

LGBTQ+ Conversation

In conversation with our LGBTQ+ Ambassador Charlotte Crisp

Why did you get involved with the LGBTQ+ movement?

CC In 2018, I was part of the CSR committee for Centor and we were talking about new initiatives, and it came up from UNA that they wanted to champion diversity as part of their remit. I suggested that I would do it as I'm passionate about diversity and I think that everyone should come to work and be themselves. A lot of people don't and haven't historically, which is really sad.

So I wanted to give that safe space to someone that I may not know needs it and that I may not be aware has received it. However, I wanted to give them the information so that they can go out and meet like-minded people in our industry and actually feel **that they are part of something, and that they can be themselves.**

What's the main role of a LGBTQ+ Ambassador?

CC Spreading awareness, making sure that people are comfortable, making sure that if someone has a problem and they want to talk to someone, that you're there; not necessarily to give advice, but to listen. Having someone to listen to you, if you're unhappy about something, is hugely important and means that people don't suffer in silence. **Maybe if they are concerned about being their true self at work, and they have one person to talk to who can understand them, even a tiny bit, they may not feel so alone.**

What role do you think LGBTQ+ plays in the insurance industry?

CC A couple of roles probably. Firstly, the LGBTQ+ community is huge and it's not that they have suddenly appeared, they have always been here, but actually people are feeling more comfortable to be themselves. I think that they are a group that are doing lots of great work and are perhaps one of those that are shouting the loudest out of all the diversity groups. In doing this they are providing a space for other diverse groups, which means that they can have the confidence to shout about what they want to shout about too.

It's also great for the insurance community because they are providing that space for the LGBTQ+ community to be themselves and not to have to face issues in the workplace; also they are helping other groups by saying, **"It's OK to shout about something that you are passionate about"**.

Charlotte Crisp
Centor LGBTQ+ Ambassador



“Although it’s work, you’re still a person.”

Why are diversity and inclusion important in the workplace?

CC Wow, that’s a big question! I think it’s important people should be comfortable being themselves. **Although it’s work, you’re still a person.** Most of your life, you’re in the workplace, so if you’re having to hide a part of yourself, or if you’re in constant fear that someone is going to find out something about you and tell the entire office, it’s not a life you want to live.

Also, companies that are more inclusive are more successful, more forward thinking and more profitable. Problem-solving is much better in companies that have a diverse workforce, because they are able to come at it from a different point of view. Firms that aren’t diverse may not be able to solve problems as quickly and as easily, or in the same way. **Business-wise it has been proven that a diverse workforce is good for business** and it generally leads to a happier workforce because everyone can be themselves: mental health is better, recruitment is down, retention is up.

Has the LGBTQ+ Network Link got any plans for Pride Month in June?

CC They do normally do something to celebrate and they normally have a section in the Pride March. You can apply to be part of this Pride March and join them, but there are other initiatives that you can also be part of it.

More information can be found at www.lgbtinsurancenetwork.co.uk

What do you think success would look like, for not only LGBTQ+, but diversity and inclusion in the workplace?

CC I think allowing people to be who they want to be, without judgement, is the goal. It would be good if people, regardless of opinion, had their voice heard and we could have an environment where we could have an open discussion. Learning more about each other so that we are more accepting of people’s different opinions is the ideal. Rather than an aggressive, uncomfortable, negative situation where it ends in an argument. Maybe, having a calm discussion about opinions would be nice. **People are people, it shouldn’t matter if they are slightly different from you.**

Even the simple act of sending out information across the workplace hopefully raises awareness and makes people aware of networks within the industry that may reflect their own uniqueness.

Charlotte Crisp is our LGBTQ+ Ambassador, and has been since 2018. She’s championed diversity and inclusion and has unquestionably made Centor a nicer place to work. We are proud to have her.