

LCBB5012: Principles of
Human Resource Management

ENVIRONMET MODEL ON
UNILEVER

Assessment 2: Coursework:
Individual Report

Student Name: Cristian Valenzuela Garcia

Student ID:2312699

Lecturer name: Nerys Dosseh

Table of Contents

1.Introduction	2
2. Business Environment:.....	2
2.1 SWOT on HR practices.....	3
3.Organisation Application.....	4
3.1 Unilever Human Resources Practices	5
4 Unilever SWOT analysis.....	6
4.1 Country Differences	8
5. Conclusion.....	9
5.1Future Implications	9
6. References	10

1.Introduction

This report examines Unilever's Human Resources functions, including recruitment, training and development, and performance management across the organisation. Furthermore, it employs a SWOT analysis to evaluate the business environment and identify both internal and external factors that may influence the company's operational objectives.

In a business, Human Resources (HR) functions are essential to sustain organisational growth, through specific activities such as recruitment, fundamental to attract, select, and hire the right candidates for roles within the organisation, crucial for increasing productivity and stability and reducing operational costs due to lower staff turnover. Moreover, training and development represent the subsequent stage after recruitment, focused on training, educating, and developing technical skills to enhance employees' current and future performance. This function is vital within HR because it reduces errors in technical roles, improves work quality and operational efficiency, and develops internal talent, decreasing the need to hire external candidates for senior positions (Marwan, 2014).

Performance management is the function dedicated to evaluating, measuring, and managing employee performance through tools such as regular assessments, feedback, individual objectives, and improvement plans. This process aligns employees with strategic goals, enables the identification of staff strengths and weaknesses, and detects performance issues before they affect productivity, while also providing motivational feedback. To strengthen employee engagement with the organisation, HR fosters effective communication, conflict resolution, workplace well-being, and compliance with internal policies. This function is essential because it contributes to creating a positive work environment. It promotes a strong organisational culture that supports operational stability by reducing employee turnover and absenteeism, as well as preventing conflicts through clear internal communication (Patrick and Mazhar, 2019).

2. Business Environment:

The SWOT business model is an effective tool for identifying and analysing the various elements within the organisational environmental system. It provides a practical understanding of performance by dividing the assessment into two segments: the internal dimension, developed through strengths, which involve the strong aspects of a business, and weaknesses, which address the areas requiring improvement within the company. The external dimension

incorporates opportunities, those factors outside the organisation that can significantly influence business outcomes, and threats, focused on competitors and their scope, particularly regarding potential impacts on business profitability. (Chakrabarty, 2024).

On the other hand, this model presents several limitations, such as simplicity and superficiality, because it only highlights the main determinants that may affect the company but does not provide detail on underlying factors. It is also a subjective model, as it depends on participants' perceptions; therefore, it cannot measure the significance of the identified elements (Kumar and Praveena, 2023).

Considering the opposite perspective of SWOT analysis, it is useful when the company needs to identify and organise internal and external factors that influence or enhance organisational performance; therefore, it facilitates information for decision-making and strategic planning regarding investment, opportunities, threats, and areas for improvement. Moreover, it is simple and economical to design and apply, and it can adapt to any business level, including multinational firms, specific markets, and departments (Shahanipour et al., 2020).

2.1 SWOT on HR practices

In Human Resources, to diagnose which factors influence HR practices, the strategic tool SWOT analysis can be implemented to enhance organisational performance and effectiveness. This is because it helps identify business strengths and weaknesses, supporting and guiding strategic decision-making within the company.

Strengths include internal development, which drives standardised recruitment processes to prevent discrimination and ensure rapid selection. Additionally, robust training and development procedures, including continuous learning to enhance technical competence and provide internal certification, are supported by clear key performance indicators that promote strategic objectives and positive labour relations among employees.

Weaknesses include internal development aspects that limit HR effectiveness, such as manual recruitment procedures for analysing suitable candidates, skill gaps with delayed detection, and poor interdepartmental communication, which leads to misunderstandings and reduced employee motivation.

(Borman et al., 2025)

Opportunities arise from the external environment, using external platforms to attract potential candidates through clear job descriptions. Subsidised training programmes expand workers' technical skills, while continuous feedback demonstrates organisational interest, reducing conflicts and absenteeism through supportive communication practices.

