

Make Your Tech Career Layoff-Proof as a Solopreneur

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Icebreaker:

What is the weirdest
thing within arm's
reach of you right
now?

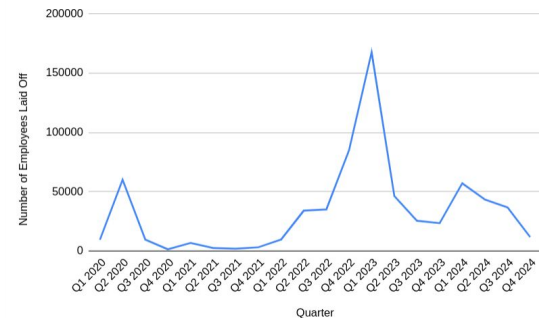
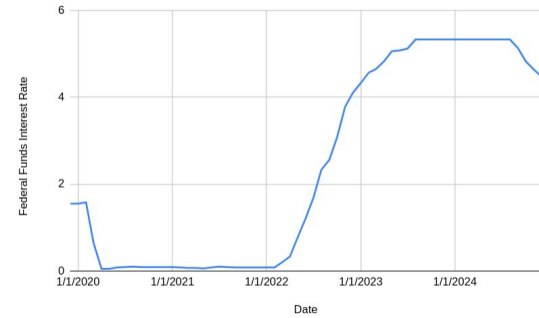
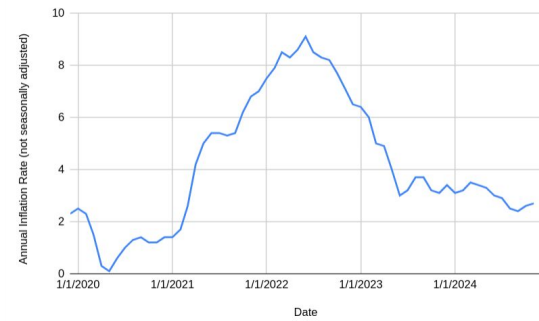
It is projected that in 2027, 86.5 million people will be **freelancing** in the United States and will make up 50.9 percent of the total U.S. workforce.

Myth: corporate
employment is
more safe than self
employment

My story

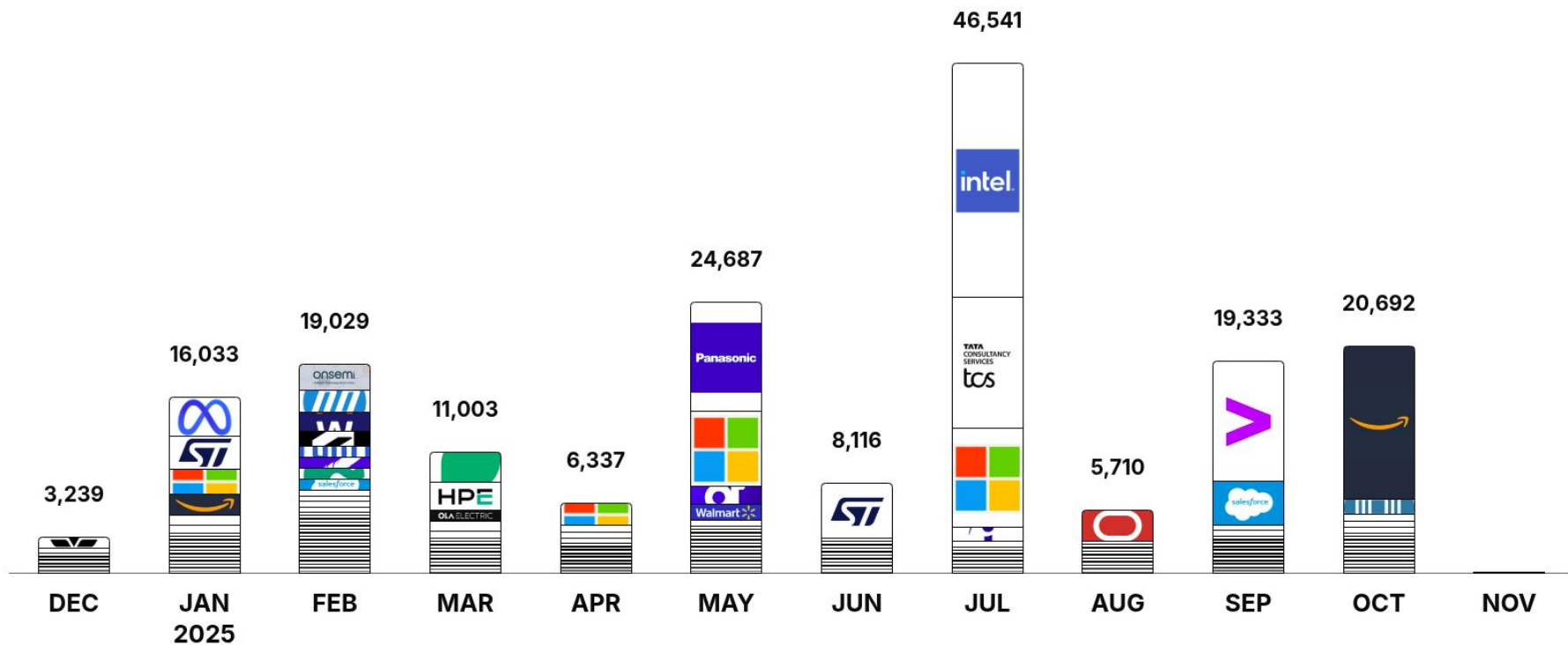
How we got here

1. Pandemic triggers shock resulting in initial layoffs
2. Federal Reserve responds by dropping interest rates
3. Companies get cheap loans and can hire/retain more people
4. This policy and supply chain disruptions contribute to inflation rising
5. Federal Reserve raises interest rates
6. Cost of doing business goes up
7. Surge in layoffs



Tech Employees Impacted by Layoffs

As of November 4, 2025



<https://trueup.io/layoffs>

Just because a
company lays off
10,000 employees
doesn't mean they
have 10,000 people
less work to do!

