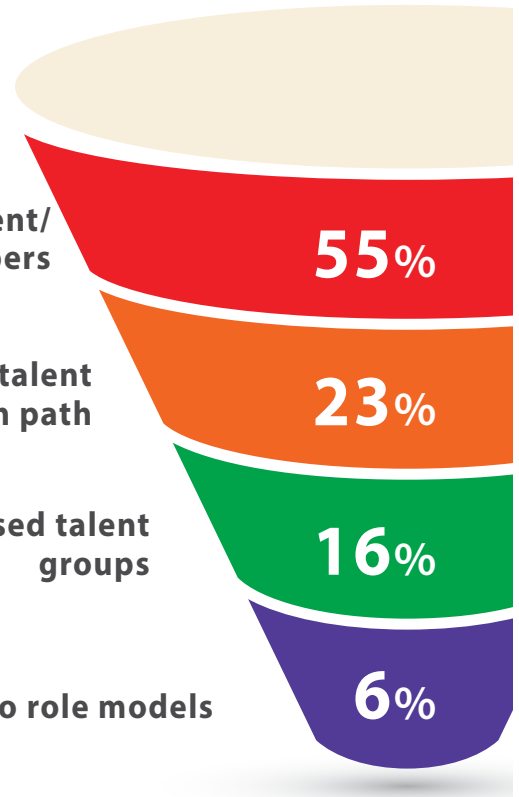


Not enough competent/
skilled developers

No defined talent
growth path

No focussed talent
groups

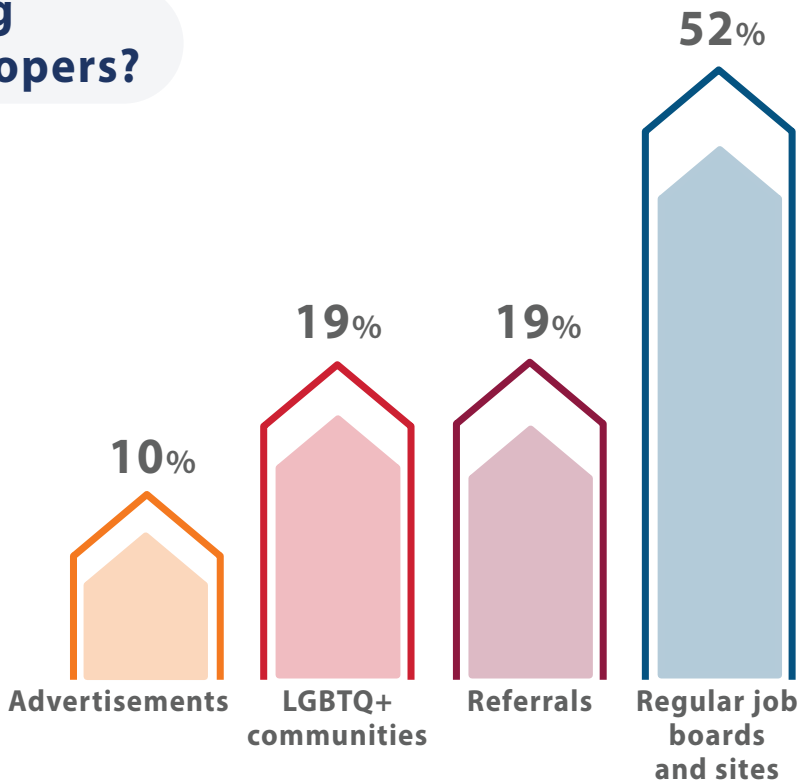
No role models



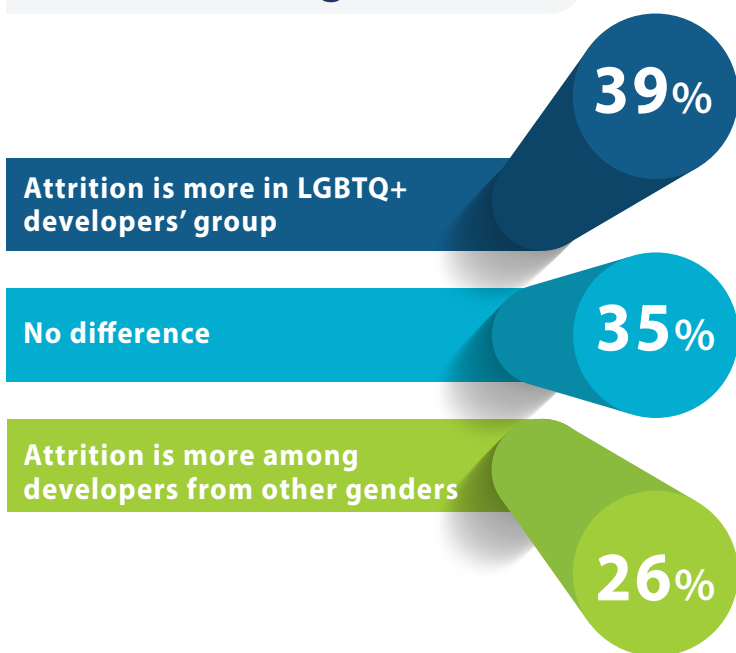
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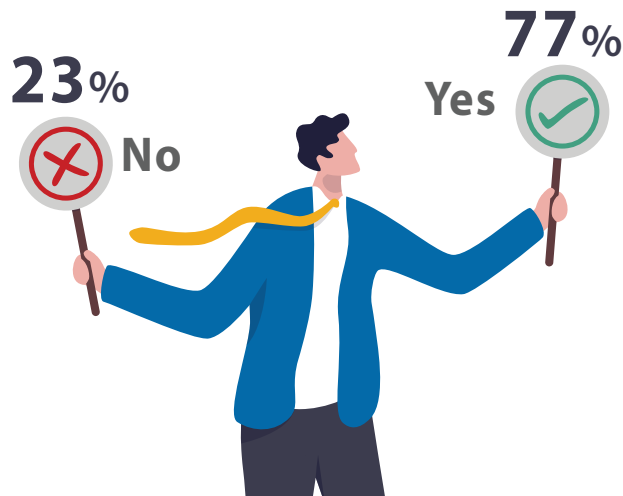
Which is your trusted hiring platform for LGBTQ+ developers?



Attrition is highest for:



