Executive Summary

Uber is a multi-service transportation agency dedicated to providing an alternate for taxi cab, carpool, and food delivery services. The business is based on the use of contract drivers connecting to customers via a mobile phone application and website. The stated intent of Uber is to provide mobility and access for a reasonable cost to everyone. Some of the services provided include point-to-point transportation for individuals and group, the ability to join an existing carpool or commute with a driver traveling in the same direction for work, or ordering food for delivery from restaurants that do not provide delivery service. Uber also aids in providing additional income to contracted drivers for the company and conducts background checks to ensure the safety of customers and drivers. As a technological company Uber is also researching and developing the field of driverless cars, beyond the current available options, and testing them for future implementation.

This paper is a summary of research and recommendations that could be used to improve Uber Technologies as an organization and future public company. The summaries will be broken down into the following sections, Organizational Behavior, Financial Analysis and Planning, Strategic Management, and Multiculturalism. After these sections, there is a section dedicated to recommendations for Uber to overcome their current issues and progress as a company. Those recommendations will be divided between short term and long term goals.

The researcher developed several recommendations for ideas and programs to address the continued organizational change needed at Uber related to the leadership echelons and improvement of the work environment. In 2017, Uber was exposed to be a toxic workplace for Women and Minorities and the leadership was complicit in creating it. Uber’s numerous issues with sexual harassment, discrimination, and toxic masculinity will be discussed with
recommendations based on their current progress to resolve the issues. Since that time Uber has attempted to revitalize the company but recent events, including lawsuits, prove there is still a long road ahead.
Developing a New Way Forward for Uber Technologies

MSA 698 Applied Research Project in Administration

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# Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Executive Summary</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title Page</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table of Contents</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational Overview</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defined Problem</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational Behavior</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Analysis, Planning, and Control</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategic Management</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiculturalism</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommendations</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) Analysis</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short Term Goals</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Media Engagement</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bystander Intervention Training</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership Hiring and Training</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diversity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long Term Goals</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>References</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Organizational Overview

Uber is a multi-service transportation agency dedicated to providing an alternate for taxicab, carpool, and food delivery services. The business is based on the use of contract drivers connecting to customers via a mobile phone application and website. The stated intent of Uber is to provide mobility and access for a reasonable cost to everyone. Some of the services provided include point-to-point transportation for individuals and group, the ability to join an existing carpool or commute with a driver traveling in the same direction for work, or ordering food for delivery from restaurants that do not provide delivery service. Uber also aids in providing additional income to contracted drivers, as a secondary or side job, and conducts background checks to ensure the safety of customers and drivers. As a technological company Uber is also researching and developing the field of driverless cars, beyond the current available options, and testing them for future implementation.

According to Uber they were founded in 2009 to solve a simple problem: “How do you get a ride at the push of a button?” (Uber, 2018). The story of Uber Technologies Incorporated begins on a snowy night in Paris, France in 2008 (Uber, 2018). The two founders, Garrett Camp and Travis Kalanick, were attending the annual technology conference LeWeb. The two were unable to get a taxi and thus mused about a simple way to order a ride. The initial concept was a for a timeshare limousine service and the idea stuck with Camp even after he returned from Paris. In 2009, Camp purchased the domain UberCab.com, worked on the concept as a side project, and convinced to Kalanick to join him on the development process (Blystone, 2017).

The company launched a beta test in New York City with an official launch in May 2010 in San Francisco, California. At debut the company focused on the ordering of luxury “black-car” service. The technology behind the company was simple yet disruptive. Utilizing the
mobile phone UberCab application the customer could order a ride with the tap of a button. The app would use the global positioning system (GPS) built into the mobile phone to calculate the cost of the trip from starting point to destination. If the cost was acceptable the customer could accept the ride and a charge would be made to their user account (Blystone, 2017).

