<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/features/2018-05-02/china-s-tech-industry-wants-youth-not-experience>

一、

1. No. You are clearly not too old. Many Chinese companies understand the value of corporate knowledge. Many Chinese companies hire older engineers.

What I do sense (not just in tech sector) is that many people in China continue to “advance” through more and more senior roles but that their advancement is not based on their skills and experience developing in line with that seniority and responsibility. This phenomenon is supported by high staff turnover (large numbers of people changing roles/employers almost annually), low expectations of credible detailed specific references from previous direct managers (partly because often they no longer are in the same role themselves or because companies don’t like giving out verbal references or because the new employer doesn’t know if he is really talking to the previous direct manager or not).

2. Consequently the “Peter Principle” (Peter principle - Wikipedia) is invoked - people naturally rise to their level of incompetence.

I can easily see the 42 year old engineer spoken of in the article getting to this situation. He’s taken promotion after promotion through various companies and then within ZTE. Every promotion failed to properly assess his readiness or train him (formally or informally) for the next level of responsibility. He is thus quite a number of levels above his pay grade. Eventually “the chickens come home to roost” and he is called out (perhaps not even in his hearing) for his incompetence. His boss just appointed him - they don’t want to admit to a bad hiring or promotion decision. They don’t want to face him to tell him the situation because they lack the management skill to have such hard conversations or to accept some of the blame for the hiring decision.

The situation within the industry can well be perceived as a problem hiring 30+ engineers. It can become a rule of thumb in the sector and may well be. It’s like a proxy though - the real issue isn’t age. The real issue is the culture and systems of inadequate vetting of skills and experience in hiring in a sector with huge employment growth leading to entrenched incompetence across many levels. At least -30 aged engineers have only had five or six unqualified promotions and not 10 or 15 and so are less likely to be so manifestly incompetent.

4. Everything I have said is a generalization. I know many people in China who are very competent and who have been loyal employees promoted based on real skill and experience but I guess it is a minority. Without this minority China wouldn’t be surviving so well. But for sure, the culture and systems need to change across all sectors - not just tech. Even Government sector is definitively affected by this phenomenon.

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Why is Tik Tok (app) so popular?

Emmad Mazhari, Product Designer at Quora (2017-present)Answered Nov 7

I think to best understand Tik Tok you have to understand and look at it in the context of its predecessors - Musically & Vine.

I think Vine can be credited for essentially starting and popularizing the trend of short videos as independent pieces of content. Of course YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, etc all existed before Vine, but Vine was really the tipping point for short videos (< 6s) to take off as a large and serious format in which people made content. You can view Musically as almost an extension of Vine, in that（原因状语从句=because） it allowed most of the same behavior (short videos) but it added this new layer of lip-syncing which had one massive change - it made the barrier to entry of creating content much much lower.

2. For a Vine to be "good" you both needed to have a good idea and good execution. The social cost of a bad Vine was fairly high (the same as say a bad tweet). This naturally meant that like most products Vine had a small number of creators and the majority of the users were just consumers. Musically changed this, because while（让步状语从句，尽管） having a good idea and execution was still the best recipe for having a high quality video, the lip-syncing feature made it easy to make videos that were explicitly supported by the mechanics of the app. So while尽管 you still have high quality video, many were just people lip-syncing songs, and there was little social cost to them since the app mechanics supported and encouraged this. This, I think is super important. It meant that the pool of creators in Musically was massive.

3.Tik Tok is this same principle, but taken to the next level. So there can still exist high quality Tik Toks with unique ideas and good execution, but there also exists medium to bad quality Tik Toks of people lip-syncing songs. And而且 on top of that Tik Tok has unique features that adds camera filters and easy editing tricks that even further reduces the barrier to content creation. I think this is at the heart of Tik Tok's success and their growth strategy - their ability to continuously grow the base基数 of people that can create content.

4. Another way to think about this is the sustainability of Vine - there are many reasons Vine couldn't live (not monetizing correctly is one of them of course). But another critical part is that Vine's small group of creators held all the power and leverage on the platform - and because of the restrictive nature of their format (just videos, super short) creators often got their start on Vine and moved on to other platforms like Instagram and particularly YouTube. In short - I think it's incredibly difficult to succeed if your platform has a restrictive format for creating content and relies on a small set of users as the sole source of content.

5. Tik Tok sidesteps this problem by dramatically increasing the pool of people that can make content, mainly by lowering the social cost of bad content (and also by allowing for other formats and types of content to exist). So the reason Tik Tok stays successful is not because their content is super high quality and curated处理数字信息 (which I think it can be over time through better ranking) - but because there is a demand by people (particularly young people) to be able to make this type of content.

 6. To speak on the demand for a bit, I think it's likely super fun to make a Tik Tok. This has been pointed out by multiple people and shouldn't be surprising. Making any silly video will likely to be fun - but again that’s not why Tik Tok is owning this market. It's because people feel okay with posting these videos and sharing them. In this way, Tik Tok is like Snapchat but public and global.

 7. My intuition is that what Tik Tok is unlocking isn't a fad and pretty accurately reflects demand in the market. And the way to continue to grow and capture this market is to make it easier and easier to make this type of content and as a result of that, decrease the social cost of worse and worse content. What I don't know is whether Tik Tok will continue to own this market - I think a number of other apps could copy it - Instagram, FB, Snapchat, & YouTube being the top competitors. If I had to take another guess, I would imagine that Instagram and FB would not be able to replicate this given that 原因状语从句both platforms are focused around neat curation and signaling on profiles, and Tik Tok is super un-curated and low quality content. I think Snapchat could do this but at this point I doubt their executional abilities. I think the likeliest contender is YouTube - largely because it already have the existing infrastructure and system to host videos like these, often don't have any strong curation or signaling behavior, have content like this already, and (most importantly) successful creators on apps like Tik Tok often end up on YouTube as the last destination.