

June 13, 2025 Pizza doesn't pay the bills: toward more meaningful staff recognition in a difficult economy

Comparative valuation of pizza – 1980–2021, 2006–2023



Pizza	VS.	Currency
\checkmark	Portable	
\checkmark	Divisible	
\checkmark	Limited Supply	
\checkmark	Acceptable	

Pizza	VS.	Currency
×	Uniform	
×	Fungible	
×	Durable	



If this all seems a bit ridiculous...

Popularity of the 'this is fine' meme

Renewable energy production in Burundi



•---- Relative volume of Google searches for 'this is fine meme' (without quotes, in the United States) · Source: Google Trends

tylervigen.com/spurious/variable?id=25144

Relative popularity

•--- Total renewable energy production in Burundi in billion kWh · Source: Energy Information Administration

tylervigen.com/spurious/variable?id=23562



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Our teams and their needs

- Field vs. office
- Main branch vs. satellite
- Physically demanding, mentally demanding
- Motivation differs from person to person
- Cost of living increases in recent years financial stress
- Uncertainty: political, social, financial

Monetary compensation

- Wages, bonuses, overtime
- Insurance, retirement plans
- **Pros:** clear, measurable, immediate
- **Cons:** long term effectiveness, become expected, vulnerable to highest bidder
- Motivation is largely extrinsic in nature
- Cash only goes so far; budgets are limited

Non-monetary compensation

- Intangibles fostering commitment
- Recognition, flexibility, training, purpose, experiential
- **Pros:** build loyalty and morale, lower cost
- **Cons:** hard to quantify, can take time, requires suitable culture as a foundation
- Motivation is largely intrinsic in nature
- We all need money to live; can't just be intangibles

Intrinsic motivation

- Done for inherent satisfaction
- Competence
- Autonomy
- Relatedness
- Threats, deadlines, competition can undermine intrinsic motivation if excessive
- Expected tangible rewards undermine intrinsic motivation
- Greater competence requires parallel
 increase in autonomy for persistence

Extrinsic motivation

- Done for external reward or avoidance of consequence
- External
- Introjected
- Identification
- Integrated
- Competence, autonomy, relatedness are drivers of greater selfdetermination
- Over-reliance on extrinsic motivation produces anxiety, reduced interest, external blame, negative coping







Image credit: Travis Ruskus

A balanced approach

- Pizza is great, but my kid needs braces
- Company cookouts are fun, but they don't fix my vehicle
- A raise is fantastic, but it's golf season
- I don't want to be an "X" forever how can I grow my skills?
- What hidden talents does your team have that you don't know about because you haven't asked?

Parting thoughts - visualization exercise





Thank you!