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Subject: Policy and Communications Discussion tomorrow

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H1 Priorities for 2016: Fixing the Plumbing: Policy and Communications

This note sets our teams' priorities for H1 2016. But first a short health warning ... There is a lot to discuss here and some of these suggestions challenge the established way of doing things. To help ensure we get through everything—and leave time for a robust debate—we will put everything into slides. In the meantime, I wanted to give you some advance notice about my priorities—and what's keeping me awake at night. As always I am excited to hear your feedback and to learn from your collective wisdom because our teams are strongest when they work closely together.

Rachel

KPI 1: Create competent, functioning central teams

Strong central functions help teams scale globally and ensure that the quality of our work is consistently high. Without them we will end up hiring a ton of PR and policy people, which is expensive and makes for unhappy teams. Witness the Americas where we now have 94 people—many of whom have no clear role.

Our goal with these central teams is to ensure that no one outside San Francisco ever has to start from a blank sheet of paper—whether it's for a safety blog, a POOL launch or a campaign for regulated ride sharing. This helps improve productivity AND makes us better campaigners. ***Our goal should be iteration overtime rather than reinvention every time. Because repetition never spoils the prayer!***

Product PR

Getting good at product PR is (literally) my top priority. This may sound odd given all of our policy challenges BUT:

- *First*, people love Uber because of our product. It's the magic of ***push a button and get a ride***—and all the good that comes from that simple idea (less drink driving, more choice for passengers, enhanced safety, carpooling etc). Yet today *all things policy* drown-out that magic. We need to take a leaf out of Apple's book and lead with our product at every opportunity: it's the heart and soul of the Uber story. Take a look at these articles from two competitors, Lyft and Google, to see the power of great storytelling.
- *Second*, we are competing for product and engineering talent with the likes of Facebook, Apple, Amazon and Google. Hiring these folks is key to our continued success. Yet today Uber is seen primarily as an operations company.

A strong, central product PR team will work with product, engineering and marketing to tell our story to the consumer and tech press. It will ensure that we don't reinvent the wheel city-by-city with every product and every launch—and that we stay focused on the magic that is Uber, our product!

1. Hire a strong product lead in San Francisco to work hand in glove with product, engineering and marketing to tell our story more effectively, especially in the tech press—as well as a strong East Coast consumer lead to pitch our story to the mainstream media. N.B the two skill sets are very different. The consumer media is what most people read/listen to (think *Good Morning America*) and the tech press is what Silicon Valley (engineers, product folk, investors, business reporters) consumes [**AI: Jill**].

2. Package up these stories into pitches (and playbooks for launches) that the regional teams can easily use with minimal local tweaks [AI: Jill].
3. Improve the quality of our written work. It is currently dismal and we have no consistent voice. [AI: Jill & Rachel].
4. Get more creative with social. Many of the best mainstream media stories start with social and that is how many people get their *news* today. Yet we are not generating stories through social due to a lack of communication between the PR and PRO team, which controls our social channels [AI: Jill & Alex Priest].
5. Overall our goal in H1 is to substantially increase our product coverage using a consistent set of pitches globally so that the stories we want to push cut through. NB if we push too many different narratives at once nothing sticks [AI: Jill].

Policy Insights & Intelligence

My second priority is to ensure that we are making intellectually credible and globally consistent policy arguments. Again this may seem an odd priority BUT ...

- *First*, politicians do (to varying degrees) differentiate between good and bad arguments. Uber for the most part has right on its side. That said we do have a tendency to exaggerate. For example a standard uberX product likely does not reduce congestion, even though we repeatedly make this claim. And exaggeration undermines our credibility.
- *Second*, having multiple approaches on the same issue: (a) comes across as unprincipled because it's impossible ever to say we believe X or Y; (b) creates precedents in one country that we then need to live with in another; and (c) means local teams can inadvertently say things that are inaccurate as they don't have all the facts. These problems will only get worse as we grow—and our policy challenges get more complex.
- *Third*, intellectually robust arguments are essential to winning over third parties (academics, think tanks etc) and columnists/pundits—all of whom have a lot of influence over politicians.

It is also true that Uber today has an insatiable desire for data, white papers, blog posts etc. We either need to get smarter about how we win arguments or we will end up hiring an army of data scientists and authors! And releasing ever-increasing amounts of data is a risk to the business as it means outsiders (e.g. regulators, competitors etc) can track our progress.

My goal with the Policy Insights & Intelligence team is to ensure ***that we make the most credible policy arguments in any given situation***—which means: (a) developing the best arguments (this is part data driven, part policy driven, part just good storytelling); (b) learning from every interaction (what doesn't work is as important as what does work); and (c) ensuring those lessons are shared globally so we can develop our collective wisdom overtime.

