

LEAD Asia

Leadership News from the **Center for Creative Leadership**

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Diverse Cultures

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A Message from Sureish Nathan

MANAGING DIRECTOR, CCL - ASIA-PACIFIC

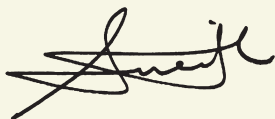
As the world begins to emerge from a historic recession, organizations everywhere need more than just new ideas and smart strategies to thrive. They need well-prepared and effective leaders. Getting the right executives and managers into the right roles can accelerate your strategy and results in good times and in bad. You need first-class leaders right now, at all levels of your organization, to steer through increased competition, volatile financial markets and uncertain demand. Even more, you will need them to drive innovation and growth in the future.

You probably do have some of these talented and tested leaders in your company. In all likelihood, you do not have nearly enough of them. At the Center for Creative Leadership (CCL®), we recently surveyed more than 2,000 leaders (including hundreds in Asia-Pacific) about the leadership skills most important for the future. The results were alarming. The four most important skills for future leaders – leading people, strategic planning, inspiring commitment and managing change – are among the weakest skills of today's executives and managers. In other words, there exists a glaring gap between the skills leaders have today and the ones they'll need to succeed in just a few years. At CCL, we call this the "leadership gap."

This gap can have a very real and harmful impact on your bottom line. But the gap can also be bridged. You can conduct assessments to understand the leadership strengths and weaknesses in your organization. You can chart a leadership strategy that delivers the skills needed to execute your business strategy. You can create systems to target, recruit and develop talent. We can help – in fact, it's what we've been doing with businesses, government agencies and non-governmental organizations around the globe for 40 years.

On a personal note, it's my honor to serve as the new leader of CCL's operations in Asia-Pacific. On behalf of my team, we look forward to continuing our valued relationships with existing clients. We are also eager to help new clients unlock their leadership potential to accelerate their business results and prepare for a promising future. Let's talk soon about how we can partner with you.

Warm regards,



Sureish D. Nathan
Vice President and Managing Director,
CCL Asia-Pacific
Center for Creative Leadership



Developing Conflict Competence

Craig E. Runde and Tim A. Flanagan

In today's world economy, we find ourselves interacting with people from very different backgrounds and experience. We are at a time in history where boundaries between countries and cultures are much more useful in defining challenges and opportunities than who owns a piece of ground.

In this business environment, characterized by the ever-expanding diversity of the workforce, increasing mobility of workers, advances in technology, acquisitions, mergers and partnerships, it is increasingly common to work with clients and teammates with whom we have an abundance of differences. These differences provide potential for both innovation and discord. Differences can one moment appear fascinating and curious while in the next moment result in disagreements and despair. Conflict between and among us is inevitable. The question is how best to deal with conflict and our natural differences in ways that lead to meaningful results and satisfying relationships.

Conflict Dynamics

During presentations, we often ask people what words come to mind when they think of conflict. They usually choose words like *anger*, *upsetting*, *frustration*, and *distress*. Less frequently, we hear terms like *opportunity* or *curiosity*. When we ask participants to characterize most of the words they have heard, they describe them as negative.

Asked how they typically deal with conflict, the vast majority tell us they prefer to avoid it. Many people tell us that conflict is just "too uncomfortable" while others indicate that their cultural norms emphasize relationship harmony over direct discussion of differences.

We believe the key question is: How can individuals and teams use conflict as a catalyst for new understanding and a novel approach to the many challenges they face, while at the same time lessening its harmful effects?

Conflict Competence

Reactions to conflict are influenced by common biological and psychological factors. When we sense threats to our interests or find that our expectations have been broken, our emotions can easily be aroused. This, in turn, can trigger fight or flight behavioral responses. At the same time, different cultural norms about how to handle emotions and conflict behaviors affect the ways that we engage conflict. Some norms support direct discussion of issues while others emphasize indirect approaches to dealing with the issues caused by differences. Some cultural norms

encourage open sharing of feelings associated with conflict and others suggest that emotional restraint is more appropriate.

So how can you manage your personal responses and at the same time deal with others who may look at conflict in very different ways? Are there ways of turning conflict from an adversarial process to one where people can collaborate and use their differences to their advantage? We suggest a personal approach that emphasizes three steps – *cooling down*, *slowing down* and *engaging constructively*.

When people's emotions are aroused by conflict, they are at risk of reacting in ineffective ways. Before saying or doing something you later regret, it is important to allow your emotional turmoil to subside. You can calm your emotions in a number of ways, including taking some calming breaths or thinking of something pleasant. Brain research has shown that reinterpreting the current conflict in ways that see the other person's actions in a less hostile light can lessen negative emotions. So too can a process called *mindfulness*, which involves stepping back and looking at your thoughts and feelings in a non-judgmental way. All of these approaches can help bring about emotional balance, which is a necessary step in conflict competence. In a particular conflict, if your emotions are so strong that despite your best efforts you are about to react negatively – STOP! This is the point to slow down and allow yourself extra time to cool down before proceeding.

