

You Were Told to Lose Money By Making Games, and You Actually Did It?

Chapter 6: A Key-Cutting Shop? Cut What Keys?

Outside the distribution warehouses of DAS, Jubaostar, and iFruitTech

"Brother Qi, Brother Gao, are you saying President Chen paid too much for the equipment?" Xiu Fu asked, looking puzzled.

"We checked the prices on the official websites ourselves," Xiao Dao added. "And they're already much cheaper than the online stores."

While coming to pick up the equipment, Gong Qi and Ying Gao had brought up the issue.

"Those are retail prices," Gong Qi explained.

"And these offline stores usually get their inventory from regional distributors, who often bundle in less popular models. We have connections with the authorized distributors here, so we can buy directly from the manufacturers without going through middlemen."

As game developers, they naturally knew a thing or two about computer hardware.

Upon hearing the explanation, Xiao Dao and Xiu Fu immediately understood.

It wasn't that they didn't know such things existed, they simply didn't have the right connections.

"Then why didn't you just tell President Chen directly?" Xiu Fu asked curiously.

"Ahem..."

Gong Qi and Ying Gao exchanged glances.

"Well... we couldn't be one hundred percent certain at the time. And besides, if we can really save a substantial amount of money, wouldn't it be nice to give President Chen a pleasant surprise?" The two answered somewhat vaguely.

However, Xiao Dao and Xiu Fu instantly understood.

That was true!

Brother Xu had publicly handed them the procurement list and entrusted them with the purchase.

If they had immediately jumped up and said:

"President Chen, your prices are too high!"

Wouldn't that have embarrassed him in front of everyone?

Besides, before any purchases had even been made, announcing how much money they could save would seem like they were desperately fishing for credit.

That would definitely be inappropriate.

Thinking this through, Xiao Dao and Xiu Fu nodded heavily.

"You're right."

"Let's wait until we get the actual procurement prices and then tell Brother Xu the good news."

"We'll give him a surprise!"

Hearing this, Gong Qi and Ying Gao felt their hearts tremble.

That form of address...

And considering the fact that these two had arrived together with the boss...

They had to be President Chen's trusted confidants!

Procurement was one of the easiest places for corruption and kickbacks to occur.

How could something so important possibly be entrusted to them so casually?

Even if they personally had no such intentions, the boss couldn't know that.

A newly acquired company...

And yet the old employees were being allowed to handle purchasing directly.

Clearly, President Chen had confidence in his own people.

The new project hadn't even taken shape yet.

But at the very least, in this procurement process, they had to demonstrate their capabilities and network connections.

They had to give the new boss a surprise!

Meanwhile, Back at the Office

Chen Xu leaned back in his chair and shifted around.

The chair was as hard as a rock.

His backside was practically freezing.

It wasn't comfortable in the slightest.

All he could say was that President Du had been far too honest.

Chen Xu had said he didn't want the equipment and wanted its value deducted from the acquisition price.

And when Du Qian cleared out the fixed assets, he really had taken only the equipment.

The desks, chairs, filing cabinets, and even the potted plants had all been left behind.

As a result, Chen Xu couldn't even find a reasonable excuse to replace them without the system objecting.

'When I get the chance, I'll definitely squeeze a huge payout out of the system and replace all this stuff.'

Chen Xu silently made plans.

"Still, it's a little disappointing, but at least we've gotten off to a good start."

After complaining for a bit, Chen Xu couldn't help feeling excited.

The game hadn't even entered production yet, and he had already spent a huge amount of money.

- Acquisition and due diligence costs: 1.35 million yuan
- Hardware upgrades: 4 million yuan

And moving forward, there would also be:

- Approximately 250,000 yuan per month in rent and utilities.
- Roughly 850,000 yuan per month in employee salaries.

Everything was heading in the right direction.

The only pity was that the system had rejected his plan to replace the furniture.

His proposal to raise employee salaries had also been shot down.

As for relocating to a larger—and much more expensive—office?

That had been completely impossible to get approved.

Clearly, in the system's eyes, the current Target Games simply didn't qualify for such treatment.

"But there still seem to be some other ways to increase expenses..."

Chen Xu sat in the boss's chair, lost in thought.

Although he had already spent an amount of money that once seemed unimaginable to him, the remaining funds were still far too abundant for developing Sekiro.