In October 2010 encountered a stumbling block when they received a cease and desist order from the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency due to operating a taxi service outside the bounds of their agency. As result the company was quickly renamed “Uber.” At this time Uber began to spread rapidly to other cities including Chicago, New York City, Seattle, and Paris. Shortly thereafter Uber began to diversify into regular taxi service, bicycles, and food delivery. In 2016 alone Uber was estimated to have provided almost 170,000 a day in New York City (Dickey, 2016).

**Defined Problem**

Uber and their mobile application has been a disruptive technology to the traditional monopoly of taxicab companies. This has resulted in several legal challenges and similar brands launching in the last nine years. However, the main issues with Uber stem from organizational problems within the company originating with their top-level leadership and reaching down to their contracted drivers. The work culture at Uber Technologies was focused on a drive to create new achievements without concern for the toxic atmosphere and discrimination against women and minorities.

Uber’s unreasonable attitude was also reflected in their corporate response to political events and bad publicity. As a result it has negatively impacted the trust held by their customer base. In addition to those topics, even though Uber is present in multiple markets domestically and around the globe, Uber has yet to break even and create a profit. In its nine years of
existence Uber has lost over $10 billion United States dollars. To address these problems the author researched the experience of Uber employees, shared publicly or via lawsuit, and pondered what would be the ideal mechanisms to address the underlying administrative issues, improve their financial positioning, and renew employee and public trust in Uber as a company. Uber has to make an extensive effort to improve as a safe workplace.

This paper is a summary of research and recommendations that could be used to improve Uber Technologies as an organization and future public company. The summaries will be broken down into the following sections, Organizational Behavior, Financial Analysis and Planning, Strategic Management, and Multiculturalism. After these sections, there is a section dedicated to recommendations for Uber to overcome their current issues and progress as a company. Those recommendations will be divided between short term and long-term goals.

**Organizational Behavior**

Upon evaluation of Uber’s recent history it is easy to observe their tremendous failures in organizational behavior. In 2017 and 2018 there were two incendiary incidents that revealed the treatment of women and minorities at Uber corporate. In February 2017, Susan Fowler, a former engineer at Uber, wrote a blog post detailing her experience of working at Uber from November 2015 to December 2016. The anecdotes of her experiences at Uber consisted of stories of blatant sexual harassment, sabotage, and discrimination within the corporation to include on her very first day her manager blatantly propositioned her for sex via the company chat service (Fowler, 2017). After the discovery of multiple incidents of sexual harassment by that person several women in the company organized meetings with human resources to address the issues. The meetings resulted in human resources denying any of the allegations against the “high
performer” employee and illegally threatening Ms. Fowler with firing as retribution (Fowler, 2017).

Ms. Fowler also described the organizational culture and work environment at Uber as chaotic with such examples as managers deliberately sabotaging their own supervisors in attempts to acquire their jobs. Project were abandoned or given no guidance with insane deadlines, requirements could change day to day, and there were constant reorganizations. After continued blocking of her career advancement by her management team to include changing her evaluations without her knowledge, denying her transfers, and a blatant sexist decision to only purchase company coats for men only Ms. Fowler decided it was time to leave Uber. When she arrived at Uber women were 25% of the engineer force and when she left 3% remained (Fowler, 2017).