Threats within the external environment negatively affect the business, since there is high competition for specialised candidates, making it more difficult to attract critical profiles and increasing salary costs. Moreover, changes in legislation and labour regulations can impact the organisation through penalties if new employment and hiring requirements are not met. According to shifts in societal mindset, employee expectations rise, demanding greater flexibility, benefits, and personal development, which may exceed the company's current capacity. Therefore, inadequate management may lead to conflicts due to the absence of inclusive policies.

(Boncea, and Cîrnu, (2010)

3.Organisation Application

Unilever is a multinational operating in 190 countries, covering Beauty & Wellbeing, Personal Care, Home Care, Nutrition, and Ice Cream. It ranks among the top ten global consumer goods companies alongside Coca-Cola, PepsiCo, and L'Oréal. It owns leading brands such as Knorr, Magnum, Dove, and Ben & Jerry's. Its high investment levels position it around rank 200 in global revenue due to strong capital expenditure. (Umbrex, 2026).

To ensure that productivity, efficiency, and value chain performance reach maximum levels, Unilever focuses on strategic areas within global operations management. Each area is interconnected, with decisions guided by global market data analysis. The strategy is structured around Products and Quality, Processes and Location Strategy, Human Resources, Supply Chain, Scheduling, and Maintenance (Thompson, 2024)



Lists ▾



Portfolios



+ Create portfolio

Watchlist

This list is empty

Equity sectors

SX3P	Consumer Staples	668.15	-0.61%
SX6P	Utilities	549.03	+0.53%
SX8P	Technology	973.54	+0.32%
SXAP	Consumer...	447.35	-0.93%
SXDP	Health Care	1,144.48	-0.94%
SXEP	Energy	533.34	+1.17%
SXFP	Financials	966.82	-0.16%
SXKP	Communications	277.63	-0.85%
SXNP	Industrials	1,189.54	+0.27%
SXPP	Materials	793.71	+0.52%

← Home | ULVR:LON

Unilever plc

+ Add to list ▾

GBX4,743.00 -2.21% (-107.00) Today

Jul 31, 5:30:00 PM UTC+1 · GBX

Area ▾ Compare ▾ Indicators ▾



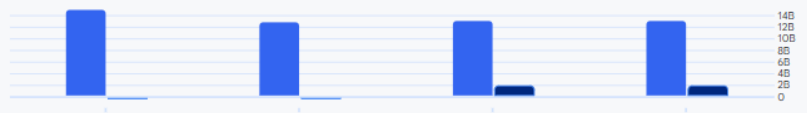
Overview Earnings Financials

Income statement Balance sheet Cash flow

Income statement

Revenue Net income

Quarterly ▾



All values in EUR

	Sep 2025	Dec 2025	Mar 2026	Jun 2026
Revenue	14.72B	12.59B	12.81B	12.81B

Source: Google Finance (2026).

3.1 Unilever Human Resources Practices

Unilever's Human Resources practices combine global standards with processes, technology, leadership, and metrics, while also adapting to local regulations such as labour laws, cultural norms, and union requirements.

Recruitment: Uses AI to identify suitable candidates through cognitive and situational tests and skills analysis. Locally, it adapts to cultural norms and labour laws such as privacy and equity. In Europe, where unions are strong, they may participate in selection processes.

Training: Promotes a graduate programme with training focused on sustainability, responsibility, and performance. Through global digital platforms, employees access technical, leadership, safety, innovation, and cultural courses. Locally, industrial countries emphasise safety and operations, Europe prioritises leadership and innovation, and emerging markets focus on developing young talent.

(Hu, 2023)

Performance management: Globally, Unilever promotes accountability and performance through shared KPIs. Locally, it follows labour requirements such as documentation and formal evaluations. In emerging markets, the system is more flexible and focused on employee development.

Employee relations: Unilever applies company principles such as inclusion, respect, equality, and non-discrimination, along with an internal platform that gives employees a voice.

Locus Assignments (2021).

4 Unilever SWOT analysis

Applying SWOT analysis to Unilever helps highlight the key elements required to assess the business environment, specifically within the Human Resources area.

Strengths

Strong brand, supported by its extensive and historic global presence, has enabled the company to allocate teams dedicated to multilevel talent attraction, whose current objective is centred on sustainability through the development of a specialised hub.

Processes: Unilever's HR department has incorporated a mechanism to identify, mitigate, and monitor impacts on staff and the value chain, thereby ensuring the organisation's reputation across both internal and external Human Resources domains.

Sustainability integration: Unilever integrates into HR performance management strategies that incentivise responsible behaviour and coherent talent management by linking compensation to sustainability objectives, reinforcing alignment between employee conduct and corporate goals.