Once your emotions are under control, you can constructively deal with the problem. However, challenges may still exist, because people from different cultures often view conflict in different ways. We believe that in most cases people will be helped by a behavior described as *perspective taking*, which means trying to understand how the other person sees the issue. It involves careful listening. When you are engaging with a person from another culture, consider how that culture approaches conflict. This may take time, but if you are able to understand one another on a deeper level, you will develop a much better sense of how to resolve the conflict.

Once you have developed personal conflict competence, you can bring these concepts to your team and organization. You can encourage them to develop norms to manage the inevitable conflicts that arise. By doing so, you will also strengthen the personal relationships needed to effectively implement these decisions.

feature



Craig Runde and Tim Flanagan are directors at the Eckerd College Leadership Development Institute and are co-authors of *Becoming a Conflict Competent Leader* and *Building Conflict Competent Teams*, published by Jossey-Bass and the Center for Creative Leadership.

For the Gilson Family, CCL is a Household Name

As head of Molecular Biology at Codexis Laboratories Singapore (CLS), Lynne Gilson is enjoying the challenges of a start-up operation – designing labs and hiring, training and mentoring staff. While working for Codexis, Inc. in the US, Lynne jumped at the opportunity to build an operation in Singapore. As she said, “These opportunities don’t come along often.”

When her HR department suggested she attend a CCL development program, Lynne initially felt it was an unfavorable reflection on her leadership skills. She shared this sentiment with her father, a retired business leader and former manager of Corning Glassworks International Division. Eugene Gilson reminded his daughter that he had attended – and greatly benefited from – CCL’s Leadership Development Program (LDP)[®] earlier in his career. Despite having a Bachelor’s degree in engineering and an MBA in finance when he enrolled in LDP, Mr. Gilson told his daughter that he had never been exposed to the things he learned in the program – and that he had easily applied this newfound knowledge to his career in manufacturing, production, engineering and financial management. At his urging, Lynne decided to give the program a try.

For her, as for her father years before, the program’s focus on self-awareness was one of the best takeaways. Lynne was particularly struck by her score on the Change Style Indicator. Twenty points away from everyone else on the “originator” scale, it was clear that she thrives on and initiates change. Additionally, the program gave her an opportunity to reflect on her career path. She knew that every few years she tended to change jobs – something she had always viewed as a failure on her part. Yet she now realized that this pattern of “burnout” was actually a by-product of her need to continually push and refine her skill set. She commented, “It helped me understand my strengths, how I was already capitalizing on them, and how I could use them to even greater advantage.”



Eugene Gilson and daughter, Lynne Gilson

Other aspects of the program also proved quite valuable to Lynne, including a simulation that required participants to design and build a bridge. Recalling this activity, she said, “It was good for me to see the importance of the information chain and how, if you are micromanaging, vital information sometimes gets lost or fails to be communicated. It was a timely lesson, since this is something I often experience in my job.”

The coaching element of the program was also very powerful. Lynne’s feedback coach helped her identify consistent themes from her assessment data and she was able to set behavioral goals that would help sharpen her leadership skills. One of the strongest findings was the need for her to delegate more. Lynne admits that she finds managing others and delegating difficult. However, she

greatly enjoys coaching and teaching – abilities that are crucial for working effectively with younger scientists. She said, “My challenge is to let them do things for themselves. As the team develops, I am doing more of this and it is working well. I am so proud of them.”

In addition to the lessons she would learn from the program, Lynne’s father encouraged her to reach out to her trainers and fellow participants – people who could share their knowledge and experience. She did just that, having connected with a “wonderfully diverse group” of people who could offer valuable insights on her leadership challenges.

After the program, Lynne and her father both agreed on one thing: Even very successful people can benefit from a leadership program, because there are always things you can do to improve. She concludes, “LDP helped me see things from a different perspective. I now feel confident in my abilities and my career decisions, and I know that I am where I belong.”