Do you go extra mile to retain the LGBTQ+ developers?

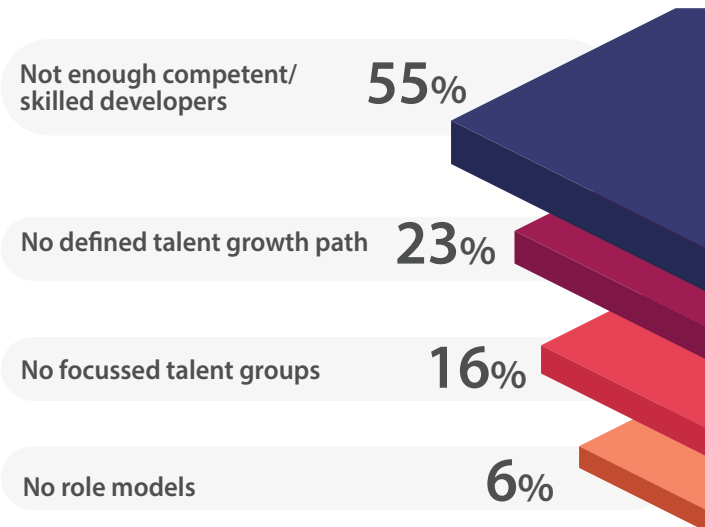


the LGBTQ+ developers v/s the drop-out from other genders. Most (41%) respondents said that attrition is higher among the LGBTQ+ developers' group. About 33% found no difference in the attrition levels basis genders, and the remaining 26% said that more men and women developers tend to leave jobs v/s the LGBTQ+ developers.

