

# [Ethical issues facing uber](https://assignbuster.com/ethical-issues-facing-uber/)

## Introduction

This report deals with UBER’s company profile, ethical dilemmas or issues facing the company and suggestions or recommendations from how to overcome these issues. This report also deals with how the company is becoming a safety hazard for the society, despite theincrease in demandfor their services as well as theaccusationsit is facing from all sides of society.

“ UBER Technologies Inc. is an Americanmultinational online transportation network company headquartered in SanFrancisco, California. It develops markets and operates the UBER mobile app, which allows consumers with Smartphone’s to submit a trip request which is thenrouted to UBER drivers who use their own cars. As of May 28, 2015, the servicewas available in 58 countries and 300 cities worldwide. Since UBER’s launch, several other companies have copied its business model, a trend that has cometo be referred to as “ UBERification”.”[1]

Despiteits increase in demand for the services, UBER is facing many law suits andprotests all over the world. UBER has been avoiding its responsibility towardssociety by neglecting its code of conduct and ethical code by participating inunethical practices. Its main goal is to expand and increase its market shareand ignoring its corporate responsibility.

UBER has been subjected to many law suits and ethical issues. The following are few of the ethical issues which are highlighted:

## Ethical issues

### Passenger Safety:

Accordingto New York Times, many UBER drivers have been convicted with sexual harassmentand sexually assaulting of the passengers.  One of the reasons for this is improperbackground checks of the UBER drivers. Also, there are no proper set criteriafor the requirements to become a driver and for the vehicle to be used bydrivers. Many cases have been filled against UBER drivers involving in unethicalpractices such as sexual harassment, rapes and sexual assaults and so on withthe passengers.  Other cases againstdrunk drivers driving UBER and misbehaving with passengers have also beenregistered in recent times. Some of the recent incidents are as following:

1. A passenger in Chicago accused an UBER driver of sexually assaulting her.
2. In Jan 2016, another case was filed in Chicago where an UBER driver was arrested for being suspect of kidnapping a drunken passenger and then taking her to a hotel for sexual assault.
3. In London, a case had been registered against a UBER driver who sexually harassed a woman and ask her to perform oral sex.

### Security of Drivers:

Recently many cases have been filed against the security of UBER’s drivers from passengers which include beating up of drivers, misbehaving with drivers and assaults of drivers etc. UBER is not taking proper actions for the security of its drivers. Many times, an UBER driver’s vehicle has been damaged by passengers but no proper responsibility has been taken by UBER for the protection of drivers. Some of the recent incidents relating to this are:

* On Nov 3, 2015, a drunken passenger in California assaults UBER driver over the weekend. Although the passenger lost his job as corporate manager at Taco Bell after the video was publicly released, UBER did not take any action to stop this kind of incident.
* Another recent incident happened on Jan 1, 2016 in Miami, when a Doctor in Florida aggressively attacked UBER driver. Some recorded the video of the incident and video got viral. Doctor was placed on administrative leave from hospital but nothing has been done from UBER’s side.

### Privacy

Recently, UBER hasbeen accused of keeping track of their customers with the help of smart phoneapp. The tracking system which the company is using to keep a track on itscustomers is called as ‘ God View’, with which they can access the customer’scontacts and send an advertisement about their services. One can argue that thepeople are monitored by police departments too. But there is a moraldifference. Police departments keep on track in order to maintain peace in thesociety whereas UBER is trying to expand its market range or businessinterests.