In May 2018, a former engineer, Ingrid Avendano, sued Uber alleging co-workers sexually harassed her multiple times during her employment with Uber and human resources failed to act or resolve her complaints. Ms. Avendano’s story is very similar to Ms. Flowers though she was with Uber for three years from 2014 to 2017. Even though she was praised for her work she was denied pay raises and promotions in retaliation for reporting the sexual harassment she experienced within the company. In one targeted incident, when Ms. Avendano was in attendance, an engineers alleged at a recruiting event that Uber was a company where women could sleep their way to the top. Nothing was done about her complaints by human resources and months later at several other events that same engineer directly claimed Avendano only got her job at Uber because she slept with someone. In another incidents a senior engineer touched her thighs at retreat and made repeated sexual advances and on separate incidents male co-workers often commented on her physical appearance (Wakabayashi, 2018).
The incident that led to Ms. Avendano departing from Uber was challenging the fact that Ms. Fowler’s harasser would not be punished. She went directly to Uber’s Chief Technology Officer to make clear they were creating a hostile work environment. She was reprimanded for “throwing senior officials under the bus” and denied any pay or advancement resulting in an abnormally low pay for her position according to human resources. Ms Avendano’s lawsuit alleges that Uber’s human resources failure to resolve her complaints displayed an entrenched disregard for the rights of women employees at Uber. She was previously one of three named plaintiffs in a class action suit against Uber over discriminatory practices in pay against minorities and women, which was settled for $10 million United States dollars. She opted out of the class action suit, to bring this separate lawsuit, as sexual harassment was not one of the primary issues addressed in it (Wakabayashi, 2018). However, in a step forward, a week prior to the announcement of Ms. Avendano’s lawsuit Uber removed the mandatory arbitration for customers, drivers, or employees who brought sexual assault or harassment claims against the company allowing for open court cases. In an effort to be more transparent Uber announced their intention to establish a database of such incidents. Uber also announced the removal of confidentially and non-disclosure agreement involving such cases (Griffith, van Esch, and Trittenbach, 2018).

Fred Luthans defines a positive organizational behavior as having five key dimensions: employee engagement, organizational commitment, job satisfaction, performance, well-being, and customer satisfaction (Kinicki, 2013). It was revealed in early 2017 that Uber was failing at all these categories. Ms. Fowler’s blog post served as a pseudo whistle-blower moment and wake up call for Uber regarding their organizational behavior.

Financial Analysis, Planning, and Control
Uber is not obligated to share their financial data but in recent years, due to the desire to go public, they have shared several quarterly and annual statements. Analysis of Uber’s financials can be difficult due to the limited information. The company had attracted almost $18 billion USD in investment and was valued at $65 billion USD in 2016. No technology firm has ever raised the amount of money Uber has from private investors before going public. The company Uber is tied to in China, Didi Chuxing, is also highly valued at $56 billion USD. In June 2010, Uber launched in San Francisco and four month later they were successful in closing out $1.25 million USD in seed funding via friends, First Round Capital, and Napster’s co-founder (Arrington, 2010).

At debut the company focused on the ordering of luxury “black-car” service. The cost of the UberCab black car service was less than the existing luxury car service market in San Francisco and allowed non-traditional users access to the service with cheaper vehicles. An UberCab would be almost two times less than a traditional taxicab service fee. Simply put UberCab would not be large enough to compete with the current taxi industry. Instead by placing the focus on offering an alternative to the luxury black car market to people who could not afford the regular black car services positioned UberCab in the role of an emerging disruptive innovator to that industry (Christensen, Raynor,& McDonald, 2017). UberCab was able to gain a foothold in the transportation industry was tackling that niche and introduction new technology.

The application allowed UberCab to develop a fleet of drivers they did not have to pay any maintenance for and connect them directly to consumers in a peer-to-peer platform. To assist with the initial development of the platform UberCab utilized a variety of campaigns to entice support. They hosted and sponsored technological events and included free UberCab rides for attendance. This ensured reaching one of their target populations: the technological early
adopter. In addition, in a practice that continues today, UberCab offered new riders 50% off their first UberCab ride (Uber, 2018). The technology behind the company was simple yet disruptive. The Uber platform as a whole based on the application did not directly maintain any drivers but connected consumers to providers similar to Amazon and eBay.

Shortly later in February 2011 Uber closed an $11 million Series A funding round led by Benchmark that placed the value of the company at $60 million USD after a mere eight months in operation (McAlone, 2015).

In 2011 successfully closed on a Series B round of funding, led by Amazon’s CEO and Goldman Sachs, securing $32 million USD. Uber was also valued at $330 million USD by the end of 2011 (Weber, 2015). By August 2013 Uber had moved to $3.75 billion USD valuation driven partially due to a Series C investment by Google Ventures and expansion to India and Africa. In mid 2014 Uber entered the market in China after raising 1.2 billion USD in another funding round (Weber, 2015). Uber’s company mid year valuation of $17 billion USD improved to $41 billion USD by the end of the year and another $1.2 billion USD round of fund raising to support plans for Asian expansion. The total include $600 million USD from Chinese search engine company Baidu.