After all, the game's environmental assets weren't especially extensive.

And throughout the game, players revisited many of the same locations multiple times.

While it wasn't nearly as extreme as Devil May Cry 4—where players first fought through the entire game as Nero, then essentially ran back through the same stages as Dante, even fighting many of the exact same bosses again—it still significantly reduced content-production costs.

Still, the game made excellent use of recycled assets.

Under those circumstances, what if the game was finished and there was still a huge amount of money left unspent?

Wouldn't that be a massive loss for him?

After all, the final settlement was primarily based on the project's total investment cost during development.

"The finance department should probably hire two more people as well."

"They can supervise each other. After all, this is the company's money we're talking about. Having trusted people handling finances is always more reassuring."

Chen Xu tested the waters.

If he simply tried to hire ordinary employees while the project hadn't even officially begun, there was a good chance the system would reject it.

But for finance staff?

His reasoning was perfectly legitimate.

'Ha! Can't find a reason to object now, can you?'

Several moments passed.

No violation warning appeared.

Chen Xu immediately understood that this move was completely safe.

"Hmm... the company currently provides meal allowances."

"But if employees have to go out for lunch and dinner, they're wasting overtime hours."

"So why not just provide food delivery directly?"

"Beef rice bowls from Jinghe Restaurant, seafood risotto from Wanxiang Plaza..."

"And the snack area definitely needs an upgrade."

"A little employee welfare goes a long way. Happier employees work happier overtime hours. Happier overtime means higher efficiency."

As he spoke, Chen Xu opened a food delivery app and began listing various dishes he personally enjoyed.

When the system still failed to raise any objections, his smile grew even wider.

Brother System...

Start dropping those gold coins already!

Relocating to a larger office had been rejected.

But employee benefits?

There was still room to maneuver there.

Of course, the limits weren't unlimited.

It seemed that fifty yuan per meal was the maximum allowable amount.

Similarly, the snack area couldn't contain anything excessively luxurious.

The most expensive options allowed appeared to be things like durian mille-feuille cake and other premium afternoon desserts.

As a result, Chen Xu could only painfully remove some of the tastier—but more expensive—items from his list.

"One day, I'll squeeze every last coin out of you, Brother System."

"I'll build a cafeteria serving all Eight Great Chinese Cuisines!"

Chen Xu clicked his tongue.

Although the next settlement period was still far away and his personal disposable wealth remained limited, the system had its rules—and he had his own ways of exploiting loopholes to improve his current quality of life.

"I'll have the office staff find me a house closer to the company later."

"After all, living nearby will help me devote myself more fully to work."

"Hmm..."

"And employee overtime pay."

Chen Xu sighed dramatically.

"Brother System, your very first rule says investment funds can't violate the law."

"So when overtime happens, we can't exactly refuse to pay overtime wages."

He continued thinking about every possible avenue through which he could increase expenses.

And regarding all of these proposals...

The system couldn't find a single objection.

"Also, as the company president, I should probably buy a vehicle for transportation."

"A Rolls-Royce Cullinan is too extravagant."

"A Bentley is a little too flashy."

"Maybe start with a Phaeton instead?"

Suddenly, another thought struck him.

"Oh right!"

"I also need to hire an executive assistant."

"A female executive secretary to handle all the miscellaneous matters that distract me from important work."

"Hmm... she should be young."

"Young people have more energy."

"And she should be attractive."

"No ulterior motives, of course."

"The president's secretary is basically part of the company's public image."

The more he thought about it, the more energized he became.

Fantasy Time.jpg

But in the very next second, Brother System made its move.

It was as though it had been suppressing itself for ages and had finally found an opportunity to strike.

Fast.

Very fast.

Extremely fast.

Yet despite its speed, there was no cold, emotionless warning voice.

Nor was there any painful physical punishment.

Brother System remained remarkably gentle.

It simply displayed a meme image in front of Chen Xu:

"Need a key cut? Cut what keys?"

The message spoke for itself.

Fantasy Time has now ended.

Looking at the meme, Chen Xu could practically feel Brother System's mockery radiating through the screen.

Damn it!

Just you wait!

One day I'll use your money to hire a female secretary!

Not just one, either!

Three of them!

Working in rotating shifts around the clock!