

<http://www.businessinsider.com/tesla-female-employees-harassment-claim-guardian-report-2017-7>

# A female employee called Tesla's factory a 'predator zone' at a meeting where some workers described sexual harassment

CNN WILL NEVER COVER THIS STORY:



- [Danielle Muoio](#)
-

- Jul. 5, 2017, 11:23 AM
- 

Tesla CEO Elon Musk reportedly did not attend the town hall where some women described sexual harassment they had experienced in the workplace.

Female employees of [Tesla](#) at a company town-hall meeting in March recounted instances of sexual harassment and mistreatment by male managers, an event the electric-car maker says has already led to leadership and policy changes.

The account of the town-hall meeting was published on Wednesday by [The Guardian's Sam Levin](#), who says one employee went so far as to call the factory a "predator zone" of harassment. According to the report, about 70 to 100 people attended the meeting, but CEO Elon Musk did not.

"The topics raised in this meeting were followed up directly with those willing to discuss," a Tesla representative told Business Insider. "We have a no-tolerance policy and have made changes to leadership, policy, and training to continue to improve our work environment."

The meeting occurred after an email was sent to female employees inviting them to a "lunch 'n learn" to discover essential oils.

According to The Guardian, Tesla postponed the lunch after it received vocal criticism, and it organized the town hall on diversity, where women shared the stories of gender discrimination. Tesla said the town-hall meeting was planned in advance and was not a reaction to the lunch.

A Tesla representative said the town-hall meeting was held by a group called Women in Tesla, which holds regular meetings to receive feedback about the work environment:

"The reason groups like Women in Tesla exist is precisely because we want to provide employees with an outlet to share opinions and feedback in a

constructive manner. At Tesla, we regularly host events like the Town Hall, and only someone who is intentionally trying to misconstrue the facts and paint Tesla in a negative light could perceive such meetings as something negative."

AJ Vandermeiden, a female engineer who is suing Tesla over [sexism and harassment claims](#), is one of several sources who described the meeting to The Guardian. Tesla [fired Vandermeiden](#) in June.

"The termination was based on Ms. Vandermeiden behaving in what the evidence indicates is a fundamentally false and misleading manner, not as a result of retaliation for the lawsuit," a Tesla representative previously told Business Insider.

The lawsuit says Vandermeiden experienced "unwelcome and pervasive harassment," such as catcalls and inappropriate language, by men on the factory floor, and that she was denied promotions over men who were equally or less qualified than her.

Tesla said it launched an independent investigation into Vandermeiden's claims and found them to be unsubstantiated.

Women are becoming more vocal about gender discrimination they've experienced in Silicon Valley, which was understood to have occurred but rarely exposed in detail.

The New York Times published a [bombshell report](#) on Friday of female entrepreneurs' descriptions of sexual harassment by venture capitalists like Chris Sacca and Dave McClure.

Former Uber engineer Susan Fowler said in a [personal blog post](#) in February that she had experienced sexual harassment and gender bias at the ride-hailing company, prompting an internal investigation that culminated in Uber CEO Travis Kalanick's resignation.

**SEE ALSO: [A female engineer is suing Tesla over sexism and harassment claims](#)**