Once it became apparent Uber would continue to lose million in battling with Didi Kuaidi in China an agreement was reached merging the companies and creating Didi Chuxing in 2016. Similarly Uber merged with its top Southeast Asia competitor Grab in 2018. However Uber remains both secretive and vague regarding financials. Today Uber operates in more than 425 cities in 72 countries with 30 million monthly users. However, the presentation of the data is focused in a way to attract additional investment without disclosing issues. For example, for 2017 Uber touted the fact Uber gross bookings through the application totaled over $37 billion
USD. However, Uber purposefully does not provide all the information required to place that in context. Most of that revenue went to the drivers and the company’s take was only $7.4 billion USD. Uber’s refusal to share more detailed financial information has directly resulted in investment banks, such as JP Morgan, discouraging their clientele from investing (Hall, 2016).

Uber continues to hemorrhage money at an astonishing rate. In nine years of existence and almost $18 billion USD in financing it is estimated that Uber has spent over $10 billion USD and has yet to generate profit. Uber uses different financial and accounting tools to present a favorable view of their finances. In view of the absence of complete reporting the actual financial positions of Uber may be far worse than discussed as a deeply in debt company unable to turn a profit due to the close margin for transportation costs. Even Amazon’s worse year only yielded a loss of $1.4 billion USD and resulted in the firing of 15% of their workforce (Nunez, 2016). Uber has yet to produce a profit or benefit from the years of financial investment. An open evaluation of the costs to the company to continue to subsidize the drivers and artificially lower the fare rate needs to be provided to future investors (Kortum, 2015).

**Strategic Management**

Strategic Management process, or Strategic Planning, can be divided up into three stages: Strategy Formulation, Strategy Implementation, and Strategy Evaluation. The evolution of Uber Technologies can be clearly viewed within the lens of the strategic management process. The initial phase, strategy formulation, focuses on developing the baseline of the company culture to create organizational buy-in from employees and determine the path forward. Some of the actions take in strategy formulation include developing a vision and mission statement, identifying an organization’s external opportunities and threats, determining internal strengths and weaknesses, establishing long-term objectives, generating multiple backup strategies and
plans, and determining the paths to develop and follow. Uber’s mission statement was originally “To Make Transportation as Reliable as Running Water, everywhere, for everyone” but on their website it has been updated to “To Bring Transportation – for everyone, everywhere.”

Some ideas generated during strategy formulation could involve determining new markets to enter or businesses to expand into. On that same note the determination to abandon certain markets or choose to follow a new plan of action would also fall within strategy formulation. Having a long-term plan of action with plans for expansion and diversity are major decisions and key to the foundation of any company (Pearson, 2014). Within the strategy formulation process UberCab looked at creating their own internal strengths such as developing from an unexploited niche of providing luxury car services to those who could not afford the more traditional options. At the same time they developed an application that allowed them to directly connect drivers and passengers and removed the cost of maintaining a fleet of vehicles. The application was particularly timely for the progression in the capabilities of smart phones. From UberCab’s viewpoint the initial short-term goals of their company were being however they sought to expand within the domestic and global markets they had identified shortly thereafter.

The second phase of the strategic management process is strategy implementation. The initial phase of strategy formulation focuses on the overall picture and long-term goals while the second phase is about executing those plans. In order to achieve those long-term plans it is necessary to establish short-term goals and check points. In that sense companies create annual objectives, develop projects to advance their strategy, create policies to manage their employees, and allocate resources to best support the company. The company is putting management and employees to work to take the steps necessary to implement and execute the strategy. During
this phase the vision and mission statement of the company along with positive leadership would be particularly effective at ensuring employee buy in and a willingness to sacrifice to achieve goals (Pearson, 2014).

