

Tesla's vice president of business development leaves

- Diarmuid O'Connell spent 11 years at Tesla.
- Several higher-level Tesla employees have left the company in the last few months.

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CNBC.com

CORRUPT TESLA MOTORS FALLS INTO A PIT



David McNew | Getty Images

Elon Musk

[Tesla's](#) vice president of business development is leaving the company.

Diarmuid O'Connell spent 11 years at the firm. The news reported earlier Wednesday by Reuters was confirmed by CNBC.

"For more than 11 years, Diarmuid has played an important role in helping Tesla grow from a small startup to a company with a presence around the world," Tesla wrote in a statement to CNBC. "He started with Tesla before the rollout of Roadster, and now that we've reached the launch of Model 3, he felt the time was right to move on and spend more time with his family."

This is another of several departures at the California electric-car maker over the last several months, a critical time for the company. Tesla recently launched a more affordable electric sedan meant to broaden its customer base and help it meet the goal of going from about 80,000 cars produced in 2016 to producing 500,000 in 2018. The company recently merged with a closely related solar power company, SolarCity.

Chief Financial Officer Jason Wheeler left the company at the beginning of the year, and former CFO Deepak Ahuja stepped back in to take his place.

Also this year, Chris Lattner, who had come from Apple to join Tesla's Autopilot division, left the job after only six months. In December, the director of Autopilot, Sterling Anderson, left Tesla to form a competing start-up with former [Google](#) employee Chris Urmson. Tesla [filed a lawsuit against Anderson](#) for allegedly poaching employees and walking off with secrets, [which it later settled](#).



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