Weaknesses

Data dependency: The data used to manage social and environmental performance are not entirely clear, creating uncertainty for Human Resources and making it difficult for them to take precise decisions.

Cultural changes: The company is positioned according to a new sustainability-driven strategic and governance model, which may generate internal tensions and require retraining talent to ensure organisational alignment.

Risk on chain of value: Because Unilever manages a large number of suppliers, it faces ongoing risks related to labour rights, safety, and overall working conditions.

(Jurevicius, 2023)

Opportunities

New strategies: Unilever is developing new strategies to advance its sustainability plan, including climate change, circular economy, and human rights. HR designs specific initiatives to address each objective through specialised training programmes aligned with global priorities.

Employer branding: HR defines clear roles to enhance the attractiveness of recruiting high-level candidates, securing competitive advantage in European markets and strengthening internal reputation, thereby reducing uncertainty and improving organisational communication.

Digitalization: HR employs AI to improve employee analysis, supporting capability gap identification, optimal training, and turnover prediction. It also automates recruitment processes for candidates and suppliers, while enhancing staff integration through digital systems across organisational functions.

Threats

Labour risks: Because Unilever manages a large number of suppliers, it faces significant structural risks such as forced labour, unsafe working conditions, and lack of formal contracts. For HR, this creates high reputational pressure, requiring increased internal audits and staff training on incident risks and human rights.

Evolution: Changes in government regulations mean that HR must adapt to new requirements, including developing internal technical capacities and managing increased administrative tasks. If HR fails to adjust all processes accordingly, the company may face penalties and reputational damage, compromising operational stability and stakeholder confidence.

Competency: The transition toward modernisation requires focusing on scarce profiles such as environmental engineers, data scientists, and human rights specialists. Consequently, HR must increase salaries to prevent talent loss and maintain competitiveness in critical strategic areas.

Unilever (2024)

4.1 Country Differences

Environmental forces affect Unilever differently depending on national culture, regulations, and economic conditions, requiring HR to adapt strategies by country. Cultural differences collectivism in India and Indonesia versus individualism in Europe demand tailored evaluation, reward systems, and communication to strengthen engagement and prevent conflicts across diverse organisational contexts (Unilever (2024)).

For instance,

Cultural differences

In India, Unilever used single-use sachets to match small, frequent purchases, creating affordable access but generating significant non-recyclable waste. In the Philippines, marketing framed sachets as modern, replacing low-waste traditions and reinforcing consumption patterns that increased plastic pollution across local markets.

Legal and regulatory differences

In developing countries such as India and the Philippines, lax plastic regulations enabled the widespread use of sachets, causing pollution in rivers, coastlines, and areas without formal waste-management systems. In South Africa, stronger regulatory pressure and activism particularly from Greenpeace Africa pushed Unilever to reduce plastics, demonstrating how local governance and civil society influence corporate sustainability strategies.

Economic conditions

In emerging markets such as India and the Philippines, low incomes led Unilever to introduce low-cost, small-format sachets, opening previously inaccessible markets but creating environmental impacts. In the United States, stable economic conditions support more sophisticated growth strategies, while Europe's political and economic tensions pose risks for operations, logistics, and strategic decision-making.

Diski, and King, (2026)

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, the analysis demonstrates that Unilever's Human Resources function plays a central role in sustaining organisational performance across a highly complex global environment. The integration of recruitment, training, development, and performance management enables the company to maintain operational stability while supporting long-term strategic objectives. The SWOT assessment highlights that, although Unilever benefits from strong global branding, advanced HR processes, and sustainability-driven governance, it also faces internal challenges related to data reliability, cultural transitions, and supplier-related labour risks. Externally, evolving regulations, rising employee expectations, and competition for specialised talent intensify the need for adaptive HR strategies. Country-specific cultural, legal, and economic differences further reinforce the importance of localised HR practices. Overall, Unilever must continue strengthening its HR capabilities to ensure compliance, protect its reputation, and support sustainable growth across diverse international markets.

