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PTFO is an acronym that's nearly impossible to accurately interpret just by looking at it for the first time. To make it even more confusing, PTFO has two possible ways it can be interpreted. PTFO stands for either one of the following phrases: Passed The F*** OutPlay The F***ing Objective Both interpretations include an F-bomb but are used in completely different ways. When PTFO is used to mean Passed The F*** Out, it implies a person is so exhausted they've fallen into a deep state of sleep. Alternatively, it can imply a person was knocked unconscious upon impact from a hit, a punch, a fall, a body check or some other physical force. The F-word helps to emphasize the intensity of a person's unconscious state. Anyone could say they "passed out" from exhaustion, which gets the point across just fine, but when they say they've "passed the f*** out," you know it's serious! Example 2 Friend #1: "Did you see that hit Jones took during the game last night?!" Friend #2: "Yeah he was PTFO!" Both examples above show how PTFO can be used synonymously with the words "asleep" or "unconscious." When PTFO is used to mean Play The F***ing Objective, it's almost always done in the chat area of a multiplayer video game. A player might use the acronym to tell distracted players to focus on how they must work together to level up and advance through the game rather than wasting time on unimportant things that are only relevant to the individual player. Like PTFO's alternative interpretation, the F-word is used here to emphasize the seriousness of the phrase. A player is much more likely to grab other players' attention by saying "play the f***ing objective" compared to simply saying "play the objective." Example 1 Player #1: "Woot! Another kill!" Player #2: "PTFO! We need more flags!" Example 2 Friend #1: "Hey do you know any good gamer friends? My quest for PTFO players... but I'll hook you up with 1 or 2 good ones" The first example shows how PTFO can be used as a demand. The second one uses it as a descriptor of a type of game player. The easiest way to tell whether a person means Passed The F*** Out or Play The F***ing Objective when they use PTFO is by determining whether there's a gaming reference in their message or in the overall conversation. If there is, it's a good chance they mean Play The F*** Out might be the right interpretation. Your best bet is to examine the context of the message containing PTFO and possibly the entire conversation to give you clues about which version of PTFO is being used. If you have ever used Tumblr, you might have seen a post that simply states GPOY. It doesn't sound like any word you can think of, so what in the world does it mean? GPOY stands for: Gratuitous Picture of Yourself The acronym is almost always followed by a photo or an animated GIF that's either a selfie or an image of someone or something else that resembles a situation, action, or character similar to the user who is sharing it. The acronym is primarily used to describe visual content on the popular microblogging platform Tumblr and is considered to be part of its community culture. It's not used much on other popular social networks such as Facebook and Twitter, although you may come across it in those places. When it comes to Tumblr culture, GPOY is rarely used in full sentences and is primarily used on its own without any other words or information. The photo or GIF communicates the message. When a photo or GIF is so relatable that it could be used to symbolize you or your life in any way, then it's appropriate to include GPOY in the caption. Think of it as the acronym equivalent of saying, "This is how I feel/what I look like right now." Example #1 A picture of a sad-looking dog or cat with the caption GPOY. This lets people know you share the feeling in the photo. Example #2 As an alternative, you could snap a photo of yourself looking sad and then tag it with GPOY. According to Know Your Meme, the GPOY acronym can be traced as far back as 2008, when Tumblr users would tag posts with "GPOYW" on Wednesdays. Posting a gratuitous photo on Wednesdays was a weekly ritual for several Tumblr users. By 2009, the W had been quietly phased out, so users could post on any day of the week. With Tumblr's explosive growth, the popularity of GPOY memes spread rapidly within the Tumblr community, where it is most often used by the younger crowd. Tumblr enthusiasts use it to describe other memes, photos, webcomics, GIFs, drawings, or anything else visual. Despite its popularity, the acronym is one of those rare ones that remain popular within one social media community and is seldom seen anywhere else online. I often hear complaints about how unmotivated technical groups can be, but managers sometimes seem to miss some of the most important opportunities to create an environment in which motivation can grow. As best I can tell, this is deeply rooted in our backgrounds as engineers. Most IT managers start out as technicians, so we are steeped in the world of facts. We search for them. We live and die by them. They are our bedrock. But we are so enamored of the facts of our work that we sometimes forget to explicitly speak of its meaning. We assume either that the facts of our work are the meaning or that the connection is so self-evident that we never need discuss it. But the meaning of the work can be one of the most important sources of motivation for a group. For example, a few years ago, I attended a meeting and listened to a presentation from the CIO of UNICEF, the United Nations Children's Fund. He was talking about the work his staff was doing, setting up satellite-network nodes in countries around the work seemed pretty repetitive: setting up the same network equipment over and over again. The pay was probably poor, since it was through the U.N. The traveling to the garden spots of the world. In fact, many of these installations were being done in war zones, so the work might occasionally entail being shot at. The facts of this job seemed remarkably unappealing: poor pay, boring work, isolation from family, and dangerous conditions. Why would anyone want to do it? Perhaps for every network node installed, 100,000 children have a chance to eat. If that's the answer, it's worth it. In this case, the facts and the meaning of the work are completely different