Some stats about the job market

- As of August, 2025 the average tech employee is filing 400 - 750+ applications to land a single offer
- Open roles are receiving thousands of applications
- 10+ interviews to receive an offer is not uncommon
- 1 in 4 job ads on LinkedIn are “ghost jobs” with no intention to hire

Why do people prefer corporate jobs?

- “Job security”
- Healthcare: the 800 lb gorilla in the room (at least for the US)!
- Other benefits
 - 401k matching
 - Lower taxes
 - Stock options
 - Various other forms of insurance
 - Access to corporate infrastructure
- Great colleagues
- Mentoring and other training opportunities

You've Been Warned: Companies Don't Value Your Loyalty Anymore. Here's Why

BY DANIEL FEININGER

UPDATED: MAY 13, 2024 1:35 AM EST





FEAR

UNTIL YOU HAVE THE COURAGE TO LOSE SIGHT OF THE SHORE,
YOU WILL NOT KNOW THE TERROR OF BEING FOREVER LOST AT SEA.

Introduction to the benefits of solopreneur work

- You are your own boss and make all the rules
- You work on what you want to work on, when you want to work on it, where you want to work, and for whom you want to work
- When you are talking to a potential employer (client), you are one of a few people they are talking to, at most
 - “It is easier to land your first client than your next job!” -Brett Trainor
- If a potential client is talking to you, it is because they have real work that needs to be done, not a ghost job ad

Caveat Emptor:

I am not a lawyer or
an accountant

Preparing to take the leap

- Setting a goal
- Identify what you want to work on
- Get financially ready for being without an income (*if you can)
- Establish which pricing model(s) you will use
- Figure out how much money you need to make a month
- Become an actual business
 - Business structure
 - Business banking, finances, contracts
 - Business infrastructure

Solopreneur models

- Freelancer
 - Typically does technical work
 - Work product: code
- Consultant
 - Typically advises
 - Work product: reports, presentations
- Fractional
 - Acts like a part-time employee, typically in upper management
 - Work product: management, leadership
- Product-based
 - Create and sell your own products
 - Work product: templates, tools, SaaS

Exercise: What is your hourly rate?

$$\text{Hourly Rate} = \frac{\text{Annual Salary}}{\text{Number of Working Hours in a Year}}$$

- Assumes you received paid vacation/holiday and sick time
- Number of working hours/year varies by country
 - US: 2080 hours (40 hours/week x 52 weeks/year)
 - UK: 1740 hours (37.5 hours/week x 52 weeks/year)

Exercise: What is your hourly rate?

$$\text{Hourly Rate} = \frac{\$150,000}{2080}$$

How does that number compare to typical contractors working in your company or field?

How much do contract shops typically take off the top?

Monthly scenario planning

The Rule of 60%

Hourly rate	\$150	Weekly revenue (FT)	\$3,750
Number of hours in a week	25	Monthly revenue (FT)	\$15,000
Health insurance	\$1,500	Health insurance	\$1,500
Targeted monthly take home	\$8,000	Expenses	\$750
Federal tax (including self employment tax)	0.29	Revenue less insurance, expenses	\$12,750
State tax	0.0455	Federal tax	\$3,698
		State tax	\$580
		Monthly take home pay	\$8,472
		Difference	\$472

Annual scenario planning

Hourly rate	\$150		Weekly revenue (FT)	\$3,750		
Number of weeks worked	48		Monthly revenue (FT)	\$15,000		
Number of hours in a week	25		Annual revenue (actual)	\$180,000	Annual revenue (FT)	\$180,000
Health insurance	\$1,500		Health insurance	\$18,000	(if working 52 weeks)	
Number of months paying insurance	12		Expenses	\$750.00		
Targeted monthly take home	\$8,000		Revenue minus insurance and expense	\$153,000		
Federal tax (including self employment tax)	0.29		Federal tax	\$44,370		
State tax	0.0455		State tax	\$6,962		
Self employment tax	0		Self employment tax	\$0		
			Revenue less insurance, expenses, taxes	\$101,669		
			Monthly take home pay	\$8,472		
			Difference	\$472		

Getting your first client

- Your first client will come from within your existing network
- So will your second
- And probably your third
- ...

You are building the brand of YOU and that is based on your
EXPERIENCE!

“Your network is
your net worth.”

Some final thoughts

- “It is easier to land your first client than your next job.”
 - You don’t need tons of clients, just a few to make those hours and completely replace your corporate salary
- You can be up and running as an official business in under 24 hours
- Just because companies are laying off doesn’t mean they don’t have work that needs to be done
- You can start the wheels in motion while still in your corporate job

Thank you!

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