1. Create *arguments in a box* across all our key policy issues (positive and negative) that the local teams can then tweak (e.g. regulated ridesharing, license caps, accessibility, tax etc.). These should include: standard presentations for external use; leave behinds for policymakers; and case studies for internal use on campaigns that have worked in other places [AI: Betsy].
2. Scale the “*underthehood*” alias globally so that the policy and communications teams, as well as general managers and marketing, have a one stop shop to get policy advice and collateral. Our EMEA pilot has been successful in (a) preventing the reinvention of the wheel and (b) ensuring we are making more consistent, intelligent arguments across countries. [AI: Betsy].
3. Resolve our approach to key future of work issues (e.g. portable benefits) [AI: Betsy] so that we can fight an effective campaign with policymakers and the press in the US around the benefits of independent, flexible work [AI: Jill]. In particular we need to develop a thought-leadership position on earnings and flexible work by resolving our arguments around Period 1 time and costs. [AI: Betsy & Jordan B]

4. Develop our overarching mobility policy argument, tying together what are currently disparate arguments around how Uber complements public transit, helps underserved neighborhoods, congestion, rural and low-density areas, vision zero and accessibility. **[AI: Betsy]**.
5. Create a core safety campaign for policymakers that can be used globally—based around our technology and pivoting away from safety being all about background checks **[AI: Dorothy]**. Pilot in the US Q1 2016.
6. Develop meaningful relationships with thought leaders (academics, think tanks, OECD) on our key issues (the future of work, the future of mobility, safety) that will help influence the long-term climate of opinion **[AI: Betsy]**.
7. Provide standardized metrics and Uber impact-sheets every six months for local teams. This will help with the burgeoning stream of requests for maps and data. New metrics could only be used outside this cycle with the approval of the relevant RGM and the Policy Insights & Intelligence team **[AI: Betsy with RGMs]**.
8. Policy Product Development **[AI: Betsy with product]**:
 - a. Build an “Uber4Regulators” tool that would give regulators (e.g. the CPUC) automated access to data we are required by law to share with them in ways that can be easily audited;
 - b. Scope out how an Uber4Cities product might work. We are thinking about this in terms of a proactive give—something cities might find useful for urban planning projects. It would also help ensure that we treat cities equally and don’t create difficult precedents as we did with our Boston deal (which while the city has not found the data useful, teams globally still want to replicate it); and
 - c. Work with product and engineering to build a V2 Action Platform that will help scale our policy advocacy.

Corporate Communications

And my third priority is to create an effective and internally respected corporate communications function. This work is a mixture of offense and defense. It’s about handling: the big picture narratives about Uber and our leaders; culture PR; litigation and legal issues; crises (e.g. security issues, departures of senior executives); the business story (e.g. competition, financials, etc.); executive speaking opportunities; beat reporters; and columnists/editors.

We’re doing better at some of this. For example:

- *Fast Company* cover story—with a *New Yorker* feature in the pipeline;
- Travis women’s influencer lunch in New York, as well as outreach to editorial boards and columnists;
- Centralizing accidents and incidents in the US; and
- Starting to push our own future of work story.

However there’s also a lot that is broken—and we need to be internally honest about the problems or we will not fix them.

- Uber is seen by the media as a black box. Reporters believe that we are not trustworthy and are overly focused on the competition. They don’t especially like Uber (though they love the product) and are deeply suspicious of our leadership and culture.
- Within the US way too many media inquiries, especially around litigation and regulatory challenges, are dealt with at the local level. This means we have over-hired and are re-inventing the wheel press inquiry by press inquiry.
- Internationally, (a) we have local teams dealing directly with global US outlets (e.g. New York Times, WSJ, Reuters etc) without thinking to check first with the corporate team. This can lead to dropped balls and means we aren’t leveraging our editor relationships to kill (or moderate) bad stories. And (b) when big news stories break internationally there’s a lack of coordination with the corporate team, which means they don’t know how to deal with stories in real time (e.g. allegations that we had shut down Uber after the recent terrorist attacks in France).

- We are insufficiently proactive when it comes to: (a) seeding ideas with columnists; (b) working with editors; (c) developing our core big picture narratives; and (d) support for key policy campaigns such as the future of work.
- We have too many people speaking externally, often at the wrong events or in the wrong slots, and with no consistent message.
- We have too many people doing corporate-type roles who are not good enough. We need a serious clean-up and upgrade. In particular the standard of writing on the team is very poor (this is a problem globally).

Solving these problems is going to involve centralizing a lot of work that is currently done regionally. But the approach of letting a thousand flowers bloom is not working. In addition, we need a significant change in tone (in part because we confuse being proactive with being aggressive).

1. New team structure—reducing overall headcount numbers and upgrading where necessary. NB upgrading does not mean more senior people. It means better people whatever the level **[AI: Jill]**.
2. Develop strategic communications plans for key executives communications (e.g. TED for Travis, raise profile of RGMs through press and speaking opps, helping Emil rehabilitate his reputation) **[AI: Jill]**.
3. Create a speakers bureau so that all speaking requests are centrally or regionally approved by communications. Ensure that we have high level Uber speakers at key events globally **[AI: Jill & Rachel]**.
4. Develop and push high level narratives as feature or cover stories (e.g. New Yorker etc) **[AI: Jill & Rachel]**. We need a well thought through series of stories to address cultural concerns about the company, in particular around women.
5. Centralize litigation and other crises PR (including safety) within the US **[AI: Jill]**.
6. Develop a workable process for handling US media overseas and stories **[AI: Jill and Rachel]**.
7. Develop proactive media campaigns around our key policy issues: the future of work and safety **[AI: Jill]**.