Publications

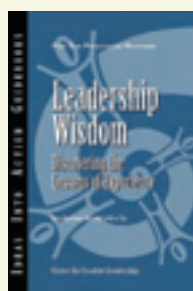
The following publications complement the articles found in this issue of LEADAsia. To place an order for any of these titles, please visit CCL’s bookstore at www.ccl.org/publications



Building Conflict Competent Teams

Craig E. Runde
and Tim A. Flanagan

Publisher: Jossey-Bass, 2008
ISBN 978-0-470-18947-4,
Stock #2273, \$29.95



Leadership Wisdom: Discovering the Lessons of Experience

Rola Ruohong Wei and Jeffrey Yip

Publisher: CCL Press, 2008
ISBN 978-1-60491-027-8, Stock #440, \$11.95

Contemporary Leadership and Intercultural Competence: Exploring the Cross-Cultural Dynamics Within Organizations

Edited by
Michael A. Moodian

Publisher:
Sage Publications,
October 2008
Available at Amazon.com



CCL Briefings

Financial Times Survey Ranks CCL No. 6 Worldwide

The Center for Creative Leadership (CCL®) ranked No. 6 overall in the 2009 *Financial Times* worldwide survey of executive education. CCL has ranked in the survey's overall Top 10 for five straight years, placing it in the company of many of the world's elite business schools. It is the only institution in the survey focused exclusively on leadership education and research. CCL was one of 45 institutions globally that were ranked in the survey.



In addition, CCL ranked No. 7 worldwide for open-enrollment programs and No. 14 for custom programs. The *Financial Times* ranks open-enrollment providers in several sub-categories. CCL placed in the Top 10 in eight of them: aims achieved; course design; teaching materials; faculty; follow-up; preparation; new skills and learning; and international locations. CCL also placed in the Top 10 in four Custom sub-categories: future use; teaching methods and materials; food & accommodation; and facilities.

The *Financial Times* executive education rankings were based on surveys of organizations and individuals from around the world who rated leading executive education providers, such as Harvard, Duke, INSEAD and IMD, for quality and impact.

Responding to the rankings, CCL President and CEO John Ryan said, "At CCL, listening to our clients and creating impact for them is our top priority. The 2009 rankings show our work really does make a difference for them. We appreciate the feedback they have given us through this survey, and we'll use it to keep getting better. I am very proud of all my CCL colleagues worldwide."

CCL Opens Second Asian Office in India

Expanding its presence in the Asia-Pacific region, the Center for Creative Leadership (CCL®) has established a second Asian office in Pune, India, near Mumbai, India's business capital. The office opened April 24, 2009, and will work with senior leadership teams to deliver open-enrollment Individual Leader Development Programs such as LDP and Foundations of Leadership as well as custom programs. It also will be involved with CCL's Leadership Beyond Boundaries work in the social, social entrepreneurship and youth sectors.



Anupam Sirbhaiya, who is in charge of the new office, says clients will be a mix of multinational corporations and large home-grown Indian organizations, with specific emphasis on three major cities – New Delhi, Bangalore and Mumbai. "Indian companies have been making their mark on the international stage through overseas acquisitions and investments," he says. "On top of this, the influx of foreign investments into India should see a corresponding increase in demand for enhanced leadership skills and greater leadership capacity within companies located here."

In the APAC region, CCL's India location joins its Singapore office and campus, which opened in 2003.

CCL Launches New Assessment to Identify Gaps in Leadership Skills

In July, 2009, CCL introduced a unique new tool that can be used to assess managers' opinions about their development needs. Known as the Leadership Gap Indicator, this new assessment is designed to help organizations identify the effectiveness of leaders' current skills and draw attention to developmental needs that may exist.

The Leadership Gap Indicator grew out of a huge CCL research initiative in which 2,670 managers from 15 organizations in Singapore, India and the United States were surveyed. The organizations included multinational financial services giants, telecom/technology leaders, pharmaceutical companies and U.S. military branches.

"Having the right people in the right leadership positions can literally make or break an organization, especially during tough times," says Jean Leslie, CCL senior manager, new product development. "Unfortunately, though, most organizations don't have a way to apply the same rigor to their talent mix that they do to other aspects of their operations. We've designed our new assessment tool to provide the objective data needed to make those strategic decisions."

By assessing leadership competencies and identifying any gap between today's skills and those required for future success, organizations will have the data they need to begin making strategic plans for developing leadership talent for the future, Leslie says. The Leadership Gap Indicator is available for purchase on CCL's Web site.

CCL Visiting Fellow and Senior Researcher Receive Prestigious Award for Paper

CCL's 2009 H. Smith Richardson Visiting Fellow Dr. Dharm P.S. Bhawuk and CCL-APAC Senior Researcher Dr. Vijayan P. Munusamy are co-authors of a paper that received the 2009 Academy of Management's Rupe Chisholm Best Practical Theory Paper Award. Susan Mrazek, a doctoral candidate at the University of Hawai'i, was a third co-author. Bhawuk is professor of management and culture and community psychology at the University of Hawai'i. The Academy of Management is a leading professional organization for scholars that creates and disseminates knowledge on management and organizations.

