

Case Title: Uber Technologies Inc.

Unique ID: MHE-FTR-046-1259927628

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Abstract

Valued at \$70 billion in 2017, Uber is globally the most valuable private start-up. Uber had a tumultuous year, culminating in the forced resignation of Travis Kalanick, Uber's co-founder and long-time CEO, in the wake of several ethical and leadership shortcomings. The case protagonist is Arianna Huffington, an Uber board member, who has been tasked to guide the new CEO, Dara Khosrowshahi, as he addresses some of Uber's ethical shortcomings and prepares the ride-hailing company for an eventual initial public offering (IPO) within a timeframe of 18–36 months. Arianna Huffington and Dara Khosrowshahi have to address a number of critical issues, but not limited to: corporate culture; employee morale; alleged gender discrimination; non-stop negative coverage in the media; customers defecting to Lyft; driver dissatisfaction; continued and more draconian regulations by cities, counties, states, and even countries; defendant in lawsuit filed by Waymo alleging Uber stole proprietary self-driving car technology when acquiring Otto, a self-driving start-up created by a then-Waymo employee; among many other issues.

Concepts: Strategic Leadership; Business Model; Platform Strategy; Innovation and Technology Strategy; Business Ethics; Corporate Governance; Organizational Culture and Structure

Context:

- Ticker Symbol: private – pre-IPO
- Protagonists: Arianna Huffington (Uber board member), Dara Khosrowshahi (CEO)
- Country: USA and worldwide (600 cities and over 60 countries)
- Sector: mobile logistics and transportation company; ride-hailing and other internet-based services
- Company Employee Count: ~ 12,000
- Company Revenue: > \$8 billion (2017)
- Market Cap: private – pre-IPO, but most valuable startup globally: \$70 billion
- Event Year: 2017

Teaching Note: Available