



“You’re Fired!” —How to Dodge those Dreaded Words

Six “Must Haves”
for Job Security

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There Is a Meeting.
You Are Not Invited.



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multiple choice

poll

Please vote now




How many downsizings, rightsizings, or layoffs have you personally experienced?

- None
- 1
- 2 or more

Datasets

- Analysis of an organization's data where downsizing occurred
- Managers were surveyed/interviewed about reasons for an individual's derailment
- Results were combined with prior 360-degree ratings, performance and potential ratings, employee survey results, and personality assessments

The organization was recognized as doing some of the best practices in leadership, performance management, and feedback.



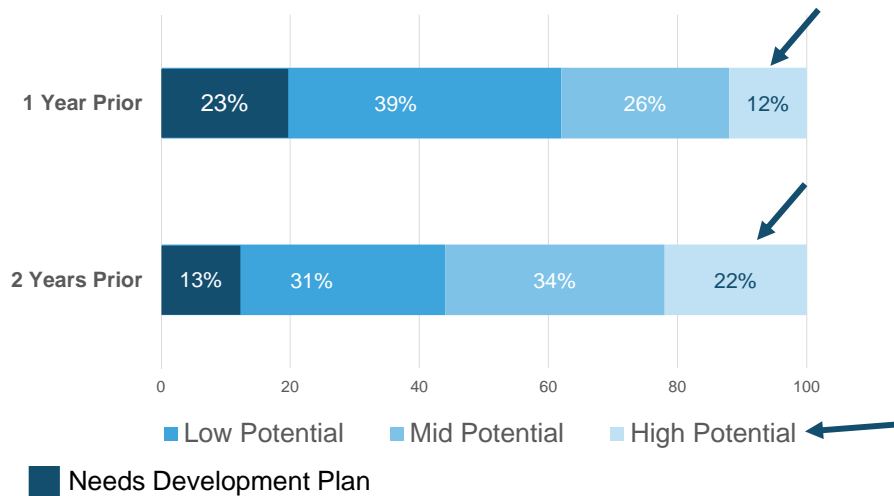
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Just-World Hypothesis

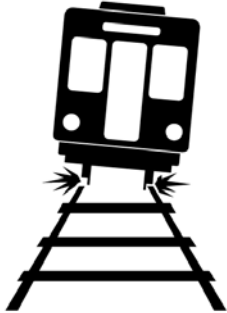
- Belief—Bad things happen to bad people
- Melvin Lerner noticed the tendency of observers to blame victims for their suffering



Did People Realize That They Were in Trouble?



6 Factors that Led to Derailment



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1. Loss of Sponsorship or Support

59% of managers indicated this was a significant factor

- *“Despite consistently weak performance and limited professional capability, this individual was a master networker, leveraging his connections to build a support system of enablers and highly placed political shielding. When his greatest champion exited his protection was lost.”*



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You Need Sponsors

- Have only one sponsor? You could be in trouble.
- Who would be your sponsors? Who would speak up for you?
- Make special effort to network with potential sponsors. Help them understand your work and contributions.



