

The Executive Allyship Playbook

A Z-Twist Resource

Concrete Steps for Trans Inclusion

Executive allyship isn't a slogan; it's a strategic imperative. This playbook outlines actionable steps for leaders committed to equity, resilience, and accountability

Overview

Let's talk consequences of last week's Supreme Court Ruling

Operationally?

- Outdated HR forms = Every binary gender field in HR systems just became a liability. Mismatched IDs? Now your payroll outs trans contractors.
- Binary onboarding systems = reputational landmines
- Refusing to adapt = watching talent drain while you post about "DEI values" on LinkedIn.

Anyone know how many trans people report to have suffered discrimination in the workplace? It's 1 in 4 according to some studies, but 35% of trans people have quit their jobs in the past over discrimination. Your "culture" won't save you when your best developer walks.

And let's talk reputation liability: Gen Z isn't asking if you're inclusive. They're watching who you platform, who you protect, and who you pretend not to notice.

72% of Gen Z *chooses brands* based on LGBTQ+ stance. Stay silent = lose revenue.

I had to explain to the investor relations team for a company *I am invested in* that the remarks of one of their HR professionals were illegal. How many of you are worried about what this ruling means for your own legal costs?

This playbook is divided into three tiers—each one building on the last. Executive allyship isn't a slogan; it's a strategic commitment. These are the actions that set real leaders apart.

Tier 1: Housekeeping (Minimal Effort, No Excuses)

These are non-negotiables. They're the equivalent of washing your hands before surgery—baseline operational integrity.

De-gender Your Forms	Remove "Mr/Ms" from forms unless legally required.	Add non-binary and "prefer not to say" options.
Update Onboarding & HR Systems	Ensure systems allow for chosen names, pronouns, and gender identity.	Mismatched IDs? Have a process that respects dignity.
Train Your Managers	Mandatory trans-inclusion modules in all leadership training.	Not "optional." Not once a year. Embedded.
Audit Your Physical Spaces	All-gender bathrooms (Not just a sign on the accessible bathroom), accessible signage, and privacy in changing areas	Normalise inclusion through design.
Review Your Benefits Package	Transition-related care must be explicitly covered.	Include mental health support with trans-affirming providers.
Implement a Name & Pronoun Policy	Ensure there's a clear, supported, and confidential process for name/pronoun updates across all systems.	Reminder to not make pronoun policy mandatory, as this risks outing people.

Tier 2: Structural Power (Time to Get Serious)

These steps require investment in institutional trust and long-term retention—but they are what build trust and credibility.

Hire Trans Experts as Consultants	Budget for trans-led expertise in D&I work.	Don't just invite them to panels—bring them into the boardroom.
Fund Internal Trans-Led ERGs	Give them real budgets, decision-making power, and executive sponsorship.	Too often minority identities are expected to do extra work for free, which is part of the systemic issue.
Make a Public Statement	Clearly affirm trans inclusion on your website, social media, and in leadership comms.	Visibility matters.
Revise Procurement & Vendor Policies	Require inclusion policies from your suppliers.	End contracts with those who discriminate.
Add Gender Inclusion Metrics to Leadership KPIs	If it's not measured, it's not managed.	Accountability is key.

Tier 3: Strategic Pressure (You're Playing Chess Now)

This is where allyship becomes leadership. These moves signal that you're not just reacting—you're reshaping the system, building proactive leadership in policy, perception, and public accountability

Lobby for Inclusive Policy	Meet with MPs, fund advocacy work, and back pro-equality legislation.	Don't ask—demand clarity on their stance.
Divest From Bigotry	Audit your investments, partnerships, and supply chains	If your partners are funding hate, so are you.
Stand Publicly Against Hate	When public attacks on trans rights happen—respond clearly and immediately.	Gen Z isn't asking if you're inclusive. They're watching who you platform, who you protect, and who you pretend not to notice.
Support Legal Action & Advocacy Groups	Donate, promote, and platform trans legal defence organisations and policy advocates.	https://transequality.org
Use Your Platform	Write op-eds, appear on panels, call out discrimination.	Model what it looks like when leaders lead.

Final Word

Everyone has options, and like a good project manager, I will include all three:

1) Do nothing. You can absolutely do this, you can accept the risk of it impacting your bottom line and alienating your customers, your workforce and potentially dropping you into legal hot water. That is... A Choice(TM).

2) Perform. Stick your Rainbow logo up in July, "The business of business is business" and all that. Going to admit, this tends to be the most popular choice with businesses.

Or 3) commit—and become the kind of leader people remember for the right reasons.



"Every executive decision communicates values. Choose your tier—but know that sustainable inclusion only takes root when all three are embraced."

— Morgan Grey, Z-Twist Consulting