

HR Case Study – Q4



Unilever is currently in the process of acquiring a new facial skincare business - “Best You”. Established 18 years ago, Best You grew rapidly from humble beginnings, and growth was largely fuelled by the company’s attractive ethos of developing premium quality, 100% organic creams and lotions made from locally sourced ingredients and with no animal testing involved. They now employ 47 staff, all of whom will become Unilever employees after the acquisition is completed. The process of due diligence is ongoing, but conversations with the incumbent management team (who will remain in place after the sale has completed) have identified that there is a high level of concern around the change and the impact the merger with a global giant will have on the Best You team. A recent engagement survey highlighted real concerns over the perceived levels of internal resilience at Best You and their employees’ ability to cope with the change.

Your manager has asked you to work with a team of HR colleagues to come up with a plan to address the issue of resilience and dealing with change once Best You becomes part of Unilever in one month’s time. It is important that any initiatives represent the essence of the Unilever Brand, are innovative and – given the geographical dispersion of the Best You team – utilise technology as much as possible in their delivery.

Email

To: You

From: HR Director, Unilever

Subject: Assimilating our Best You colleagues

Thanks in anticipation for your contribution to this resilience and change management project. The Best You brand will be a fantastic addition to the local Unilever offering in your region. Its values very much resonate with our own – in particular in working with integrity, continuously improving environmental impact and developing a truly sustainable business.

We're very conscious that the 47 individuals that represent Best You face an immense change - they've effectively been working as a family business for 18 years and they'll soon become part of a huge, global organisation. They'll be feeling the effects of our VUCA ("Volatile, Unstable, Complex and Ambiguous") environment and we need to ensure that they still feel part of a close-knit team. Your team's task is to help them develop their personal, team and organisational resilience to keep them motivated and working effectively through the transition.

You'll find an additional challenge in the Best You team not all being based in one location; some are really quite geographically remote. It will be difficult to have the team all face to face in one location for any amount of time.

I attach relevant extracts from an employee engagement pulse survey the Best You management conducted just after the acquisition was announced. We need to work fast to develop and implement some innovative, supportive and fun initiatives to start to develop the team's capability to deal with the VUCA world in which we all operate.

Thanks!

HR Director

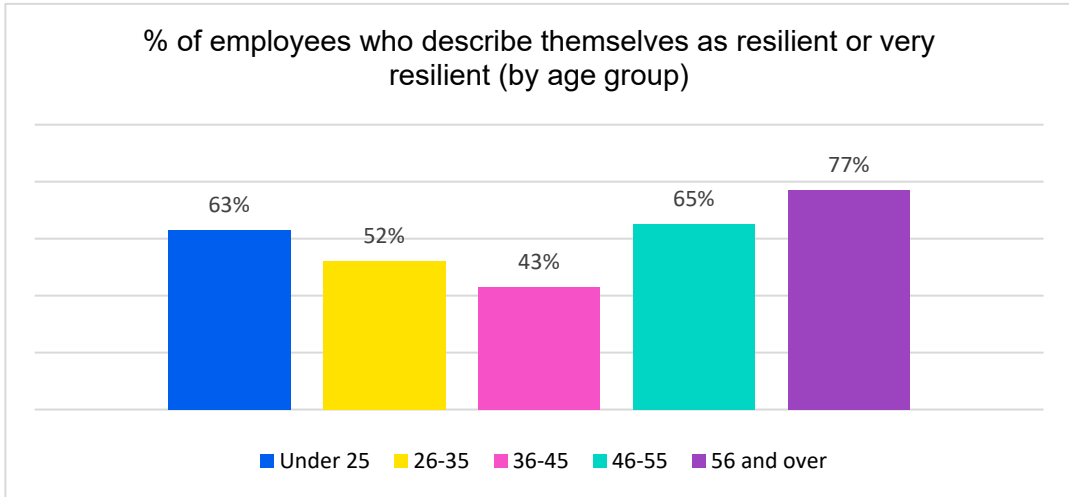


Best You Engagement Survey Results

How resilient are you at dealing with change?	Male	Female
<i>Very resilient</i>	3%	12%
<i>Quite resilient</i>	15%	45%
<i>It varies</i>	65%	28%
<i>Not resilient at all</i>	17%	15%



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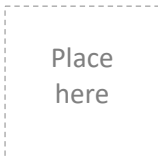
Other Highlights

Unilever is well positioned to deal with change	92%
Best You is well positioned to deal with change	75%
My manager is well positioned to deal with change	43%
I am well positioned to deal with change	57%
Best You explains change and what it means for me	87%
My manager explains change and what it means for me	53%
I believe through the acquisition, there will be a strategy to develop personal, team and organisational resilience:	
Yes	92%
No	3%
Don't know	5%
My manager is skilled in developing team and individual resilience:	
Yes	63%
No	21%
Don't know	16%



[Blog post](#)

What is Resilience?



Blog post by Laura Fraser, Organisational Development Consultant

In a world that is changing in unprecedented ways, individual and organisational resilience are key. Individually, we need to develop our ability to deal with life's challenges and adversity. As organisations, it's important that we anticipate and overcome incremental change and sudden disruptions to survive in the marketplace. Whilst some personal resilience is innate, research shows that we can develop our own personal resilience and organisations can provide the framework and culture for organisational resilience to prosper.

My own research has identified a number of factors that I believe are critical in creating an environment that can cope with the change that is ever present. Organisations will develop these areas in their own, unique way, but each is important in developing resilience.



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