



Daily Article (Bharath's Reading list) - Answers and Explanations 28.12.2023

Article link : [Link](#) (It's All Bullshit : Performing productivity at Google)

1. "It's literally failing upwards with no end in sight." Which of the following best explains what 'failing upwards' refers to in the given context?

- A. With perverse incentives for launching new projects, nine thousand, eight hundred and eighty-three chat apps have been launched thus far by Google techworkers
- B. The LPA cycle has created a rush to launch projects seen as sustaining innovation with no necessity to follow through, as even failed or canceled launches can lead to promotions
- C. Even projects that may not actually be bullshit get nixed all the time, transforming all that work into bullshit
- D. None of the above

Explanation : B

Refer to the lines, 'Even after eight years at Google where he worked his way up to the title of staff engineer—a highly respected role—none of his code has ever made it to Google's production servers. Instead, he has swung from one failed or canceled project to the next, collecting promotions along the way. As the employee put it to me: "It's literally failing upwards with no end in sight."'

2. Tech firms like Google differ from industrial firms in that:

- A. Unlike industrial firms, internet platforms are fundamentally extractive, generating profit on the basis of existing property, intellectual or otherwise, without additional labour for each unit of output
- B. Unlike industrial firms, platform monopolies have a built-in moat as their value comes from the number of users they have
- C. Unlike industrial firms, tech firms are awash with capital and tech workers, who have an

unusual amount of agency, demand more from their employers
D. All the above

Explanation: A

Note the lines, 'Unlike the industrial firms that Marx and Smith wrote about, tech firms like Google differ in one key aspect: how they turn a profit. Where industrial firms extract profits from the gap between value produced and what workers get paid in wages, internet platforms rely foremost on rents, which generate profit on the basis of existing property, intellectual or otherwise.'

Options B and C are not stated in the article.

3. According to the article, the techworkers are in a 'quandry' as:

A. Working in or admitting to working in a bullshit job robs them of the power employees have over their employers, which is the power to withhold their labor

B. The increase in the number of fat and mean middle managers puts pressure on them to show increase in productivity

C. The vast majority of projects in tech companies do not, in any direct way, contribute to revenue, thereby making employee impact difficult to assess

Explanation: A

Refer to the lines, 'Herein lies the quandary: If the power that workers have over their employers is the ability to withhold their labor, admitting to working a bullshit job robs them precisely of that power.'