

Losing Money to Become a Tycoon: Starting with Games

Chapter 468: Tengda Group Cornerstone Award

March 25th, Friday.

These past two days, President Pei has been very busy.

Every time it came to the final week before settlement, Pei Qian would enter a state of emergency spending.

Although the GOG season bonuses, Fright Hostel investment, and frequent celebratory banquets by employees had already eliminated most of the financial burden for this cycle, there were still some finishing tasks left to handle.

During this period, Pei Qian was busy dealing with these matters.

First were the most basic expenses such as employee salaries and benefits. Based on the reputation of each project on the TPDb website, bonuses were issued where needed, base salaries were increased where possible, and everything that could be improved was pushed up as much as possible.

Of course, this was only the statistical phase—actual salaries and bonuses would still need to go through procedures and would only be issued at the end of the month.

After that, many projects carried out extremely aggressive promotional campaigns.

For example, Moyu Internet Café, ROF PC assembly services, Top Student, Come Quickly, Against the Wind Logistics, Terminal Chinese Web, and others—all engaged in controlled “burn money” activities within system limits.

On the surface, it looked like spending money to gain popularity, but in reality, it was purely for burning money.

At this point, Pei Qian realized the benefits of having projects that had become popular.

Take Moyu Internet Café for example. Originally, the plan was to pursue a high-price strategy to discourage customers as much as possible and ensure losses.

But after a series of miraculous developments, even the Moyu Internet Café in Lin City was now completely packed...

The original idea of “discouraging customers to increase losses” had already been completely overturned.

But at this point, Pei Qian realized—this was exactly the time to run promotions.

Normally maintaining standard prices already resulted in full occupancy. That meant even if he spent money on discounts, there was no room for customer growth anyway.

So spending money at this stage was pure loss-making expenditure!

Moreover, once a project became profitable, the system's restrictions on "spending money for popularity" became much looser, even showing some tolerance—or even encouragement—for this kind of "slow poisoning strategy."

Obviously, such behavior could have side effects, like further increasing the project's popularity.

But for Pei Qian, who had already tasted the "sweetness" of this so-called slow poisoning strategy, this was hardly a concern.

Last settlement period, he had already gone through a big round of losses. At the time, he had worried that the current cycle would be especially difficult.

But in reality, although it was somewhat difficult, he still managed to get through it using his own intelligence—and was now very close to safely reaching settlement.

Well... actually, it was probably too early to say that. Better not flag it.

In any case, all the emergency spending had been arranged. The current cash flow situation was healthy, and another round of funds would arrive next week. At that point, everything would be spent directly on GOG season bonuses and employee benefits, and then he could calmly wait for settlement.

Pei Qian looked at the clock—2:50 PM.

It was about time.

At this moment, outside President Pei's office on the 16th floor of Shenhua Prestige, quite a number of people had already gathered.

They were all heads of various departments within Tengda Group.

They had only received a notice that there would be a short meeting at 3:00 PM, but no one seemed to know the exact content.

Except for a few managers directly involved in the preparation process.

But those managers were all tightly keeping silent and would not reveal anything.

By now, all employees of Tengda Group—from top executives to frontline staff—had developed a tacit understanding of the Tengda Group spirit: unconditionally completing President Pei's instructions without asking unnecessary questions. If President Pei required secrecy, everyone would do their utmost to ensure absolute confidentiality.

Because no one could be sure what deeper meaning President Pei might have, they were all afraid of messing things up and losing his trust. The safest approach was simply to listen obediently and do whatever President Pei said.

Of course, as for what these people were actually thinking in their heads—and what wild interpretations they were making—that was another matter.

They would follow everything President Pei said without question, except for one thing: if President Pei told them not to overthink, that was absolutely impossible.

As it approached 3 o'clock, President Pei walked out of his office.

Everyone was already seated in the conference room waiting for the meeting.

Pei Qian also sat down at the conference table. After glancing around, he got straight to the point:

“Today, I will be presenting a new award to an outstanding department within Tengda Group.”

“In the future, this award will be given out irregularly. The timing depends entirely on me.”

“When I find a department that meets the criteria for this award, I will immediately call a meeting to present it.”

Hearing this, the department heads all showed pleasantly surprised expressions.

Another award?

Weren't there already enough rewards?

Everyone already felt that the internal benefits were so generous that other companies would be jealous. Every department member received additional monthly bonuses based on TPDb ratings, salary increases were frequent, and on top of that, there were two annual “jackpot draws” to reward outstanding employees. There were even monthly “no overtime competitions,” with winning departments receiving recognition.

And now there was going to be another award specifically for outstanding departments?

This was... incredibly exciting!

Several department heads who thought they might have a chance immediately straightened up.

For example, Huang Sibao, Lin Wan, Chang You, Hu Xianbin, He Desheng, and others.

Pei Qian looked at them—and felt a pang in his heart.

From the perspective of making money and “backstabbing” me, you people really do deserve an award.

But unfortunately, none of you are getting it.

Pei Qian took the trophy from Assistant Xin. A dazzling golden light immediately blinded everyone’s “pay-to-win dog eyes.”