In 2011 Uber, as a part of market expansion plans, launched operations in several domestic markets including New York, one of their biggest markets today, and expanded internationally to Paris, France. In 2012, Uber further expanded by launching a new service, UberX. UberX hired regular people to drive their own car, for the app, after a background check and meeting minimal vehicle requirements. UberX was 35% less expensive than their original luxury car service. However, until the application generated a high enough population of both drivers and customers the cost was much higher than using a taxi. The lack of drivers could result in a long wait but you could request a car with the click of a button and thus it became popular quickly (Hanson, 2016). UberCab, now Uber, was not the first company to utilize mobile applications and global positioning technology to allow for the ordering of car service but it was among the first and the most flexible. Other services had limitations such as only allowing taxi service as a bridge from another subscription, requiring consumers to pay a fee to order a taxi within their app but still having to pay the driver separately. By combining all of those options in a standalone application Uber saw great success.

As a part of Uber’s plans for long term diversification in transportation they stated they want to be the “Amazon of taxi services.” The idea is that Uber would expand into other forms of transportation industries and services. This diversification project began with the UberX expansion into traditional taxi cabs services and continued via the opening a number of services starting with Uber RUSH in 2012 and Uber POOL in 2014. UberRUSH was a bicycle delivery service with flat rates pending zoning. UberPOOL was a carpooling service that matched drivers
and workers traveling in the same direction (Ong, 2014). Shortly later in 2015 Uber Eats was launched allowing for customers to utilize Uber as an online food delivery service. Moreover, 2014 was also the year in which Uber reached cost parity with regular taxi services. They launched a large campaign in New York City announcing that an Uber cost less than a taxi ride. Much like Amazon, Uber is focused on keeping the prices low via subsidizing drivers and rapidly expanding their market share to grow to the point it is a valid alternative to car ownership (Uber, 2018).

The final phase of strategic management is strategy evaluation. After developing ideas and working to implement them results will not always be positive. Management needs to be able to effectively and efficiently evaluate the progress of small and large scale project as well as the companies’ momentum within markets and various businesses. Management needs to be prepared to change the ongoing course of action and redirect or reallocate resources into a more beneficial direction. The three fundamentals of strategy evaluation are reviewing internal and external factors to determine the effectiveness of the current strategy, measuring the level of performance, and making any necessary changes or taking corrective action (Pearson, 2014).

While Uber has shown great progress in the strategy formulation and implementation stages in moving the company forward toward stated goals they are lacking in the strategy evaluation realm. Today, Uber operates in more than 425 cities in 72 countries with 30 million monthly users. As mentioned earlier Uber announced they had $37 billion United States dollars through the application but the presentation of the data is focused in a way to attract additional investment without disclosing issues. Most of the revenue generated by the application went to the drivers and the company’s take was only $7.4 billion USD. Also although Uber took $7.4
billion United States Dollars off the booking they posted a loss of $4.5 billion United States Dollars for 2017 (Newcomer, 2018).

Some of the factors relating to this drain in funding is the method by which Uber forcibly keeps rates down and also subsidizes riders. By keeping their fares artificially low Uber can continue to contract business but their drivers suffer from a loss of potential wages and the company from additional avenues of income.

**Multiculturalism**

Upper management and your companies’ leadership must be personally responsible for diversity within the day-to-day operations of the company. Everyone within the companies’ leadership must be committed to inclusion and diversity. They must also buy into the personal responsibility necessary for the programs success. At times, management views diversity as a human resource matter. For a company in today’s competitive market, the only compelling advantage is the people within the company. To be successful in the business, it is imperative that the major interest within the companies’ leadership and employees is the importance of diversity to the success of the business as a whole. Leaders need to demonstrate what is required, have a strong vision, and hold everyone’s feet to the fire.

In March 2017, during Kalanick’s leave of absence, Uber released the diversity report detailing the structure of the company’s workforce and the challenges they faced in improving. They also stated that their previous intense hyper-masculine culture went too far and needed to be adjusted. They noted that top performers were promoted into managerial positions but received little to no training on their new roles. 63% of their management team had never held a leadership role. Among Uber’s 12,000 employees, 40% were Women, and African American and Hispanic employees make up about 15% of the company. In an attempt to alleviate some of the
identified issues Uber has launched several new effort to include a set baseline training for all their first time managers and program to recruit more Woman, Hispanics, and African Americans into employees from universities (Sharma, 2017).

