

Unilver CEO's Email to Employees

Here's an example of a well-crafted email to employees from the CEO of Unilever, Alan Jope. It is empathetic, gets to the point quickly and provides clear direction about what to do and not do.

I wanted to update you on a new set of actions we will be taking to protect ourselves against coronavirus (Covid-19).

The situation has now been confirmed as a pandemic by the World Health Organization. It is clear that the global threat from coronavirus is continuing to grow, and at a rapidly accelerating rate. There are now more than 120,000 recorded cases in over 100 countries, and sadly more than 4,700 people have died as a result. This week's message from the World Health Organization was unequivocal – that humanity's success in tackling coronavirus effectively is heavily dependent on the actions that organisations take over the next few days to help slow down its spread and avoid overloading health care systems.

As you know, since the initial outbreak in China, we have put in place measures to help minimise the risk from coronavirus to our employees and their families. Our approach has been one of abundant caution, and the speed of response and collective responsibility I have seen across Unilever has been truly heroic. Not only in China and Italy, where we have been most impacted, but in many other parts of the company too. Thank you for your professionalism and commitment.

However, it is very clear that we now need to go to the next level.

As a result, today I am announcing the following measures for all our people, including contractors, globally. They are most simply broken down into 'musts' and 'must nots':

THE MUST NOTS:

You must not ...

1. Travel by air either internationally or domestically. Any air travel which is currently booked, apart from return-bound flights, will be cancelled centrally by our travel booking partners.
2. Work from any Unilever site other than your principal location.
3. Enter a Unilever site if you are suffering from cold or flu-like symptoms.
4. Invite any visitors onto a Unilever site without the prior approval of the site leader.
5. Attend meetings, conferences or events of more than 20 people.

THE MUSTS:

You must ...

1. Self-isolate for 14 days if you are experiencing any cold or flu-like symptoms or have returned to your country from another location for either business or personal reasons.
2. Apply hand sanitiser when you enter a Unilever site.
3. Undergo thermal testing upon arrival at any Unilever site as legislation and equipment allows.
4. Use non-physical greetings (ie avoid shaking hands) and maintain appropriate "social distance".

For the avoidance of doubt, all these measures are applicable to all employees, irrespective of role or geography.

We are also applying additional measures which vary based on whether you have an office-based role, work in a sourcing unit, or are one of our field sales or retail staff:

SOURCING UNITS AND DISTRIBUTION CENTRES

- All of our sourcing units and distribution centres will apply specialist tiered protocols to protect our workers while supporting business continuity. Country leadership teams will continue to monitor carefully and engage with site leads as appropriate.
- Strict site protocols for hygiene and social distancing are also being put in place.

FIELD SALES AND RETAIL STAFF (INCLUDING 3P FIELD SALES AND MERCHANDISERS)

- All field sales employees should connect with customers virtually wherever possible and minimise the use of public transport if a customer visit is necessary.
- Strict protocols on social distancing (including non-physical greetings), and hand hygiene (especially after handling cash) will also be put in place and will be communicated shortly.

OFFICE-BASED ROLES

- All office-based employees globally should work from home. Any exceptions (which we expect to be few and far between, and most probably due to the need to access data-intensive systems) must be approved by the country General Manager.
- The only country where this does not apply is in China, where people are beginning to return to work per national controls.

R&D

- For R&D colleagues who work in laboratories or pilot plants on essential activities, protocols are now in development and will be shared by R&D site leads.
 - It is likely that some R&D roles will follow the office-based protocols and some will follow the Sourcing Unit rules.
- More details about these changes, which will be effective from Tuesday 17 March, will be shared by your country General Manager early next week.

I hope you agree that these measures are the right thing to do. They have been developed based on the latest scientific and medical advice and are designed to protect our safety, our families' safety, and the safety of the communities in which we operate and live. They also demonstrate Unilever's leadership as a responsible, purpose-led business.

We are continuing to support global and local authorities by donating hygiene products to support the fight against coronavirus and we will be further stepping-up these efforts in the days ahead.

I am acutely aware that these changes to our working arrangements will have a big impact on our lives. None of the measures have been taken without careful thought and consideration about what this will mean for all of us, and I want to reassure you that we will support you through this change.

Further information – and regular updates – will follow. This will include more details on the protocols being put in place to help protect Sourcing Unit and Distribution colleagues, as well as Field Sales and Retail Staff. Also, for those of you who are about to embark on what we expect to be an extended period of working from home, we will shortly be sharing more guidance to help you during this period.

These are unprecedented times. Now, more than ever we need to stay calm, be resourceful, and do what we do best: focus on supporting each other, meeting the changing needs of our consumers, and on serving our customers.

Thank you again for your commitment.

Stay safe, stay well, and take care.

Alan Jope, CEO