The survey further probed if tech companies were putting in extra efforts to retain developers from the queer group, and the unanimous answer was 'yes' with 77% votes. Only 23% respondents said 'no' to this question.

When asked about the popular tools to retain developers from the LGBTQ+ group, company-sponsored upskilling opportunities (49% votes) topped the list. Offering career growth (35% votes) was the second choice, while offering financial sops (16% votes) was the third most-trusted tool to retain LGBTQ+ tech talent.

Another big trend from this survey is that finding tech talent from the queer community is a huge challenge. About 55% surveyed tech recruiters said that they still find it difficult to find skilled techies. The rest of the respondents shared other roadblocks for hiring queer developers, here's what they said:



Indian tech companies have a series of offerings for the LGBTQ+ workforce. In the further pages, read about the queer-specific policies at HGS, Lowe's, Mphasis and Mahindra Logistics.

55% tech firms have active Rainbow groups, most groups offer emotional support as top priority
The TechGig survey asked how active their firm's queer support group were, and most (55%) defined their groups as 'very active, holding meetings and proceedings regularly'. About 35% said that their pride groups were inactive. The rest, 10% said that pride groups at their firm were moderately active, holding meetings and proceedings periodically.

The survey probed about the focus of such groups, and here are the responses:



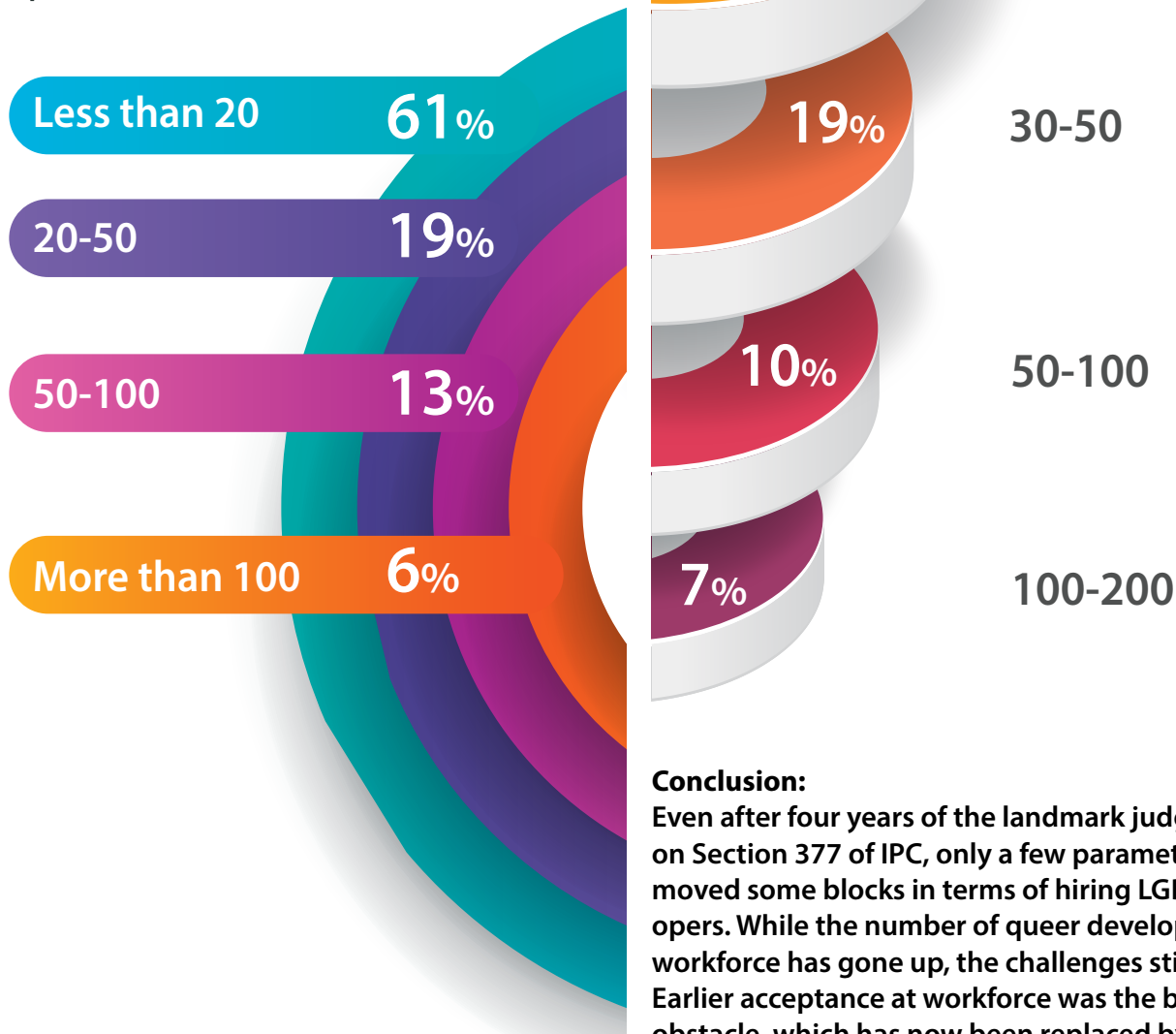
Job boards and sites most trusted medium to hire LGBTQ+ developers, provide concrete employment data points v/s pride communities