To start the change in Uber from the top, former Expedia CEO, Dara Khosrowshahi, was selected by the Uber board of directors as the next CEO of Uber. Khosrowshahi has been viewed as an anti-Kalanick or “correction” for Kalanick’s errors maintaining Uber’s toxic culture of sexual harassment, abusive speech toward a driver, and actions regarding President Trump’s controversial immigration policy (Thompson, 2017). Khosrowshahi, an immigrant from Iran, has been a vocal critic on the current Administration’s policies while also being viewed as calm, friendly, and approachable in the business world (O’Kane, 2017).

Uber is making an effort to adopt new cultural norms and make long term changes to their human resources department, recruitment programs, and training for managers. However the toxic work culture that existed since the beginning of Uber was an issue that would take a long time to resolve. In Fall 2017 their new global head of Diversity and Inclusion, Bernard Coleman discussed the March 2017 diversity report and made these comments about Uber’s growth in an interview:

"When I arrived at Uber some eight months ago, I was eager to help drive [the company] as a leader, not only in ridesharing, but also as a forerunner in diversity and inclusion engagement. Through well-built and meaningful relationships both internally and externally, I’ve been able to advance programs and Uber's efforts while working in close collaboration with the many talented folks from the people program areas such as human resources, talent recruitment, analytics, marketing, communications, and branding to enhance [diversity and inclusion] throughout Uber.

Coleman came to Uber from Hilary Clinton’s Presidential campaign as the first ever chief of diversity and human resources officer for any presidential candidate. He spoke of enabling diversity and inclusion at Uber as a journey and not something that would happen overnight.
Based on the ideals developed with new CEO, Dara Khosrowshahi, and within the company Uber set two objectives as their focus:

1) To focus on inclusion Uber was making sure they were fostering an environment in which everyone is welcome—an Uber where we focus on inclusion that centers on both belongingness and uniqueness

2) Uber created a four pronged intersectional approach:

   - Individuals: We want employees to feel an increased sense of belonging at Uber.
   - Systems: We want to see a dramatic increase in diversity through every stage of the recruiting pipeline (not just top of-funnel) and ensure that all employees are supported.
   - Leadership: We want leaders at every level to understand why diversity and inclusion matters and amplify the message throughout Uber.
   - Citizenship: We want to be good corporate citizens and plant seeds that will yield meaningful benefits once we've achieved our goals.

With those long term goals Uber also pursued diversity events and engagement to improve their standing. Beyond that internally within the company Uber worked to reach pay parity for women and minorities who had likely been discriminated against in reviews (Brew, 2017). Oddly Coleman left the company shortly thereafter and a new chief of Diversity and Inclusion was hired in January 2018. Separately Uber has launched several programs to increase diversity among drivers. One of particular note is their ongoing drive to train and register women drivers in Saudi Arabia now that is legal for women to drive there.

In 2018, as part of the process to rebuilding their image, Khosrowshahi has given extensive interviews regarding the changes he would implement at Uber and also apologies to various entities regarding ethical issues regarding Uber. He created a new list of cultural values by soliciting ideas from the employees, including “We Celebrate Difference” and “We Always Do the Right Thing Period.” Khosrowshahi has also focused 2018 on driver and rider safety
such as including access to 911 in the Uber app and improving background checks.

Khosrowshahi summed all of his efforts, and his intentions going forward, at a speech titled “Reforming the Bro Chaos” to the Women of the World Summit (2018). Khosrowshahi identified the previous culture at Uber as one where power allowed one to do whatever they wanted. In May 2018, Uber also broadcast a series of commercial advertisements starring Khosrowshahi (Uber, 2018).

