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# 'Too many employees, but few work': Pichai, Zuckerberg sound the alarm

Zuckerberg noticed that it was getting harder to get all the employees to attend a meeting as they were sometimes taking time out in a day for personal work

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Last Updated at August 8, 2022 21:17 IST

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With global recession fears looming, some of the biggest names in the technology world have some ominous words to spare: Big Tech has hired more people, but only some of them are doing the work.

Meta (earlier Facebook) Founder Mark Zuckerberg fired the first salvo. It was the weekly Q&A on June 30, and he had said that the economy was headed for the "worst downturns that we've seen in recent history".

Then he continued.

"Realistically, there are probably a bunch of people at the company who shouldn't be here," Zuckerberg said on the call, according to a Reuters report. "And part of my hope by raising expectations and having more aggressive goals, and just kind of turning up the heat a little bit, is that I think some of you might just say that this place isn't for you. And that self-selection is okay with me."

In addition to reducing hiring, he said, the firm was leaving certain positions unfilled.

Google and Alphabet chief Sundar Pichai echoed the sentiment when he told employees that productivity was not high enough, considering the number of people on the company's rolls, CNBC reported.

"There are real concerns that our productivity as a whole is not where it needs to be for the head count we have. [We need to] create a culture that is more mission-focused, more focused on our products, more customer-focused," he said. Pichai had recently said that the firm would cut hiring and investment through 2023, pushing staff to work with greater urgency and "more thoughtful" than demonstrated "on sunnier days". It came after the firm reported its second consecutive quarter of weaker-than-expected earnings and revenue. Revenue growth slowed to 13 per cent in the quarter from 62 per cent a year earlier.

Meanwhile, Zuckerberg noticed that it was getting harder to get all the employees to attend a meeting as they were sometimes taking time out in a day for personal work. So the Meta boss said that, in an effort to be "cost-conscious," he was freezing or reducing staffing for low-priority projects and slashing engineer-hiring plans for the year by 30 per cent, reports added.

To be sure, the Covid-induced pandemic saw Meta embark on a massive hiring spree, growing its number of full-time staff from 48,000 at the end of 2019 to more than 77,800 — a 62 per cent jump. But now the firm must "prioritise more ruthlessly" and "operate leaner, meaner, better executing teams," Meta Chief Product Officer Chris Cox wrote in a memo, which appeared on the company's internal discussion forum Workplace before the Q&A.

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*First Published: Mon, August 08 2022. 21:11 IST*

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