In June 2015, EPIC(Electronic Privacy Information Center), a non-profit organizationheadquartered at Washington D. C filed an official complaint on UBER about itsmisuse of customer’s privacy terms.[2]

### Recruitment and Unethical Conduct of Employees:

UBER is accused offollowing unethical recruitment and unethical behavior of its employees. UBERhas hired some employees as brand ambassadors and provided them with creditcards in order to create a duplicate account with its competitors and to luretheir drivers. This program is termed as SLOG (Supplying Long-term OperationsGrowth) by UBER.[3]

UBER has also beenaccused of unethical behavior of its employees. In UBER, employees areencouraged to book the competitor services and cancel the order once they getthe confirmation for the ride. The main competitor Lyft which is identifiablewith pink mustaches has released information that the UBER employees havebooked and cancelled approximately 5000 rides in time range of few months. Herethe competitor has to face double losses of less number of customers andunnecessary expenses on going to the pick-up, place only to turn back with nocustomer. Here the question of unethical behavior as well as violation of faircompetition laws arises.[4]

### Unethical leadership at UBER:

First, CEO of UBER, Travis Kalanick admits to trying to torpedo funding efforts of his biggestrival, Lyft. He was also quoted admitting that his company tried to talkinvestors out of raising money for Lyft. Second, CEO Kalanick has also referredto his company as “ Boob-er” by which he meant that running UBER has helped himmeet girls.

Bloomberg wasquoted by talking about the CEO as “ He can behave, gleefully, like a feral fratboy dreamed up by Ayn Rand; his mission statement runs to some variation of“ you know, push a button and get around San Francisco like ballers.”[5]Finally I would like to conclude by saying that if ethics start at the top, then tone at the top certainly matters a great deal. Kalanick clearly needssome help with what it means to be an ethical leader, setting an example forhis growing empire.

### UBER Poaching Competitor’s Drivers:

“ Independent contractorsfor UBER apparently use burner phones tied to dummy accounts, with instructionsto vary the locations from which they order car rides from their maincompetitor, Lyft. Once in the car, the contractors apparently try to figure outwhether drivers can be persuaded to switch loyalties to UBER, and in somemarkets can apparently offer them a sign-up kit on the spot. The latestdocuments shed new light on practices that Lyft has been complaining about itfor some time, including in a CNN Money report this month in which the companyclaimed that 177 UBER workers had ordered and canceled more than 5, 000 rides. That and other reports have framed those canceled rides as a form of sabotage. If someone orders a ride and then cancels it, it costs the driver the time, money and aggravation of going to the pick-up location to meet a rider whoisn’t there.”[6]

## Recommendations:

### Passenger’s Safety

Asthere are dozens of law suits filled over UBER’s passenger safety regarding thenumber of sexual harassments attempts over the passengers higher authorities inUBER should think of installing a new app that once opened in the time ofemergency during any assaults in the transit time that will send calls andmessages directly to the police control room or the any five relatives or thefriends of the passengers as a signal of some assaults taking place at thatvery time.

### Security of Drivers

Lotsof incidents have been reported about assaults over drivers like beating up ofdrivers, abusing and misbehaving etc. However the company failed to take anymeasure to ensure the security of the drivers. UBER should take necessaryactions for the assaults happening over the drivers like they should ask thedriver to install security cameras and a disclaimer is sent via messages to thecustomers when they book rides saying “ we value our customers, Assaults arepublic offenses, Violators will be prosecuted” and in case something wronghappens with the drivers UBER should take strict actions.

### Privacy Issues

Firstly, There should be certain laws over theUBER so that the company is limited to the type of data that it collects forexample payment information which is required by the company as a part oftravel information but beyond these categories the company should be able toshow or prove rights and reasonable comments over the collection of personaldata.

Secondly, UBER is required to delete all therecords of the customer that it requires at the time customers uses the UBERservices. For obvious reasons that once the ride is completed it should deletethe customer’s information.

UBER should really hire third party associates in order to verify the driver’s background check in order to ensure that further there are no more assaults from the drivers over the customers.

### Unethical conduct of employees

For UBER to sustain for longer term and to be in the competitionthey should think of practicing and implementing new strategies to increase thebusiness not by making fake accounts and to order fake rides from othercompetitors to decrease their business to make their own business moreprofitable. Such steps could be very harmful for long term business of acompany as these cases will increase the business risk in terms of customer’sroyalty.

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