Cyberpunk 2077 dev breaks promise, will force employees to work six days a week



Cyberpunk 2077 developer CD Projekt Red has told employees that six-day workweeks will be mandatory ahead of the game's November 19th release date, even though the studio has repeatedly and explicitly promised it would never do that, *Bloomberg* reports.

On two separate occasions in 2019, studio co-founder Marcin Iwiński told game journalist Jason Schreier how it would address crunch, once even saying that "we want to be more humane and treat people with respect." It seemed pretty clear from excerpts like this that mandatory crunch was not going to be part of it!

> *Jason: If I'm a designer at CD Projekt Red and I say you know what I have kids, I have a family, I'm going to work from 10am to 6pm every day, and that's it. Even until the very end. Am I going to be okay with that?*

Iwiński: Yes. Yes.

Jason: No matter what.

Iwiński: Yes.

Jason: So you can commit to that?

Iwiński: We've committed to that already.

While CD Projekt Red didn't completely throw crunch time out the window, the company was clear that employees would be able to say no. In one interview with *Kotaku*, Iwiński said the studio would have a "non-obligatory crunch policy," meaning that while the company could still ask employees to work overtime, it would not be "mandatory." The words in quotes are Iwiński's actual words.

But by January, it was already starting to look like the company wasn't going to keep its promise to employees. As *Polygon* notes, when asked whether the development team would be "required to put in crunch hours" during an investor call in January, CD Projekt CEO Adam Kicinski answered yes, suggesting that it was somehow out of his hands: "We try to limit crunch as much as possible, but it is the final stage. We try to be reasonable in this regard, but yes. Unfortunately."

"We've extended all other possible means of navigating the situation"
In an email obtained by *Bloomberg*, CD Projekt Red studio head Adam Badowski offered a similar excuse, suggesting that his company somehow has no alternative than to force employees to work harder to address the remaining bugs and glitches in the game — even though a CD Projekt Red employee told *Bloomberg that* some staff had already been working nights and weekends "for more than a year."

"I take it upon myself to receive the full backlash for the

decision," Badowski wrote in the email. "I know this is in direct opposition to what we've said about crunch. It's also in direct opposition to what I personally grew to believe a while back – that crunch should never be the answer. But we've extended all other possible means of navigating the situation," he said, apparently without describing any of the other possible means that the company has already tried.

Cyberpunk 2077 was originally supposed to launch on April 16th, but the studio pushed the game's release to September 17th, saying the developers "need more time to finish play-testing, fixing, and polishing" the game. CD Projekt Red would then push the release date once again to November 19th, explaining that the development team needed extra time to "go through everything, balance game mechanics, and fix a lot of bugs." We've already waited this long and the game is almost done: could CD Projekt Red just push the release date one last time instead of forcing its developers to crunch?

https://www.theverge.com/2020/9/29/21494499/cyberpunk-2077-development-crunch-time-cd-projekt-red