Losing Money to Become a Tycoon: Starting with Games

Chapter 470: Immediate Shock

March 28, Monday.

According to reports over the weekend, President Li and others had already finalized the development plan for the projects around Fright Hostel, and construction and inspections were about to begin soon.

Of course, these restaurants, hotels, and similar facilities were not being built from scratch. They would all be renovations of existing buildings in the old industrial district. With enough overtime work, they should be able to finish alongside Fright Hostel. Even if some projects were delayed, it wouldn't be by much.

Pei Qian was slightly surprised that the plan had been finalized so quickly, but he remained emotionally stable.

Well… can't stop it anyway. Just let it be.

Today was Monday. Originally, Pei Qian planned to head straight to Feihuang Studio to announce the "Periodic Shock Therapy," but the HR department's Hao Yun said he had something to report. So after lunch, Pei Qian still came to headquarters first.

He was a bit puzzled, because HR shouldn't have much to do recently.

Was Hao Yun just bored and forcibly creating work for himself? If so, that was a very bad sign—maybe he should consider replacing the HR manager.

Hao Yun knocked and entered.

“President Pei, I’m here to report on the salary adjustment proposals submitted by various departments.”

Pei Qian became even more confused.

“Salary adjustment proposals?”

What did that mean?

Wasn’t Tengda Group already paying well enough?

Did I… still have room to improve?

Suddenly, Pei Qian became interested.

Hao Yun explained:

“Yes, President Pei. In line with the goal of ‘strengthening the foundation,’ each department conducted internal reviews. During this process, some departments noticed unreasonable salary inversion issues among employees.”

“After review, the HR department believes this phenomenon is relatively widespread across departments. So we used Friday afternoon and this morning to compile a report for you.”

Pei Qian slowly began to understand—but was still mostly confused.

He knew what “salary inversion” meant.

It usually refers to situations where new employees earn more than older employees, frontline staff earn more than managers, or subordinates earn more than their supervisors.

For example, an old employee might have joined at a market salary of 3,000/month. Even if their salary increased over time, it would be limited. Two years later, if the market rate rises to 4,500/month, a newly hired employee with no experience could immediately earn more than the veteran—creating a salary inversion.

This is very common, because most companies cannot afford to constantly adjust everyone's salary to match current market rates.

Because of this, many companies prohibit employees from discussing salaries, since it would expose these inversions and lead to dissatisfaction or resignations.

It would be impossible for a manager to stay calm if he found out that his subordinates were earning more than him.

As a company that had been established for over a year, Tengda Group had gone through multiple hiring waves. Although it frequently increased salaries, differences in position, seniority, and ability still led to some cases of salary inversion.

Of course, because Tengda often gave raises and had extremely generous benefits beyond salary, the situation was much better than in most companies.

But Hao Yun felt that, in line with the “Cornerstone Spirit” of strengthening the foundation, salary inversion was still a hidden risk. Even if other companies ignored it, and even if nothing bad usually happened, it should still be reported to President Pei for a final decision.

Pei Qian took the report from Hao Yun and felt his eyes glaze over at the dense numbers.

After a brief pretence of reading, he said:

“So in other words… some new employees have higher base salaries than older employees. Is that what you mean?”

Hao Yun thought for a moment and said, “Yes, that’s what it means, but the actual situation is a bit more complicated.”

“Simply put, for example, an old employee joined six months earlier than a new employee and clearly has more experience and better skills. But their base salary is only 200 yuan higher. That can also be considered a form of salary inversion in practice.”

Pei Qian’s eyes suddenly lit up.

Well done! I was just worrying about not having a reason to keep raising salaries!

“This is easy to solve.”

“Add money!”

“Every so often, we’ll review all employees based on the highest salary level offered to new hires, and top up the salaries of all old employees to match!”

Hao Yun froze for a moment. “Uh, President Pei, that would certainly be the best solution. But I should remind you that while this kind of across-the-board salary increase is manageable when the company is small, as the number of employees grows, the total amount of salary increases will also grow—possibly far beyond what we can currently imagine…”

“Most companies… actually try to save costs at this stage. That’s how most industries operate.”

Keep increasing?

That’s even better!

Pei Qian was practically delighted as if he had just picked up money. He decisively said, “Do it. Immediately bring salaries up to parity!”

“No matter how many old employees there are, no matter how much difference there is, adjust everything.”

Hao Yun confirmed again, “All of them?”

She clearly understood that when President Pei said “bring them up to parity,” he didn’t mean making everyone’s salary equal, but rather eliminating salary inversion.

Pei Qian didn't hesitate. "Yes, all of them. If possible, have the finance department redo the payroll starting this month."

Hao Yun nodded with emotion. "Understood. I'll notify the finance department right away."