2. Not Viewed as Strategic

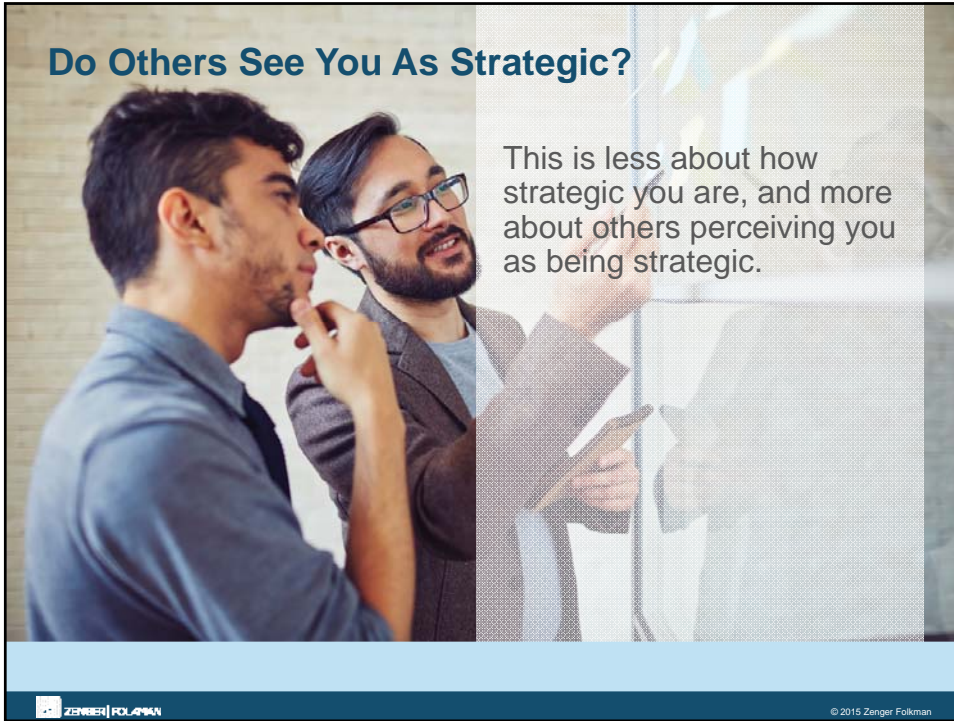


46% rated leaders as lacking in adequate strategic and execution capabilities.

- Operations-oriented, not strategic
- Couldn't lead an organization or set a strategy for the future.
- Overreliance on narrow set of technical expertise
- Handled narrow roles well, but floundered in organizational navigation and setting strategic direction
- Lacked business focus, strategy, developing organization—not a leader, but deep functional expert

Do Others See You As Strategic?

This is less about how strategic you are, and more about others perceiving you as being strategic.

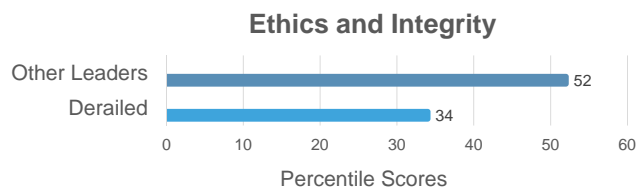


The Pantry

- Daughter reorganized pantry
- I couldn't find anything
- I needed to understand her strategy



3. Ethics and Integrity



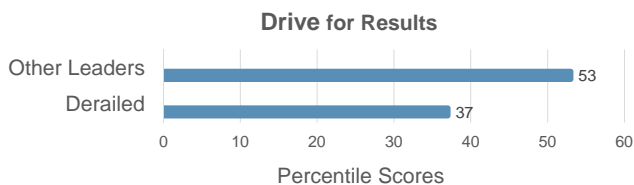
- Poor judgment regarding use of company funds
- Arranged fictitious invoices for money not spent so they could roll that over to the following fiscal year
- Lack of compliance with company policy in their role
- Terminated for an inappropriate relationship with a former subordinate. This followed a series of inappropriate comments and actions towards women during his career

Questionable Ethics Make This An Easy Decision

- Do you push the boundaries or not follow procedures?
- Are you clear about the difference between taking risks and ethical violations?

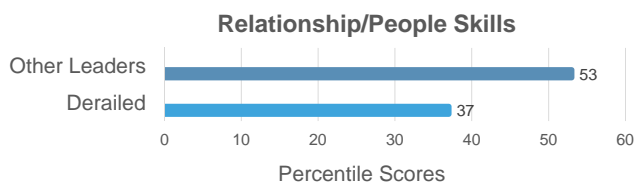


4. Failure to Consistently Deliver Results



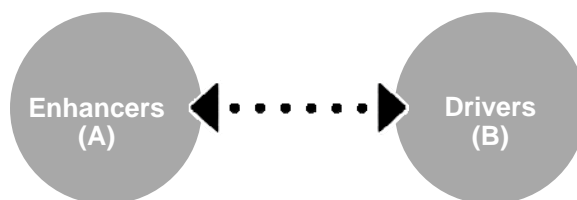
- Missed deadlines, over committed, set low bar
- Loss of effectiveness over time
- Struggled to take ideas into action
- Viewed as someone who didn't work very hard
- Failure to consistently achieve short and long-term commitments

5. Interpersonal Skills/Cultural Fit



- Technically strong, but weaker than peers in leadership, influence, managing change.
- Collateral damage always occurred. Needed collaboration and people skills.
- Always viewed as a difficult person to deal with. Held info and used it as power.
- Brilliant technical knowledge, but unable to manage impulsive behaviors.
- Leadership behavior was inappropriate. Created hostile environment for women on team.
- Anger issues/temperamental.
- Unable to work with others—combative, created toxic environment around them.