The entire trophy was golden.

No doubt about it—it was pure gold.

The shape of the trophy was a mountain, though somewhat abstract and artistically stylized.

On the base was a small inscription:

“Tengda Group Cornerstone Award.”

On the golden mountain itself were two vertical lines of traditional Chinese calligraphy, written with flowing, powerful brushstrokes—clearly the work of a skilled calligrapher:

“Though the golden mountain has gaps, its height remains undiminished;

The sea of wealth has no end, and its erosion only deepens.”

These two lines had been carefully thought out by Pei Qian and commissioned from a local Jingzhou calligrapher. The writing was then scanned and engraved onto the trophy.

Why go to such trouble?

Because he was worried the award might produce the opposite effect.

Pei Qian had already decided that this trophy would be given to the department with the greatest losses.

But if handled poorly, it might backfire—making the losing department think President Pei was encouraging them, pushing them to try even harder to turn losses into profits.

That would completely ruin everything.

So it absolutely could not be misunderstood.

This award was not some indirect encouragement at all—it was a pure, wholehearted, completely unreserved praise!

It was meant to encourage them to lose money!

Of course, it couldn't be said so directly. So Pei Qian engraved these words as a subtle hint that the only criterion for this award was how much money a department had lost.

“Golden mountain” and “sea of wealth” both symbolized riches. The meaning of the two lines together was: money is endless, so what's the point of chasing it? Your losses don't matter to Tengda Group—in fact, they are beneficial. So please, keep increasing the effort!

Pei Qian felt the message was already very clear. Anyone with even a little cultural understanding should be able to understand it.

At this moment, the department heads looked at the “golden mountain” and showed surprised expressions.

This award... seemed to have even more prestige than “Best Employee”?

Because the trophy was custom-made, engraved with text, and personally awarded by President Pei, its significance was immense.

Pei Qian cleared his throat and spoke solemnly:

“Today, I am presenting the Tengda Group Cornerstone Award!”

“As everyone knows, Tengda Group has many highly profitable departments, but there are also many departments that have been operating at a loss. I believe that loss-making departments should also receive recognition!”

“The Tengda Group Cornerstone Award is specifically given to those departments that continuously operate at a loss, because only such

departments are worthy of being called the ‘cornerstones’ of Tengda Group!”

“I hereby announce that the winner of this Tengda Group Cornerstone Award is—Against the Wind Logistics!”

Pei Qian stood up, smiling, and gestured toward Lu Mingliang, signaling him to come up and receive the award.

Lu Mingliang froze for a moment, seemingly not expecting the award to actually go to him.

The other department heads also froze briefly, but quickly reacted. The conference room erupted in warm applause.

Although they were confused, it was still President Pei presenting the award, and Lu Mingliang receiving it—so applause was only proper.

Lu Mingliang stood up, slightly bowed, and accepted the heavy trophy from President Pei. Just as he was about to say something like “I don’t deserve this,” Pei Qian interrupted him with a smile:

“No need for a speech. Your contributions are all quietly remembered by every Tengda employee.”

Lu Mingliang returned to his seat holding the trophy, still looking confused.

The reason Pei Qian stopped him was mainly to prevent phrases like “I don’t deserve this” or “we will strive harder to turn losses into profits,” which would ruin the carefully crafted atmosphere.

Seeing the other department heads becoming visibly envious, Pei Qian smiled and continued:

“In addition to this trophy, there are other rewards.”

“All employees of Against the Wind Logistics will each receive a 2,000 yuan Tengda Group Cornerstone Award bonus and a ‘Koi Medal.’ In addition, Against the Wind Logistics will also receive 30 OTTO E1 phones, to be awarded to employees who have made outstanding contributions within the department!”

As soon as these words were spoken, the other department heads became even more envious.

These benefits were simply too good!

Setting aside the 2,000 yuan bonus, there was also a “Koi Medal”? And 30 E1 phones?

For Tengda employees, cash bonuses were not the most attractive part. It was the honorary rewards—especially those personally issued by President Pei—that had tremendous appeal.

Pei Qian glanced over the clearly “lemon-filled” expressions of the department heads and couldn’t help but smile.

Clearly, they were getting anxious.

These departments all believed they contributed greatly to Tengda Group—mainly in terms of profit-making.

But President Pei had just defined the Cornerstone Award as being specifically for loss-making departments.

How could anyone accept that logic?

“Exactly—don’t accept it!”

“Be jealous, be envious, feel unbalanced—go ahead and try to create losses yourselves!”

“If all departments voluntarily start losing money, wouldn’t my life become much easier?”

“Hurry up, compete with each other in losses!”

Pei Qian thought happily to himself.

However, when he scanned the room, he noticed that everyone was staring at him, seemingly waiting for a reasonable explanation.

Oh? Expecting a plot twist?

Sorry, there isn’t one.

Pei Qian stood up directly.

“Alright, that concludes today’s short meeting. You may all disperse.”

With that, he turned and left the conference room.

Leaving the department heads looking at each other in confusion, each with different expressions.