Although she had vaguely anticipated this outcome before reporting, President Pei's eager expression still made her feel his deep care for all long-term employees.

Just as Hao Yun was about to leave, she was called back.

"Wait a moment."

"You mentioned earlier that, in line with the goal of 'strengthening the foundation,' all departments conducted self-inspections and discovered salary inversion… Why strengthen the foundation?"

Pei Qian suddenly realized there was something off in the way Hao Yun had started her report.

Hao Yun smiled. "President Pei, didn't you recently present the Tengda Group Cornerstone Award last Friday, implying that all departments should strengthen their foundations? That's why everyone started these internal reviews. But aside from salary inversion, they didn't find any serious issues."

Pei Qian blinked, slightly confused.

Again… related to me?

Did I present the Tengda Group Cornerstone Award to imply that everyone should strengthen their foundations?

That wasn't my intention at all.

Hmm… but the outcome does seem to align in a strange way.

No other problems were found, just a minor salary inversion issue—and it even made me spend more money.

Not bad!

Pei Qian didn't find anything else suspicious and nodded. "Alright, go notify the finance department."

……

After Hao Yun left, Pei Qian packed up and headed to Feihuang Studio.

Now that A Better Tomorrow had already been taken off theaters and the contract with Aili Island had been signed, Pei Qian had had enough.

He absolutely had to "shock-therapy" this department before they caused any more trouble!

The system had already been generous enough to allow one department per cycle to be "shocked." That was mercy enough. He needed to make good use of it.

Arriving at Feihuang Studio, Pei Qian noticed that only a small portion of employees were browsing the web or watching shows.

A large number of them were still working!

President Pei looked at this scene and felt a deep pain in his heart.

Look at this… look at this… is this even human behavior?

The projects were already completed, and no new projects had even started—yet there were still people forcibly working?

It seemed that Feihuang Studio really had a serious problem. This “overworking mindset” had clearly become deeply ingrained, and it absolutely needed immediate “shock therapy” treatment!

Huang Sibo and Zhu Xiaoce were discussing something in front of a computer screen when they noticed President Pei and quickly stood up.

“President Pei, what brings you here?”

Pei Qian decided not to waste time and went straight to the point.

“Nothing special. I’m here to announce a new system.”

“The Periodic Shock Therapy!”

“Massive profits mean massive input. The more money you earn, the more you are overdrawing yourselves.”

“On the surface, making money seems like a good thing, but it has hidden dangers. It doesn’t just overdraw your energy and health, but also your inspiration and talent!”

“So, for departments that are severely overdrawn, we will implement ‘shock therapy.’ For the next four months, all Feihuang Studio employees will continue to receive their full salary and benefits, but no work will be done.”

“During the entire treatment period, you will rest properly and recover your energy, health, inspiration, and talent.”

“Feihuang Studio’s shock period starts next month and lasts four months—from March 1st to June 30th.”

Everyone present was stunned.

What… did that mean? A full four-month paid vacation for the entire department?

In other companies, paid leave is given to individuals, so their work can be covered by colleagues.

But here, the entire department was just going on leave together?

And even though it was clearly paid vacation, why did President Pei make it sound so serious—and even a little gritted his teeth?

It didn’t sound like vacation at all. It felt more like… exile.

Huang Sibo hesitated and said, “But President Pei, that won’t work. Even if we’re not doing new projects, there’s still daily work that needs to be handled. The studio can’t completely shut down.”

“If we do shock therapy like this, it might turn into ‘sudden death therapy’ instead…”

Pei Qian thought for five seconds.

“Then arrange shift rotations. Ensure the studio maintains minimum operations.”

“Divide everyone into groups. Each group works for one month. Everyone still gets their four-month ‘shock period,’ but because of rotation, the overall treatment period extends to five months—until July 31st.”

Huang Sibo hesitated again. “But there’s still—”

Pei Qian’s expression darkened.

“No ‘buts.’ Solve difficulties yourselves. You must enter shock mode before March 1st.”

Huang Sibo and Zhu Xiaoce exchanged a look, both showing a bit of reluctance.

But in the end, they both nodded.

“Understood, President Pei. We’ll arrange it immediately.”

Pei Qian finally showed a satisfied smile.

“Good. During the shock period, only maintain basic operations. Do not start any new projects. And don’t worry about failing to create value for the company—you’ve already contributed enough!”

Huang Sibo felt a little moved.

“Understood, President Pei! But please rest assured—even while on break, Feihuang Studio will still continue to create value for the company!”

Pei Qian’s smile froze.

“?”

Zhu Xiaoce stepped aside, revealing the computer screen they had been gathered around.

“President Pei, A Better Tomorrow has been picked up by an overseas distributor. It’s going to be released internationally.”