Despite the availability of a plethora of LGBTQ+ communities, recruiters still trusted job boards for hiring queer developers. About 52% respondents said that they scouted the regular job boards and sites to hire LGBTQ+ developers, 19% said they trusted pride communities and an equal fraction of respondents said that they would ask for referrals when hiring LGBTQ+ developers. About 10% recruiters said they launched special advertisements for hiring such developers.

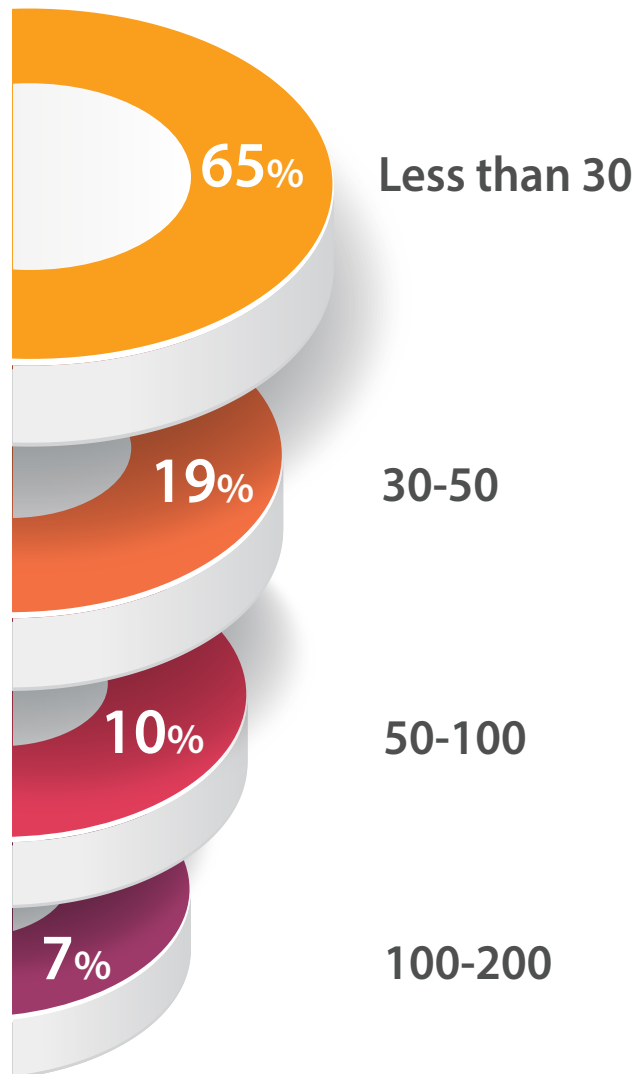
Their biggest rue: Job applications from pride communities and referrals usually lack critical skill and employment related data and multiple follow-ups

are required to attain such information. This was cited by the majority (48% respondents).