**Recommendations**

**Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threat (SWOT) Analysis**

For a SWOT analysis for strength Uber has shown itself flexible to set backs and continuing to move forward. Uber has taken what previously was an internal weakness, their toxic climate culture, and have made their efforts to improve it into and advertising campaign around their new chief executive officer. The implementation of a program to be diverse and fair, which should have been the standard, has been used to polish their image and attempt to remove the negative association. A perfect example would be that CEO Dana Khosrowshahi was asked at his speech “Reforming the Bro Chaos at Uber” if he would hire the original whistle blower, Susan Fowler, and he gave a resounding yes to applause (2018).

Another strength for Uber would be their well-known name and majority share of the domestic market. Uber has become a noun and a verb for the action of using a ride-sharing application. Uber also urges its use as an alternative for drivers who have consumed alcohol as a way to prevent drinking and driving. Programs working with Mother Against Drunk Driving to offer ride for drunk individuals on certain holidays are strengths that should be further promoted. A study has shown that the advent of UberX in California is related to a drop in a driving under the influence fatalities (Greenwood & Wattal, 2017). Uber has also positioned itself as an option
for increased mobility for the disabled. By providing additional transportation options people
would not be restricted by their inability to drive. A campaign on these two strengths would be
very positive for Uber’s public perception (Uber, 2018).

The situation with Uber’s new CEO Dana Khosrowshahi is also a weakness. The
reformation of their toxic climate culture is viewed as highly dependent on him as well as
preparing Uber for an initial public offering in 2019. If Khosrowshahi were to leave it would
have far reaching implications and be a major impact to Uber. Often news articles focus on
Khosrowshahi and his connections for future investment purposes, such as Warren Buffet, when
discussing Uber’s future bid at going public. As the company becomes more stable it would
ideal for Khosrowshahi to begin to withdraw from focus. Uber also has an ongoing issue on
determining if their drivers are contractors or regular employees who deserve benefits (Crank,
2016). They have already lost several court cases stating that the drivers are not just contractors
so that needs to be resolved (Ross, 2015).

Aside from the reforming of their toxic culture the continual losses in the billions of
United States dollars is another obvious weakness to be addressed. Uber still have not reached a
sustainable profit after ten years and has spent over half of the $18 billion United States dollars
in investment funding. For opportunities Uber may continue to their actions of mitigating threats
to their operations in foreign markets such as their merger with Didi Kuaidi and creating Didi
Chuxing in 2016. This allowed Uber to still receive a profit share of the market and support from
three of the biggest companies in China without continuing a losing battle.. Uber will likely
continue to leverage the name they have built globally to enter foreign markets and in areas
where the competition is too mature merge with their local competition. As shown within the
Grand Strategy Matrix launching joint ventures the action of a company with a strong
DEVELOPING A NEW WAY FORWARD FOR UBER

competitive position within the market (Pearson, 2014). Uber’s continued expansion into other ventures in transportation also provides them with several opportunities. For example with the recent revelation that many people are calling Uber for rides to the hospital, rather than take an ambulance, Uber intends to launch UberHEALTH to allow healthcare providers to book rides for their patients (Healthcare Financial Management, 2018).

The biggest threat to Uber is the same as their major weakness: Uber has yet to turn a profit and continues to lose money in the billions. The various domestic companies such as Lyft only take a small market share compared to Uber so their threat is minimal compared to the artificial pricing Uber created by subsidizing fares and driving down their profitability. Uber’s drivers can move work for other companies at the same time or give up their employment with Uber is it does not benefit them enough (Hall & Krueger, 2018). Uber can offer up their continued massive growth on a global scale to counter balance their inability to produce revenue but unless a clear vision of the current finances and plan for future growth are presented Uber may find itself losing its investors (King and Newcomer, 2018).

Short Term Goals

Short-term goals are ones that can be achieved quickly and provide some view of tangible change for the company. Uber has already implemented some short-term goals to show improvement in the company such as their two prong plan to focus on inclusion and use intersectional methods for their development approach. Also the development of new slogans for the corporate climate such as “We Celebrate Difference.” There are other avenues they can use as well.