5.1 Future Implications

Future implications for HR managers at Unilever will be shaped by accelerating regulatory pressure, rising sustainability expectations, and increasing workforce digitalisation. As global markets tighten environmental and labour standards, HR will need stronger compliance systems, expanded audit capabilities, and continuous monitoring of supplier practices. The integration of AI and advanced analytics will require new digital skills, redesigned talent-development models, and more predictive workforce planning. Cultural diversity across Unilever's operations will demand tailored engagement strategies, flexible communication approaches, and locally adapted reward systems to maintain cohesion in heterogeneous markets. Growing public scrutiny of corporate ethics will intensify reputational risks, making HR responsible for embedding human-rights training, crisis-response protocols, and responsible leadership. Overall, HR must evolve into a strategic, globally coordinated function capable of anticipating risks and supporting sustainable growth (El Sabhet and Endah Kurniawati, 2024)

6. References

- Boncea, A. and Cîrnu, D. (2010) “STRATEGIC HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT ASSESSMENT AT PRICEWATERHOUSECOOPERS,” *Analele Universității Constantin Brâncuși din Târgu Jiu : Seria Economie*, 1(4), pp. 92–106.
- Borman, R., Natsir, S., Hasanudin, B. and Muzakir, M. (2025). Strengthening human resources to enhance competitiveness using SWOT analysis. *Research Horizon*, 5(6), pp.2291–2304. doi:10.54518/rh.5.6.2025.835.
- Chakrabarty, B. (2024). SWOT analysis in modern business: A qualitative study. *IOSR journal of Business and management*, 26(11), pp.05–08. doi:10.9790/487x-2611120508.
- Diski, A. and King, S. (2026). *Greenpeace international*. [online] Greenpeace international. Available at: <https://www.greenpeace.org/international/story/80567/what-consumed-reveals-about-unilever-and-why-the-company-must-break-its-sachet-habit/> [Accessed 22 July 2026].
- El Sabhet, E. and Endah Kurniawati (2024). Implementation of Green Human Resources Management (HRM) practices in PT Unilever Tbk’s 2024 sustainability report. *Jurnal Manajemen*, [online] 17(1), pp.220–229. doi:10.32832/jm-uika.v17i1.21813.
- Google Finance (2026). *Unilever PLC (ULVR) – Financials*. Available at: <https://www.google.com/finance/beta/quote/ULVR:LON?tab=financials> (Accessed 1 August 2026).
- Hu, Q. (2023). Unilever’s practice on AI-based recruitment. *Highlights in Business, Economics and Management*, 16(2), pp.256–263. doi:http://dx.doi.org/10.54097/hbem.v16i.10565.
- Jurevicius, O. (2023). *Unilever SWOT analysis 2023 - SM insight*. [online] *Strategic Management Insight*. Available at: <https://strategicmanagementinsight.com/swot-analyses/unilever-swot-analysis/> [Accessed 13 Aug. 2026].
- Kumar, C.R.S. and Praveena, K.B. (2023). SWOT analysis. *International Journal of Advanced Research*, [online] 11(9), pp.744–748. doi:10.21474/ijar01/17584.
- Locus Assignments (2021.) *Human resource management: a case study of Unilever*. Available at: <https://www.locusassignments.com/dissertation-help-resources/human-resource-management-unilever-case-study> (Accessed: 22 July 2026).

Marwan, M.S. (2014). The role of human resources management practices represented by employees recruitment and training and motivation for realization of competitive advantage. *African Journal of Business Management*, 8(1), pp.35–47. doi:10.5897/ajbm2013.7263.

Patrick, P. and Mazhar, S. (2019). *Core functions of Human resource management and its effectiveness on organization: A study*. [online] *ResearchGate*, pp.257–266. Available at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/350089524_Core_Functions_of_Human_Resource_Management_and_its_Effectiveness_on_Organization_A_Study [Accessed 21 July 2026].

Shahanipour, S. Amindoust, A. Sahraian, K. Beiranvand, S. (2020) “Identification and prioritization of human resource strategies with employees’ creativity approach in administrative organizations using SWOT–ANP,” *Opsearch*, 57(1), pp. 119–143. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12597-019-00416-w>.

Thompson, A. (2024). *Unilever’s operations management, 10 decisions & productivity*. [online] *Panmore Institute*. Available at: <https://panmore.com/unilever-operations-management-10-decisions-productivity> [Accessed 1 Aug. 2026].

Umbrex (2026). *Unilever strategy and business model*. [online] *Independent Management Consultants*. Available at: <https://umbrex.com/resources/company-profiles/unilever-plc/> [Accessed 22 July 2026].

Unilever (2024) *Unilever sustainability statement*. Available at: <https://www.unilever.com/files/unilever-sustainability-statement.pdf> (Accessed: 22 July 2026).