Most LGBTQ+ developers working as executives, only 9% LGBTQ+ representation at leadership level
When understanding the present representation of queer developers in the workforce, TechGig found that most firms (45%) have LGBTQ+ developers in the executive roles. About 29% companies said most queer developers were at the mid-management level. Here are the complete responses which show the present workforce composition of the queer developers.



the 2018 judgement. When asked about the average number of developers that they hire annually, here is what they said:



Conclusion:

Even after four years of the landmark judgement on Section 377 of IPC, only a few parameters have moved some blocks in terms of hiring LGBTQ+ developers. While the number of queer developers in the workforce has gone up, the challenges still remain. Earlier acceptance at workforce was the biggest obstacle, which has now been replaced by finding skilled developers (as stated by 52% respondents). With these double-fold challenges at hand, the Indian workforce right now needs a home-grown Tim Cook who proudly leads the world's most aspirational tech firm while flaunting his queer status. Right now, India Inc's journey to become a diverse workplace is a long and rocky one.

LGBTQ+ hiring gained pace after the judgement on Section 377

The TechGig survey found that hiring for LGBTQ+ talent improved drastically after the legislation in favour of gay rights in 2018. About 61% respondents said that their hiring for LGBTQ+ gained traction from

This is how India Inc. companies are making their workplace LGBTQ+ inclusive



Edwin Lobo,
Vice President, Human
Resource,
Mahindra Logistics

Is it easy to find skilled workforce from LGBTQ+ community?

No. But, it is very important for the businesses to come together and create ample opportunities for the queer community for training, higher education opportunities, scholarships, skill building so that their employability can be enhanced.

What is the biggest challenge when hiring LGBTQ+ workforce?

Recruiting from the queer community is significantly more difficult than hiring from other diversity spectrums, for a variety of reasons. While the situation is improving, many members of the community are still hesitant to apply because of the social challenges associated with coming out and dealing with the public. Also there are challenges as:

- Not enough competent/skilled talent
- No focussed talent groups
- No defined talent growth path
- No role models

When did you last introduce a policy exclusively to benefit LGBTQ+ workforce?

Our LGBTQ+ policy was introduced in June 2020 and is being followed since then.

What is your company's trusted approach to improve LGBTQ hiring in the workforce?

Our approach is to create awareness about the community and enable an inclusive environment that is free from any sort of bias or discrimination. We strongly believe in leveraging this huge untapped talent pool, enhance engagement and more importantly embrace a sense of oneness that celebrates our demographic dividend.



Shilpa Sinha Harsh,
Senior Vice President
– Global Corporate Com-
munications, CSR and
D&I, HGS

Does HGS have an exclusive community for LGBTQ+ workforce?

We have PRIDE@HGS Employee Resource Group which stands for People Respecting Individuality, Diversity and Equality at workplace. Its aim is to provide a safe environment for LGBT+ inclusion dialogues, initiate discussion on issues, challenges, best practices and suggest innovative solutions to address their concerns.

Tell us more about a few highlight policies and programs of this community?

We use terminologies like partner, they/them in all our policies. HGS provides maternity and childcare policy benefits to a LGBT+ partner with child-bearing abilities, along with adoption leaves for all employees irrespective of gender. Our medical insurance policy recognises and covers same-sex partners. Our dress code policy is gender-neutral and encourages individuals to bring their whole selves to work. We also have a policy on prevention of sexual harassment that addresses employees irrespective of gender and sexual orientation.