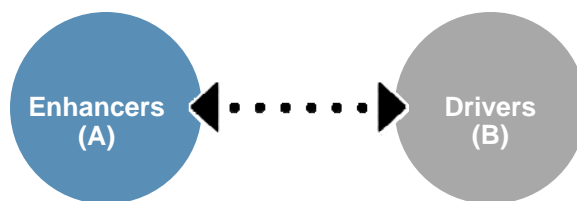
Relationship Between Two Competencies on Employee Engagement



- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staying in touch with issues and concerns of others • Being trusted • Acting as role models • Giving honest feedback in a helpful way • Being concerned about developing others | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishing high standards of excellence • Getting people to stretch for goals that go beyond what they originally thought possible • Keeping people focused on the highest priority, goals, and objectives • Doing everything possible to achieve goals • Continually improving |
|---|---|

Study based on 160,576 employees

First They Looked at “A Without B”

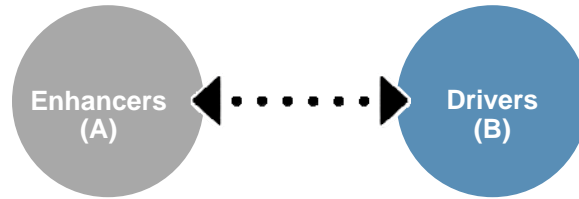


If this is a strength...

but this isn't...

% of highly engaged employees at 90th percentile: 7%

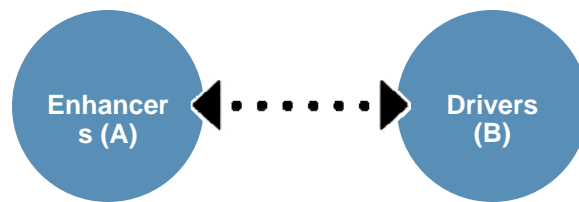
Then They Looked at “B Without A”



If this is *not* strength... but this *is*...

% of highly engaged employees at 90th percentile: 9%

The Power of “A+B” Led to the Notion of “Powerful Combinations”




If these are *both* strengths...

% of highly engaged employees at 90th percentile: 7%

~~16%~~
+9%

68%!

Is It Better To Be an Enhancer or a Driver?

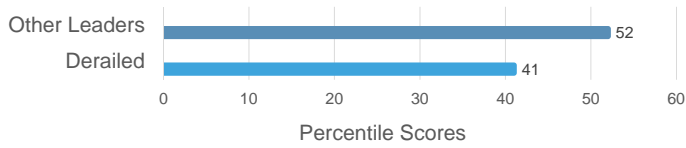


- It's better to be an enhancing driver. Both skills are critical.
- The problem: people tend to choose one or the other.
- In our study to create the powerful combination, skill level was set at the 75th percentile.
 - A person can be “great” at driving, but only needs to be “pretty good” at enhancing to achieve the 75th percentile.

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6. Resistance to Organizational and Personal Change

Asks for and Responds to Feedback



Category	Percentile Score
Other Leaders	52
Derailed	41

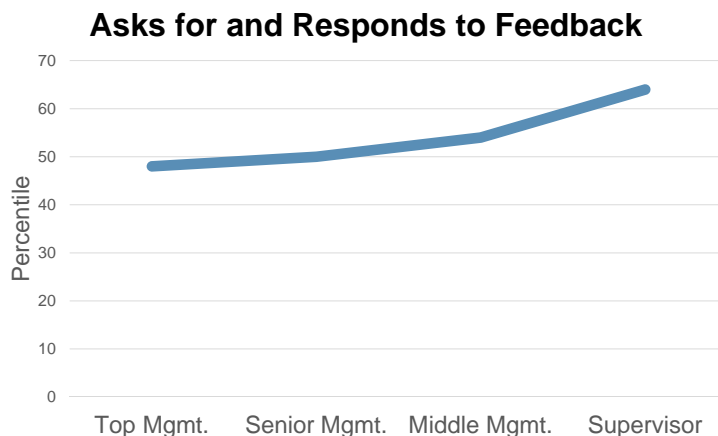
Percentile Scores

32% of those who derailed were seen as unable to adapt to a new situation.

