

Subject: A sharper stress test for menu innovation proposals

The proposal's real warning is that precise economics can make an indefensible idea look practical when the human and reputational costs are excluded.

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Jonathan Swift's **A Modest Proposal** is a useful warning for anyone evaluating a menu or product concept: a proposal can sound efficient, scalable, and broadly beneficial while hiding an unacceptable premise.

The speaker uses precise calculations, market forecasts, culinary detail, and a list of supposed winners to normalize the unthinkable. He also dismisses less dramatic reforms-not because they are impossible, but because there is no sincere will to implement them.

That creates a practical review lens for new concepts: What assumptions are doing the persuasive work? Which costs or harms are missing? Does operational efficiency obscure consumer, employee, or PR risk? Are we optimizing the wrong outcome?

Would you be open to a one-page version of this stress test for menu proposals?