This is how India Inc. companies are making their workplace LGBTQ+ inclusive



Srikanth Karra,
CHRO,
Mphasis

Do you have an exclusive group/community for LGBTQ+ workforce in your company?

- No

Tell us more about the policy and programs at your company.

We are proud to have made gender neutral restrooms a reality. We put the COVID-19 pandemic situation to real good use. While almost all our employees are working from home, we made civil and minor structural changes to our facilities by creating gender neutral restrooms. Apart from hosting exclusive webinar and trainings for our employees on the Inclusion of LGBTQ+ in the workplace, this year we will also focused on the below to truly take this initiative to the next level

- Making systemic changes on the HRMS tools (provision for He/She/Others)
- Included same gender/live-in partners in our medical insurance policy
- Introduction of gender reassignment surgery leaves

Did you introduce any special COVID-19 care policy/package?

Yes

Is it easy to find skilled developers for LGBTQ+ community?

No

What is the biggest challenge when hiring LGBTQ+ developers?

Not enough competent/skilled developers

When did you last introduce a policy exclusively to benefit LGBTQ+ workforce?

Last 6 months

What is your company's trusted approach to improve LGBTQ developer group in the workforce?

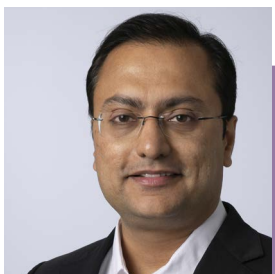
Internship programs for all candidates irrespective of gender or sexual orientation with the objective of introducing them to the corporate culture

Focused online and offline training programs to upskill/cross-skill new talent

Instructor-lead training programs for upskilling these potential candidates

Sensitisation programs for managers to be adept with handling all employees including employees with different sexual orientation

Awareness and training sessions for recruiters and recruiting panellists in handling/interviewing/shortlisting and hiring people with different sexual orientation



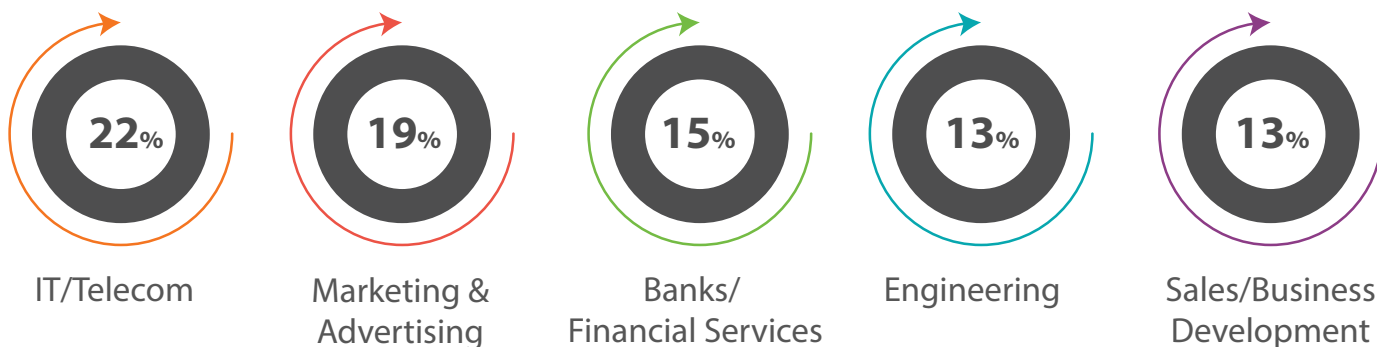
Mohith Mohan,
Vice President - Head of HR & Corporate Operations, Lowe's India