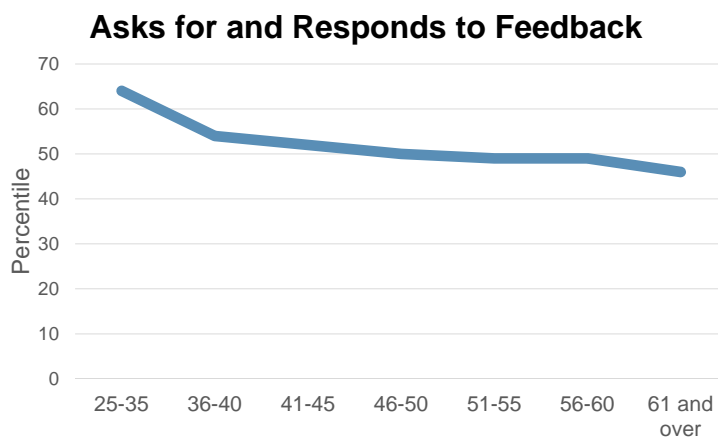
- Became a barrier to change and needed to be moved out.
- Unwilling to change with the organization, resistant and inflexible to new approaches.
- Learning over time, was not open to feedback.
- Resisted feedback and refused to change/learn.
- Unable to approach issues from strategic perspective, did not display urgency or interest in learning new skills or approaching issues from a new/different perspective.

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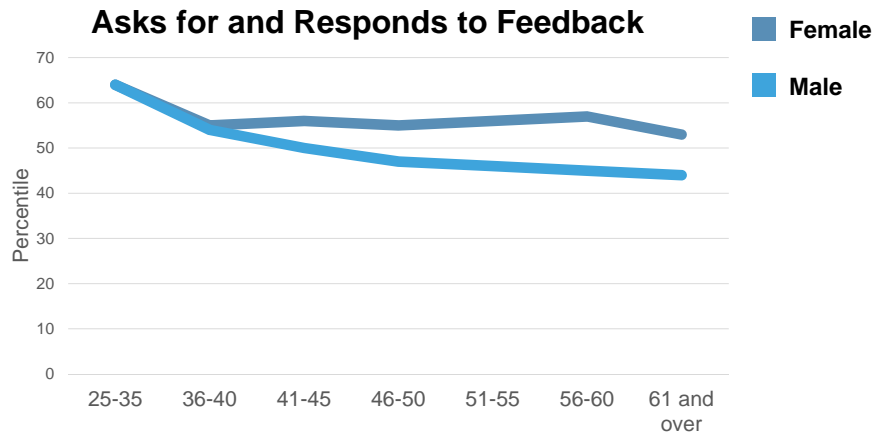
When Promoted, People Ask For and Respond to Feedback Less Often



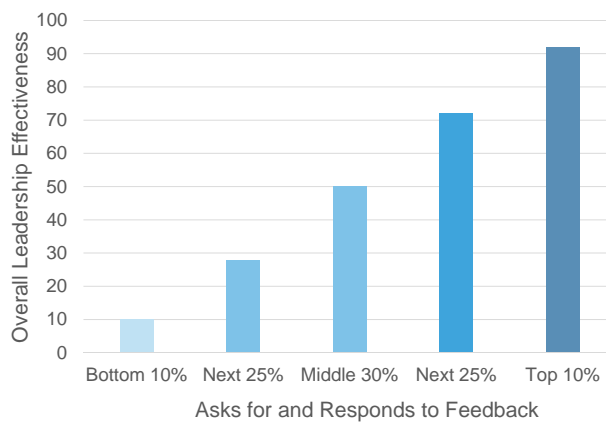
As People Age, They Ask For and Respond to Feedback Less Often



Males are Much Less Effective Than Females at Asking for and Responding to Feedback



Impact of Asking for and Responding to Feedback on Overall Leadership Effectiveness



Results from 16,644 leaders


For leaders struggling in your organization, which factor is most common?

