

Uber CEO caught on video arguing over fares with driver

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In this Dec. 13, 2016, file photo, Uber CEO Travis Kalanick, poses during the launch of its bike-sharing product, uberMOTO, in Hyderabad, India. Uber's CEO says he needs leadership help after a video has emerged of him arguing heatedly with a driver about fares. (AP Photo/Mahesh Kumar A., File)

Uber's CEO says he needs leadership help after a video has emerged of him arguing heatedly with a driver about fares.

In the latest embarrassment to beset the ride-hailing company, CEO Travis Kalanick is seen discussing Uber's business model with the driver.

In the dashcam video obtained by Bloomberg News , the driver argues that Kalanick is lowering fares and claims he lost \$97,000 because of him. "I'm bankrupt because of you."

Kalanick lashes back. "You know what? Some people don't like to take responsibility for their own s—. They blame everything in their life on somebody else. Good luck," he said, then slamming the door.

After the video went public, Kalanick issued a statement to Uber employees. In it, he says he must "grow up" and apologizes to the driver, identified as Fawzi Kamel, as well as the driver community.

"This is the first time I've been willing to admit that I need leadership help and I intend to get it," he said.

The outburst, reportedly from early in February, is the latest in a string of problems for Kalanick and his company, which has become a global ride-hailing giant largely by challenging laws and authorities.

Last week the company found itself in a sexual harassment firestorm stemming from an essay published by a woman who used to work as an Uber engineer. She charged that her prospects at the company evaporated after she complained about sexual advances from her boss. In the post about her year at Uber, Susan Fowler said the company's human resources department ignored her complaints because her boss was a high performer.

Kalanick called for an independent investigation, and the company hired former Attorney General Eric Holder to help.

On Tuesday, a top engineering executive, Amit Singhal, left Uber five weeks after his hire was announced. According to a report in the tech blog Recode, Singhal failed to disclose that he'd left his previous job at Google because of a sexual harassment allegation.

Last week, Waymo, a self-driving car company that used to be part of Google, sued Uber in federal court, alleging betrayal and high-tech espionage.

The 28-page complaint accuses Anthony Levandowski, a former top manager for Google's self-driving car project, of stealing technology now propelling Uber's effort to build an autonomous vehicle fleet.

The lawsuit alleges that the theft occurred before Levandowski left Google to found a startup called Otto that is building self-driving big-rig trucks. Uber bought Otto for \$680 million last year, and Levandowski is now overseeing Uber's autonomous car effort.

Also this month, Kalanick resigned from President Donald Trump's business advisory council after facing a weeklong rider boycott. Twitter users encouraged riders to delete the Uber app because it charged less than it could at JFK Airport in New York as taxi drivers had halted service for an hour to protest Trump's immigration policy. The move was perceived by some as an effort to profit off the protests.

The San Francisco company also has tangled with authorities in California and around the world about driver background checks and whether drivers are contractors ineligible for employee benefits.

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