

Airline boss promises pilots bonus to keep flying

9th October, 2017



The boss of Europe's biggest low-cost airline has promised to increase the pay and working conditions of pilots to stop them leaving the company. Michael

O'Leary, CEO of Ryanair, made a personal pledge to the budget carrier's 4,200 pilots to address concerns that pilots are dissatisfied and want to quit the company. Pilots have been offered salary increases of up to \$11,700 and loyalty bonuses of \$14,000. A long-serving pilot told the BBC this was, "too little, too late." He said: "There is a lack of basic benefits [for pilots] - no free bottles of water, coffee or tea and no crew meals." He said pilots also had to buy their own uniform. He added: "People have just had enough of the toxic atmosphere."

Mr O'Leary is attempting to repair the damage done to Ryanair's reputation after a scheduling error with pilot holidays. The costly mistake meant more than 20,000 flights have been cancelled recently because of a lack of available pilots. This has affected over 700,000 passengers. An industry analyst said the airline made this costly error, "by initially disrespecting the skill set of pilots". He added: "In a rare move, [Ryanair] is being forced to backpedal, apologize and meet [pilots'] pay demands." O'Leary is confident that pilots will stay. He said: "I urge you to stay with Ryanair for a brighter, better future for you and your family." He added: "We are a very secure employer in a very insecure industry."

Sources: bloomberg.com / bbc.com / independent.co.uk

Writing

What are the pros and cons of being a pilot? Would you like to be one? Why?

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

boss / promised / pay / working conditions / airline / loyalty / bonus / atmosphere / repair / damage / mistake / flights / pilots / analyst / confident / brighter / future

True / False

- The airline in the article is Europe's biggest low-cost carrier. T / F
- The airline employs almost 42,000 pilots. T / F
- The airline offered a salary increase of up to \$14,000. T / F
- The airline provides pilots with uniforms free of charge. T / F
- The airline made a mistake with its pilots' holiday schedule. T / F
- Over 700,000 passengers have been affected by flight cancellations. T / F
- The article said pedals on airplanes weren't put back. T / F
- The airline is fairly sure that its pilots will not quit. T / F

Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- | | |
|----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. boss | a. fundamental |
| 2. pledge | b. trying |
| 3. basic | c. poisonous |
| 4. buy | d. at first |
| 5. toxic | e. (do an) about-face |
| 6. attempting | f. purchase |
| 7. costly | g. chief |
| 8. initially | h. trade |
| 9. backpedal | i. promise |
| 10. industry | j. expensive |

Discussion – Student A

- What do you think of low-cost airlines?
- What do you think of pilots?
- Should pilots of budget carriers be well paid?
- What is your favourite airline?
- What do you think are the difficulties of being a pilot?
- What do you think of pilots having to buy their own uniform?
- What advice do you have for Ryanair?
- Have you ever worked in a toxic atmosphere?

BreakingNewsEnglish - The Mini Lesson

Phrase Match

- | | |
|---|----------------------------|
| 1. working | a. to Ryanair's reputation |
| 2. address concerns that pilots | b. benefits |
| 3. loyalty | c. backpedal |
| 4. There is a lack of basic | d. are dissatisfied |
| 5. People have just had enough of | e. analyst |
| 6. attempting to repair the damage done | f. bonuses |
| 7. more than 20,000 flights have been | g. conditions |
| 8. industry | h. employer |
| 9. Ryanair is being forced to | i. the toxic atmosphere |
| 10. We are a very secure | j. cancelled |

Discussion – Student B

- What do you think about what you read?
- How safe are budget carriers?
- What do you think of flying?
- Would you like to be a pilot?
- How would you feel if your flight was canceled?
- Have you ever backpedaled on a decision you made?
- Why do you think the airline industry is insecure?
- What questions would you like to ask Ryanair's CEO?

Spelling

- made a personal lgepde
- the budget rrairerc
- pilots are eiisdtdafss
- olytaly bonuses of \$14,000
- pilots also had to buy their own omunifr
- toxic pseraotmh
- the damage done to Ryanair's optruetnai
- a liudegcshn error with pilot holidays
- a lack of eabaillav pilots
- An industry ansylat
- Ryanair is being forced to lacobkped
- in a very cnsruiee industry

Answers – Synonym Match

1. g	2. i	3. a	4. f	5. c
6. b	7. j	8. d	9. e	10. h

Role Play

Role A – Airplane Food

You think airplane food is the best thing about flying. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): in-flight entertainment, the cabin crew or landing.

Role B – In-flight Entertainment

You think in-flight entertainment is the best thing about flying. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): airplane food, the cabin crew or landing.

Role C – The Cabin Crew

You think the cabin crew is the best thing about flying. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): in-flight entertainment, airplane food or landing.

Role D – Landing

You think landing is the best thing about flying. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): in-flight entertainment, the cabin crew or airplane food.

Speaking – Airplanes

Rank these with your partner. Put the best things about airplanes at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|-----------------|---------------------------|
| • pilots | • in-flight entertainment |
| • cabin crew | • checking in / boarding |
| • airplane food | • the whole experience |
| • taking off | • landing |

Answers – True False

a	T	b	F	c	F	d	F	e	T	f	T	g	F	h	T
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.