1. Loss of sponsorship or support
2. Not viewed as strategic
3. Ethics and integrity
4. Failure to consistently deliver results
5. Interpersonal skills/cultural fit
6. Resistance to organizational and personal change

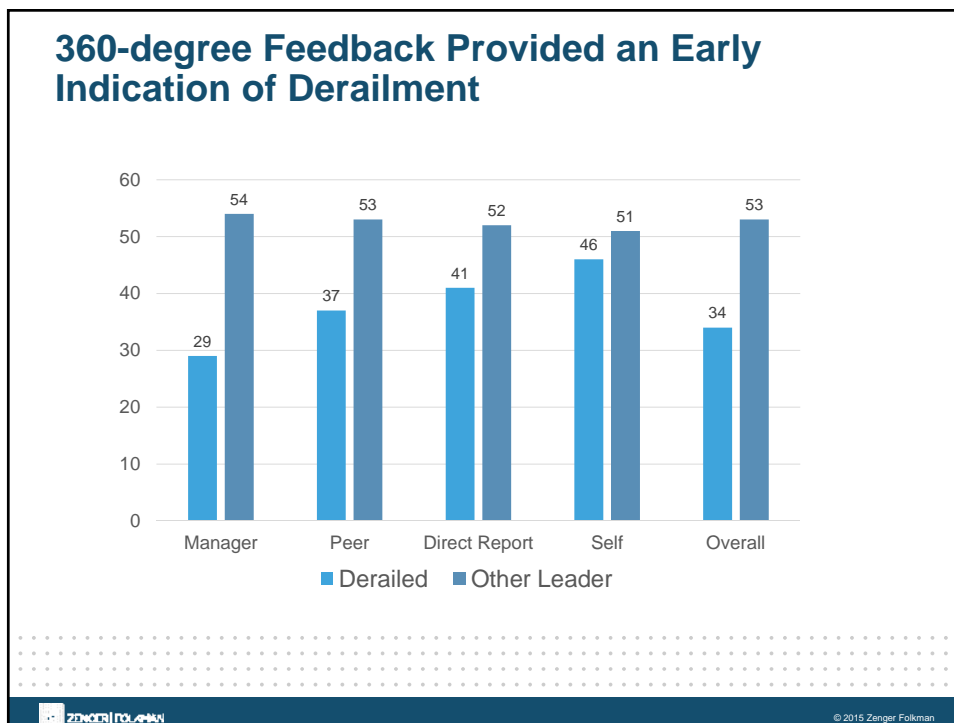
multiple choice

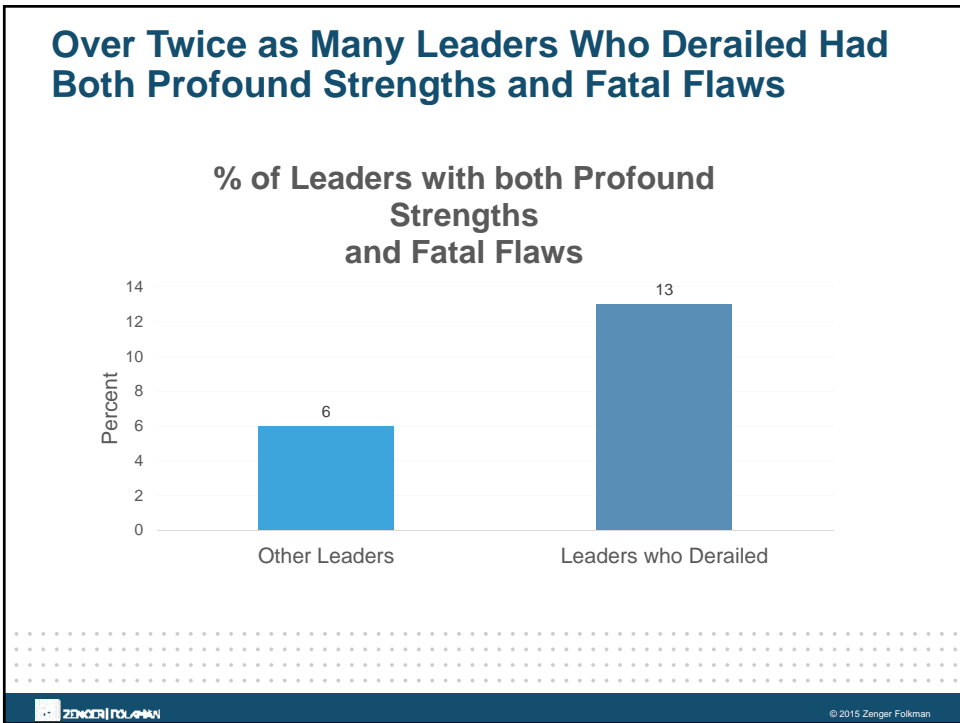
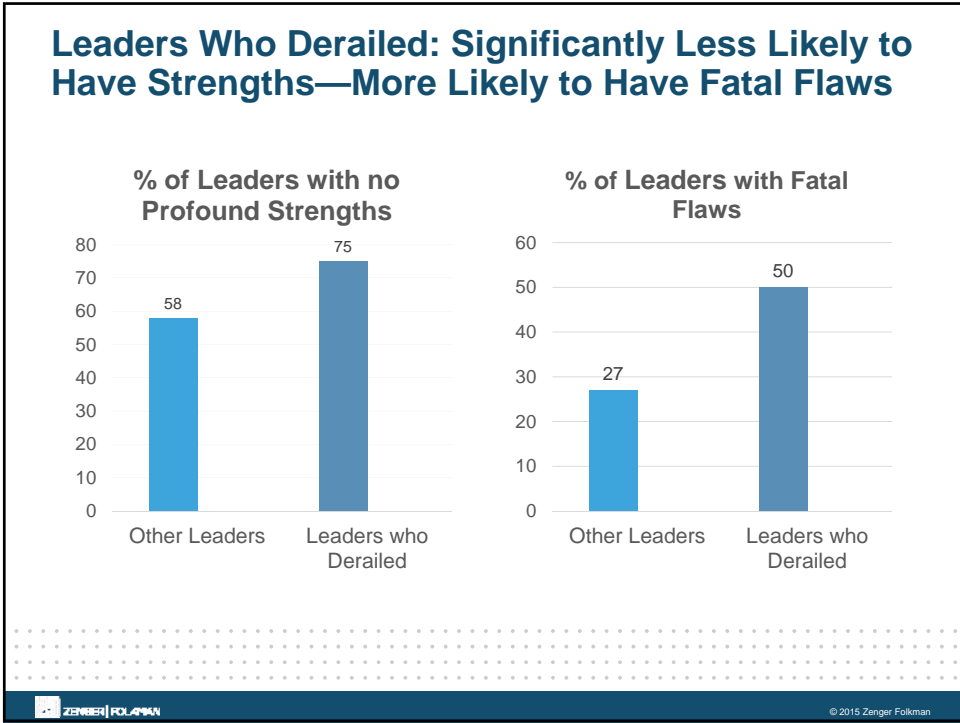
poll

Please vote now



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Conclusions

- Everyone ought to be a little bit paranoid—the world is not just.
- Promotions and positive reviews can bring a false sense of security. The organization wants to know, “What have you done for me lately.”
- Openness to feedback and willingness to change are the keys to continued success.
- Leaders need continued 360-degree feedback and the message that “good is NOT great.”
- Events such as downsizing ought to be studied.



Zenger Folkman helps organizations flourish by increasing the effectiveness of leaders at all levels. Our unique, strengths-based development methodology enables leaders to move faster and higher.

Each offering is solidly grounded in research, utilizing our extensive empirical database. The end results are statistically significant improvements in how leaders lead, how their employees engage and how their companies profit; allowing both leaders and organizations to soar to new heights.

THANK YOU

Contact us at info@zengerfolkman.com
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