things. The facts seem like excellent de-motivators, while the meaning is extraordinarily compelling. Of course, not every project is to reduce inventory costs by one-eighth of a percentage point, don't expect people to weep in ecstasy during the rollout. Sometimes you have to look for motivation elsewhere. So, how do you know if you're thinking about the facts or the meaning of your work? Here's one way to look at it: Facts are simple points. They're cold and lifeless. They just lie on the page and express some simple truth. Meaning requires a more narrative structure. There are characters — people who inhabit the narrative. There's action — things that happen to the characters, or could happen. There are settings — spaces where the action happens. And there's transformation, internal and external. The heroes struggle, and the villains suffer. In the narrative form, facts come alive and are woven into the story line. They support the larger structure and are thereby imbued with meaning. Here, a project is no longer just a series of tasks lying dead on a Gantt chart. It's a heroic story with a theme and lessons. So next time you wonder why your group seems unmotivated, ask whether people have a sense of more than just the facts of their work. Ask what they think it means, and you may find that everyone has a different idea. But just having them think and talk about the meaning can be a step toward deeper motivation and engagement. Paul Glen is the founder of the GeekLeaders.com Web community and author of the award-winning book Leading Geeks: How to Manage and Lead People Who Deliver Technology (Jossey-Bass, 2003). Contact him at info@paulglen.com. Copyright © 2008 IDG Communications, Inc. Morrowind/Shutterstock.com You're scrolling through social media, and you encounter someone saying that they're "HODLING" or telling someone else to "HODL." Confused? Here's what the word means in the world of cryptocurrency and finance—and why it's not misspelled. HODL = HOLD "HODL" is a cryptocurrency-related slang that stands for the word "hold" misspelled. It often refers to retaining crypto assets that you own for an extended period, even throughout a highly volatile market movement. "Hodl" is meant to encourage people to not impulsively sell when a cryptocurrency drops dramatically or rises to become highly profitable to sell. "HODL" also acts as an acronym for "Hold on for dear life." You will often see the term in various cryptocurrency forums and social media circles. Some influencers even encourage their followers to "hodl" various cryptocurrency forums and social media circles. Origin of Hod! The word "hold" has been used in finance for a very long time as part of the buy-and-hold strategy. This investing method involves buying a financial asset and holding it for an indefinite period of time. This is related to the view that an investor should not be swayed by short-term market movements and look to the long-term view. The term "HODL" originates from a post made in 2013 on cryptocurrency forum Bitcointalk shortly after a move by the Chinese government caused the price of Bitcoin to fall drastically within a day. An intoxicated member typed out a post entitled "I AM HODLING" in response, detailing his general lousy luck with investing and his desire to keep holding onto his assets in the future. Soon after that incident, the term "hodling" became commonplace in the cryptocurrency enthusiast community. It made its way into memes and onto social media and became a way of signaling a token owner's desire to hang onto their assets. "Hodl" and Cryptocurrencies The biggest reason why "hodl" has become such a popular term is the general volatility of the prices of cryptocurrency tokens, even relatively stable ones such as Bitcoin and Ethereum, frequently have very volatile market swings. The cost of these tokens can fall 100% one month and then rise 300% within the next few months. Cryptocurrency prices are also prone to the movements of whales (a term for people or organizations that hold a very large amount of a particular token). If even one whale decides to sell a particular token, they could tank the price entirely. "HODL" is viewed as a way to combat these swings in price. An asset-holder who follows the strategy does not sell, even as the market changes. Many people who "HODL" do not even pay close attention to the day-to-day market movement of cryptos, instead preferring to take a long-term view of their tokens. Why Do People "Hodl?" Andreanicolini/Shutterstock.com One of the biggest reasons why people view "hodl" as a viable strategy is their belief in the underlying technology and the use case behind it. Bitcoin and most other cryptocurrencies are based on a technology called blockchain, which has many uses, including a way to safely and anonymously make payments over the internet. Some people believe that Bitcoin is the future of all financial transactions rather than fiat currencies like Dollars and Euros. For many cryptocurrency owners, "hodling" is an intriguing prospect. The value of a single Bitcoin has gone from under a dollar when it first came out more than a decade ago to five-digit figures in recent years. Despite high market volatility, many cryptocurrency owners believe in the long-term financial prospects of Bitcoin and other tokens. At the same time, many other people believe that buying cryptocurrency is equivalent to gambling. Many people also believe that the values of cryptocurrencies are better when people buy and do not sell off their tokens. That is why "hodl" is such a well-used term in the community—it's often said to beginners who might have fears about holding such a volatile asset. "HODL" combats what crypto users call "FUD," which stands for "fear, uncertainty, and doubt." FUD can include anything from naysayers to governments to negative presses on the issue of cryptocurrencies and not other assets. If you want to use the term "hodl," reserve it for conversations about these tokens or you could be misinterpreted. If you run into people telling you to "hodl," there's a good chance that you've encountered cryptocurrency enthusiasts. Be sure to use good judgment in making critical financial decisions, such as purchasing a cryptocurrency. Never invest more than you can afford to lose. If you want to learn more about cryptocurrencies, start with our guide on Bitcoin.

