

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

Chapter 36: No One Understands President Chen Better Than We Do!

Inside the office, Chen Xu leaned back in his chair, grinning happily.

Although he had just served everyone another bowl of rich, delicious motivational "chicken soup," he wasn't particularly worried.

The optimization work had already hit a wall. That meant the problem was with the hardware itself.

No matter how talented his employees were, they couldn't possibly invent some new futuristic technology capable of breaking through hardware limitations, could they?

Looking at it this way, his original insistence on perfection—wanting Sekiro to have even better visual presentation—had unexpectedly brought him additional benefits.

Next came Yang Chen's game merchandise project.

As long as the quality was decent, once the contract was signed, another huge amount of money would be spent.

Then he could use the remaining funds to buy advertisements on those notoriously inefficient marketing platforms.

When the settlement period arrived, wouldn't he be able to squeeze the system dry?

And considering Sekiro's inherent quality, Chen Xu firmly believed that given enough time, the game would eventually receive the recognition it deserved.

The system's gold.

Future positive reviews.

Continuously growing revenue.

I want all of it.

Chen Xu's mood brightened considerably.

Everything was finally falling into place.

. . .

Outside the office.

Gong Qi, Ying Gao, and the rest of the staff were still immersed in President Chen's heartfelt speech.

Everyone felt both touched and conflicted.

They were touched by how much President Chen cared about them.

He was genuinely worried that excessive overtime would damage their health.

What kind of boss would think about employees from that perspective?

But at the same time, they felt conflicted.

Because Sekiro still hadn't reached the level of optimization they had envisioned.

Yet they had to admit that the optimization effort had indeed stalled.

And this wasn't a problem that could be solved by simply working overtime for another month or two.

"Perhaps President Chen wasn't telling us to give up entirely."

As one of the company's founding employees—and also Chen Xu's college roommate for three and a half years, his Telegram resource-sharing partner, and one half of the legendary duo known as the Crouching Dragon and Young Phoenix—Xiao Dao suddenly looked thoughtful.

"That's right. Based on what we know about President Chen, he wouldn't say those things for no reason. His concern for us is one aspect, but on another level, he may already have been giving us hints."

Xiu Fu nodded in agreement.

*Really?*

*That's what he meant?*

Everyone was initially confused.

But then Gong Qi and Ying Gao were the first to reach enlightenment.

They remembered the conversation they had before Sekiro's development had begun.

"Hasn't President Chen always been like this?" Gong Qi slapped his hand on the table.

"He never directly states his thoughts or decisions. Instead, he guides us through subtle hints and lets us think things through ourselves."

"Exactly!" Ying Gao's eyes lit up.

"Just like President Chen said, this isn't a problem that can be solved through blind overtime. The players' hardware limitations are already there. No matter how hard we force ourselves to optimize, it would just be meaningless overtime!"

As he carefully reflected on Chen Xu's words once more, Ying Gao felt as though everything had suddenly become clear.

"So that's what he meant!"

"President Chen was actually trying to tell us this!"

"Of course!"

"He first rejected our approach, but still told us to continue optimizing—just not through excessive overtime. Isn't that an obvious hint?"

The other employees listened to Gong Qi and Ying Gao's discussion.

Then they replayed President Chen's words in their minds.

Originally, the speech hadn't seemed particularly profound.

But now, upon reviewing it, every sentence felt packed with wisdom.

Every line seemed to contain hidden guidance from President Chen.

"But what are we supposed to do then?" asked Yamagami after finally understanding everything through translation.

He still felt that everyone might be reading a little too much into it.

Hearing his question, Xiu Fu smiled knowingly.

"Of course we're not giving up."

"Eiji, you've only been at Morning Star Games for a short time. It's perfectly normal to have doubts, because you don't yet understand what kind of person President Chen really is."

"We've been his roommates for three and a half years."

"No one understands President Chen better than we do!"

"That's right!" Xiao Dao declared firmly.

"No one understands President Chen better than we do!"

Don't ask where their confidence came from.

After all, they were the very people Chen Xu had once called his left and right arms—the legendary Crouching Dragon and Young Phoenix.

"In fact," Gong Qi said, as though he had already seen through everything, "President Chen has already told us exactly where we should begin."

He picked up a bottle of mineral water from the table and took a leisurely sip.

"Since we can't break through the limits of the hardware, and continuing to brute-force optimization is becoming increasingly inefficient, we need to find another approach. We need to let go of some things and learn to simplify," Gong Qi spoke slowly.

The moment everyone heard his words, their eyes lit up, as though a window had suddenly been thrown open.

For all this time, they had been continuously optimizing the game.

In truth, they had already squeezed nearly every bit of performance out of mainstream CPUs and graphics cards.

It wasn't that their optimization skills were lacking, the problem was that the hardware itself had reached its limit.

Even with overclocking, there was only so much performance it could provide.

A game couldn't magically turn an X060-series graphics card into an X090-series card.

That was obviously impossible.

Furthermore, because they had put so much effort into Sekiro's visual presentation during development, their optimization efforts had always focused on maximizing hardware utilization while preserving the game's stunning graphics and maintaining acceptable frame rates.

"There is no perfect solution in this world," Gong Qi said with a sigh.

"As game developers, the most important thing we need to learn isn't just technology—it's how to think."

"When a project reaches a dead end, understanding a game's priorities and learning when to simplify—that's probably what President Chen was trying to teach us."

What kind of game was Sekiro?

An action-adventure game.

And among those two elements, action was its core gameplay.

Exploration was simply one of the motivations driving players forward.

Different games had different priorities.

If Sekiro were a story-driven game—a game without intense combat or demanding action sequences—then graphics would naturally deserve a higher priority.

Because in narrative-focused games, visuals and music greatly enhance immersion.

But for a game like Sekiro, where action plays the dominant role, graphical fidelity wasn't nearly as important.

After all, did most players buy a game like this just to admire the scenery and take screenshots?

Certainly, there might be a small group of players who did.

But the vast majority bought it to actually play the game.

Therefore, when forced to choose between graphics and frame rate, a game developer's first priority should always be frame rate.

The goal was to provide players with a smooth experience.

*This was President Chen's wisdom!*

If he had simply told them outright to cut certain features—for example, by removing some nonessential visual effects—they might never have understood the deeper lesson.

The next time they developed a game, they could easily make the same mistake again and lose sight of the project's true priorities.

But President Chen had instead chosen to guide them through hints and implications, allowing them to arrive at the realization themselves.

With admiration and reverence, everyone glanced toward Chen Xu's office.

Then, without another word, they quietly returned to their desks.

A new round of optimization work began.

There was no need for speeches.

Actions would speak louder than words.

They would present President Chen with a game optimized to perfection!