Social Media Engagement
Historically Uber has been very slow in their response regarding public relations and engagement with the public. There has been some improvement in the last year but it still lags behind. Uber needs to become more actively engages on social media platforms such as Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, Facebook, and other emerging networks to provide a more immediate response to issues and be more flexible to problems. If Uber had a more active social media team to handle Twitter then they would have been able to respond to the #DeleteUber movement, due to their breaking of the New York Taxi Worker’s Alliance strike for John F. Kennedy International Airport over the Immigration Ban, much sooner than the next day.

**Bystander Intervention Training**

A program focused on training current employees on how to actively prevent and be aware of instances of discrimination, harassment, and threats to the well being of others would be highly appropriate. If focused on improving the general work climate and preventing the emergence of a toxic environment studies involving bystander intervention, regarding sexual assault, have shown positive results on college campuses, hospitals, and within the military (Banyard, Plante, and Moynihan, 2004).

The Green Dot Bystander Intervention trains personnel to be proactive in situations rather than being unequipped to intervene. Green Dot training also references creating a more positive environment. Conversations and behaviors that foster an unsafe and toxic work environment are identified as “red dots.” The bystander training teaches personnel to intervene and not let “red dot” actions occur unchallenged (Alteristic, 2018). The corporate culture at Uber would benefit from a similar bystander based intervention program that actively teaches tools to allow individuals to immediately challenge the toxic behavior that ran rampant at Uber (Cook, Millsbaugh, and etc, 2014). During the initial months after the resignation of former Uber CEO
Travis Kalanick the employees began launching focus groups to talk about the problem at Uber, to include misogynistic actions, and address them (Khosrowshahi, 2018). Bystander intervention training stems from the idea that violence, sexual or otherwise, is embedded in community and cultural norms. To change the environment that allows for such crimes there is a need for a community focused solution to change the social norms. To induce change it must occur on four levels: the individual, relational, community, and societal (Dalberg and Krug, 2002). Ms. Flowers and Ms. Avendano’s experiences at Uber are perfect examples of allowing a toxic culture to flourish without challenge. It requires accountability to improve the toxic workplace (Mattice and Lucas, 2017).

**Leadership Hiring and Training**

Uber continues to have several vacant upper level leadership positions. The hiring of qualified personnel to help lead the way to the future would portray an image of stability for the company. Anyone hired in a management or leadership role would also need to receive training on how manage personnel and ensure a safe work environment.

**Diversity**

In addition to training current employees to not engage in discriminatory behavior Uber has to continue its diversity recruitment drive and on a global scale. Beyond seeking women and minorities at standard technology focused universities Uber needs to also consider smaller schools that focus on their demographics. Uber has contributed $3 million United States dollars to science programs for youth to grow into engineers but there are accessible pools for hiring already available. Uber also needs to look at their current global employment structure and consider exchange programs to increase multiculturalism globally within the company.
Long Term Goals

There are two long term problems that cannot be fixed with immediate changes that Uber needs to focus on: 1) How to become a profitable model for the transportation industry and stop losing billions of dollars and 2) How to reconcile the issue related to Uber drivers being contractors or employees and what that means for their other employment options (such as being both Uber and Lyft drivers). Uber needs to do an honest assessment of what it costs for their services without the additional supplement the company provides. Driving down the rates only negatively effects their profit margin and the income of their contracted drivers. Similarly Uber continues to lose court cases related to the status of their drivers as contractors or employees. Uber needs to resolve this question and formalize the processes they have around drivers to protect the company from further damages. Both of these concerns are issues that should be considered within the realm of strategy evaluation and which Uber continues to fail at utilizing.

Conclusion

Uber is making an effort to adopt new cultural norms and make long term changes to their human resources department, recruitment programs, and training for managers. Uber has numerous challenges in their future from their plans to become profitable and go public to growing beyond the large shadows of their CEOs personalities. If they continue to take each issue and conduct strategy evaluation it will allow them to resolve issues before they become damaging to the company and scandals in the media. If not they will see a repeat of the terrifying impacts of 2017 again and again. Based on the steps taken by the Uber Board of Directors to have a third party evaluation of their organizational climate it seems likely that Uber will not fallback in the short term. It is only if they maintain this idea of organization improvement and growth that they will see a positive change for the future.
References