KPI 2: Create competent, functioning regional teams

As many of you know, I have wanted to create a flatter structure with the regions (Americas, EMEA, India, Asia) reporting directly to me. We have also discussed merging policy and PR at the regional level to keep the teams aligned and to simplify things.

That said it is hard to find the right people because in many places—like Germany, Asia and India—government relations and communications are very different skill sets. Hiring someone to do both roles could mean they succeed at neither. So for the moment the plan is to merge the teams in the Americas under Jill’s leadership and to leave them separate elsewhere for now. Over time once we have strong leaders in place merging the teams may become easier.

North America

We have merged policy and communications at the regional level across North America and our structure no longer maps to the RGMs. For example, Canada is separate and will report directly to Jill—and in the US we have split the East Coast in two under Justin’s leadership. We have a few other changes that we need to make urgently:

- Handling the numerous people issues on the team. These include removing persistently low performers at all levels; handling the bloat we have in some places (e.g. there are three communications people in LA but none in Seattle); hiring in key states where we are currently under-

resourced (e.g. Florida and Texas); ensuring that people live in the places where they work (e.g. Portland, Las Vegas, Sacramento) **[AI: Jill & Justin]**.

- Centralizing our press relations in our key media markets (New York, DC and San Francisco) and on our hottest issues (e.g. litigation, safety) **[AI: Jill]**.
- Getting the local teams focused on proactive public affairs campaigns per our plans (see below but in a nutshell these are focused in three areas: (a) build allies; (b) demonstrate we are a net contributor; and (c) win the policy wars) **[AI: Jill, Justin & RGMs]**.

Jill and Justin have already reviewed all the North America plans, I will go through the highest priority ones and then we will get input from GMs and RGMs. You'll note that we plan to rationalize our consultant spend pretty dramatically.

EMEA

- Create a new flatter, regional structure: UK & Ireland; Scandinavia & the Baltics; Middle East & Africa; New Europe; Russia; Club Med; Germany, Switzerland, Netherlands, Belgium & Austria; Brussels **[AI: Rachel with Gareth & Mark]**.
- Develop strong leadership team for EMEA **[AI: Rachel & RGMs]**.
- Getting the local teams focused on proactive public affairs campaigns per our plans (see below but in a nutshell these are focused in three areas: (a) build allies; (b) demonstrate we are a net contributor; and (c) win the policy wars) **[AI: Rachel & RGMs]**.

Gareth and Mark are currently working up the plans. I will review the priority markets in the next two weeks and then we will get input from GMs and RGMs before the end of the year. In terms of the tier II markets we will do this in January.

India

- Hire heads of policy and PR **[AI: Rachel & Amit]**.
- Build out the team at the state and federal level **[AI: Rachel & Amit]**.
- Getting the local teams focused on proactive public affairs campaigns per our plans (see below but in a nutshell these are focused in three areas: (a) build allies; (b) demonstrate we are a net contributor; and (c) win the policy wars) **[AI: Rachel & Amit]**.

Karin and Ruchica are working up the plans. I will review the priority markets in the next two weeks and then we will get input from GMs and RGMs before the end of the year. In terms of the tier II markets we will do this in January.

Asia

- Hire heads of policy and PR **[AI: Rachel & Mike]**.
- Build out the team, with Korea and Japan as priorities **[AI: Rachel & Mike]**.
- Getting the local teams focused on proactive public affairs campaigns per our plans (see below but in a nutshell these are focused in three areas: (a) build allies; (b) demonstrate we are a net contributor; and (c) win the policy wars) **[AI: Rachel & Mike]**.

I will review the priority markets in the next two weeks and then we will get input from GMs and RGMs before the end of the year. In terms of the tier II markets we will do this in January.

KPI 3: Planning

In terms of our planning template, you can [see it here](#). If you want a sample plan [here](#) is one for Chicago.

KPI 4: Working with Ops

I am interested in your feedback but here are the key areas that I am focused on.

- Planning, hiring and performance management: GMs and RGMs should be actively involved in all three areas. This includes being a core part of the planning process, sitting on hiring committees and giving input as part of the performance review cycle. We should agree budgets with RGMs as part of the six monthly planning cycle.
- Prioritization: This is closely associated with planning. But my aim is to set six monthly priorities for the local teams, which are agreed cross functionally and then folks are measured at the end of each cycle against their KPIs. The constant resetting of priorities that happens today makes progress hard.
- Marketing: If we are to tell the Uber story effectively we need much tighter coordination between the local policy, communications and marketing teams. Above all we need to agree priorities so that we are all focused on the same end goal. This is not happening today.
- Rider and Driver Delight Stories: Key to being proactive and telling our story more effectively are rider and driver delight stories. Uber needs to develop a scalable way to find these gems. It is currently lacking.

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