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Source : www.theguardian.com

Titre : Unilever to tackle advertising stereotypes in diversity drive

Date : Thursday 21 2021

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Nombre de mots : 403

FTSE 100 company pledges to work with more businesses run by women and minorities

Unilever has said it will tackle advertising stereotypes and work with more businesses run by women and other under-represented groups as part of a wider inclusivity drive.

5 The FTSE 100 company, which is behind household names such as Dove soap, Ben & Jerry's ice-cream and Marmite, said it planned to use the might of its brands, coupled with its advertising spending power as one of the world's biggest to make a difference.

Dave Ingram, its chief procurement officer, said Unilever had set a target of spending €2bn (£1.8bn) a year with companies owned and managed by women, under-represented minority ethnic groups, people with disabilities and the LGBTQI+ community by 2025.

10 That figure compares with €300m today, Ingram said. The initiative is backed up by a development fund to help entrepreneurs finding their feet.

15 Unilever will also increase the number of advertisements that feature or are created by people from diverse groups. The move would "help tackle the prevalence of stereotypes that are often perpetuated through advertising, and promote a more inclusive representation of people", it said.

The pandemic has had a dramatic effect on the world of work, with the £115bn company – the second most valuable business on the London Stock Exchange – looking to develop new employment models.

20 Alan Jope, Unilever's chief executive, recently announced that the company's office workers would never return to their desks five days a week. While in New Zealand its staff are trialling a four-day week after a number of smaller firms found it helped productivity and employees' wellbeing.

25 The new employment ideas include flexible contracts with benefits, such as pension plans, and giving staff time off work to study. It hopes the approach will foster openness and adaptability, and also resilience, in its workforce.

"We're finding that younger people want flexibility," said Ingram. "They don't want to sit in an office five days a week and want different ways of being involved in teams. One of the fundamental elements of the new employment model is how do we have a less of a traditional organisational approach to work."

30 Unilever has also set a target of only working with businesses that pay employees at least a living wage or income by the end of the decade. Hitting this ambitious target would involve working with farmers, suppliers, NGOs and governments to bring about systemic change.



READING COMPREHENSION

1. General comprehension:

After Reading the article carefully, write out an account about Unilever's strategy to fight against stereotypes in advertising.

2. Detailed comprehension:

What has been the effect of the pandemic on Unilever's employees and what is the impact on the employment models of Unilever? Explain and give examples.

3. Opening the topic:

Do you think the three main objectives Unilever targets are achievable? Explain for each objective.