Sam Altman fired as CEO of OpenAI

Sam Altman has been fired as CEO of OpenAI, the company announced on Friday.

“Mr. Altman’s departure follows a deliberative review process by the board, which concluded that he was not consistently candid in his communications with the board, hindering its ability to exercise its responsibilities,” the company said in its blog post. “The board no longer has confidence in his ability to continue leading OpenAI.”

Chief technology officer Mira Murati will be the interim CEO, effective immediately. The company will be conducting a search for a permanent CEO successor. When contacted by *The Verge*, OpenAI’s communications department declined to comment beyond the blog post. Employees at OpenAI found out about the news when it was announced publicly, according to multiple sources.

“I loved my time at OpenAI,” Altman said in a post on X (formerly Twitter). “It was transformative for me personally, and hopefully the world a little bit.” In a follow-up post, he described the experience of his firing as “sorta like reading your own eulogy while you’re still alive.”

OpenAI’s announcement also said that co-founder and president Greg Brockman will be stepping down as chairman of the board but remain at the company. Hours after it was published, Brockman posted to X that he had quit “based on today’s news.”

Later, in another post on X, Brockman said he and Altman were both notified of their removal from the board on Friday by OpenAI co-founder and chief scientist Ilya Sutskever, who is

also a board member. “Sam and I are shocked and saddened by what the board did today,” Brockman wrote.

This is an extremely sudden turn of events. Altman has been the face of OpenAI, which kick-started the current AI arms race with last year’s hugely popular release of ChatGPT. Just last week, Altman led the keynote at the company’s first-ever DevDay conference, where it announced a suite of major new updates to compete with other big tech companies like Microsoft and Google. More recently, Altman spoke at Thursday’s Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation conference.

Microsoft, which has invested billions in OpenAI, tells *The Verge* it will continue to partner with the company. “We have a long-term partnership with OpenAI and Microsoft remains committed to Mira and their team as we bring this next era of AI to our customers,” according to a statement sent by Microsoft spokesperson Frank Shaw. Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella made a similar statement on X.

Altman has reportedly talked with Jony Ive, Apple’s former chief design officer, about making the “iPhone of artificial intelligence,” though Altman downplayed those rumors at a recent *Wall Street Journal* conference. He’s also the biggest shareholder in Humane, which just launched orders for its Humane AI Pin.

Altman is a co-founder of OpenAI and initially served as a co-chair of the company alongside Elon Musk. Musk left in 2018 to avoid a conflict of interest with Tesla. He has since founded his own AI company, xAI.

Unlike traditional private company boards, OpenAI’s board consists mostly of outsiders. After Altman and Brockman’s departures, its remaining board members are the company’s chief scientist, Ilya Sutskever, Quora CEO Adam D’Angelo, Tasha McCauley, the former CEO of GeoSim Systems, and Helen Toner, the director of strategy at Georgetown’s Center for

Security and Emerging Technology.

Tom Warren contributed reporting.

***Update November 17th, 6:46PM ET**: Added X posts from Sam Altman and Satya Nadella.*

***Update November 17th, 7:29PM ET**: Added X post from Greg Brockman and additional details.*

***Update November 17th, 12:27AM ET**: Added more details about the removal of Greg Brockman and Sam Altman from the board.*

https://www.theverge.com/2023/11/17/23965982/openai-ceo-sam-altman-fired