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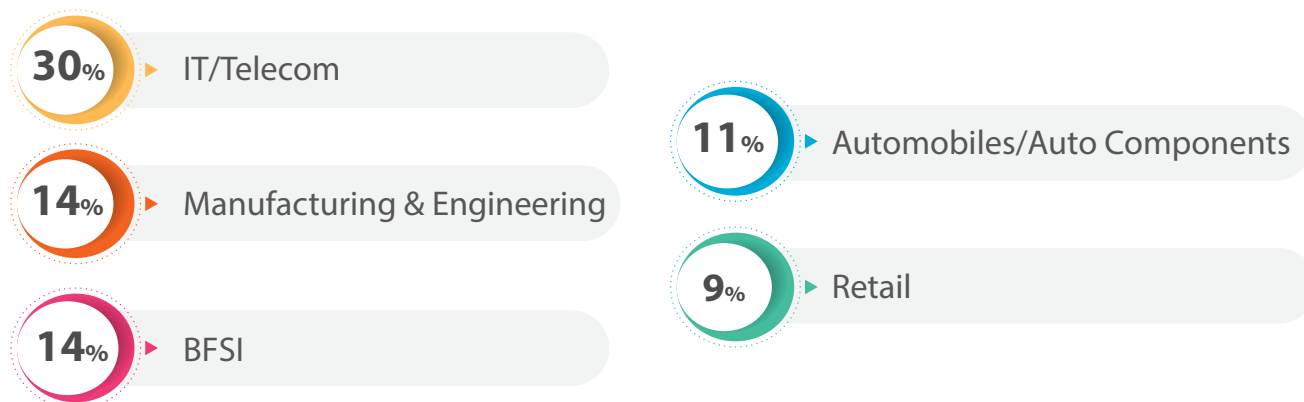
We bring the same focus & commitment to include the LGBTQ+ community with our PRIDE Business Resource Group (BRG). Our PRIDE BRG has been instrumental in strengthening our Ally group, spreading awareness and sensitising our people on removing biases and committing to thoughtful action by bringing everyone together. We have created a strong roadmap for hiring LGBTQ+ individuals and are working towards it.”

IT/Telecom noted over 30% growth in talent demand in May'22, Pune top job hub: RecruiteX

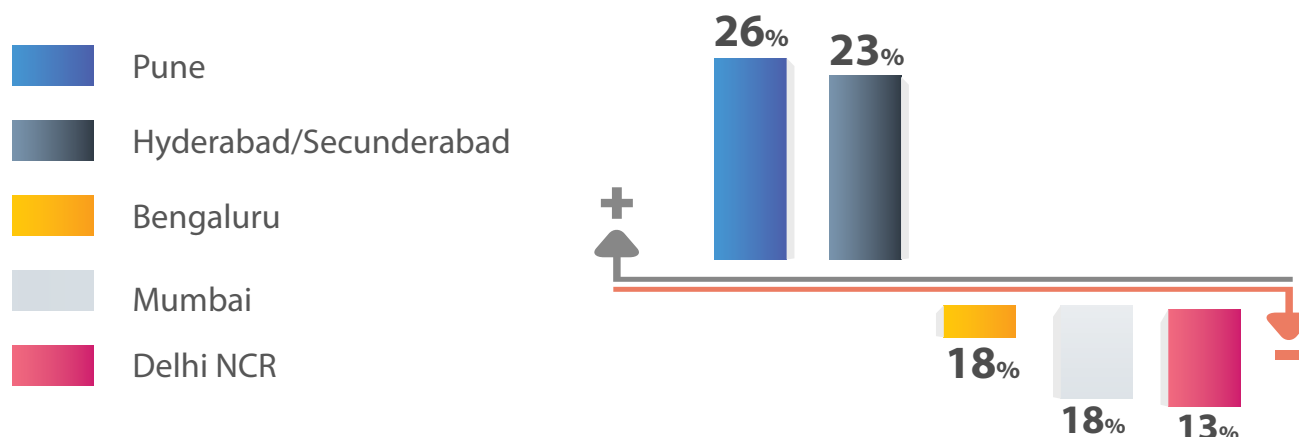
Functional area-wise



Sector-wise



Location-wise



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