The winning paper titled, "From Social Engineering to Community Transformation – Amul, Grameen Bank and Mondragon as Exemplar Organizations," argues that social change is more than rules, legislations and procedures; rather it requires nurturing and building people, and in the process, the community as well as the social change agent is transformed.

In addition, Munusamy's doctoral dissertation research on "Decoding the Meaning of Multiculturalism in Malaysia, Singapore and Hawai'i," also received best dissertation awards from the Academy of Management and the International Academy for Intercultural Research.



Bhawuk



Munusamy

Understanding the Leadership Gap

By Jean Brittain Leslie, Anand Chandrasekar, Ruohong Wei, Kelly Hannum and Yi Zhang

Past issues of this newsletter have touched upon an inaugural research study for CCL–Asia-Pacific. The study, called *Understanding the Leadership Gap*, identified “gaps” between leaders’ perceptions of the skills that are critical for their organizations’ success and the overall strength of their organizations’ leadership

research and innovation

on those skills. With all data

collected and more than 2,200 numbers analyzed, key observations related to the general state of leadership – and the need for leadership development that emerged from the study – follow.

Leaders in Asia-Pacific and in North America strongly agree on which skills are essential for effective leadership. Leaders in Singapore, India and the U.S. consider *leading people* (directing and motivating people), *strategic planning* (translating vision into realistic business strategies, including long-term objectives), *inspiring commitment* (recognizing and rewarding employees’ achievements), *managing change* (using effective strategies to facilitate organizational change), *resourcefulness* (working effectively with top management), *being a quick learner* (quickly learning new technical or business knowledge), and *doing whatever it takes* (persevering under adverse conditions) to be skills important now and in the future. The table below lists the highest percentage of leaders who rated the skills critical for success in their organization.

CRITICAL NOW

Leading people	73%
Strategic planning	64%
Managing change	63%
Resourceful	64%
Doing whatever it takes	64%
Inspiring commitment	62%
Being a quick learner	60%

CRITICAL FIVE YEARS FROM NOW

Leading people	89%
Strategic planning	86%
Inspiring commitment	86%
Managing change	82%
Resourceful	82%
Participative management	81%
Being a quick learner	79%

In addition, leaders rated the increased importance of *participative management* (involving others in early stages of critical initiatives), *employee development* (coaching and encouraging employees to develop in their careers), and *balancing personal life and work* (balancing work priorities with personal life so that neither are neglected) as necessary skills for the future.

Leaders lack the skills they need to be effective. Leaders in both Asia-Pacific and North America report an overwhelming lack of preparedness. When we compared the amount of skill leaders report demonstrating to what they report they need to be effective, we uncovered a surprising challenge – the presence of a skills gap. The following table presents the 10 skills that leaders consider current strengths, and compares it to what they perceive the leadership needs to be effective. Only 28 percent of leaders, for example, report demonstrating a large amount of the skill *doing whatever it takes*, while 53 percent of them report that they need a large amount of this skill to be effective.

TOP 10 CURRENT STRENGTHS

Doing whatever it takes	28%
Respecting individuals’ differences	30%
Culturally adaptable	23%
Composed	23%
Compassion and sensitivity	23%
Being a quick learner	22%
Resourceful	22%
Building and mending relationships	17%
Participative management	16%
Self-awareness	15%

TOP 10 NEEDED STRENGTHS

Inspiring commitment	60%
Strategic planning	59%
Leading people	58%
Resourceful	58%
Employee development	55%
Managing change	55%
Participative management	54%
Composed	54%
Doing whatever it takes	53%
Building and mending relationships	51%

In other words, managers reported an overwhelming need for leadership development. Statistically significant differences between leaders’ *current* strengths and *needed* strengths were found across all countries, all industries and all levels.

Leaders in Asia and the U.S. perceive the greatest weaknesses in their leadership capacity to be in the areas considered critical for their organizations’ success.

Examinations of the skills leaders considered critical for success in the future with perceptions of their current strengths revealed the presence of a universal leadership gap. For example, the first table in this article reports that 79 percent of managers consider *being a quick learner* to be of critical importance five years from now, while the second table reports that only 22 percent of leaders demonstrate adequate strength in this skill. The most notable leadership gaps from a statistical standpoint are *leading people* (directing and motivating people), *strategic planning* (translating vision into realistic business strategies including long-term objectives), *managing change* (using effective strategies to facilitate organizational change) and *employee development* (coaching and encouraging employees to develop in their career).

These skills are perceived to be critical to success and also the weakest in terms of current strength. In other words, these are the biggest leadership gaps.

Leaders do not report major problems in the way of their career paths. Studies conducted by the Center for Creative Leadership since 1983 have identified flaws that cause once-successful managers to derail, or come off the track, while moving towards senior leadership positions. Results from these research studies have identified five major flaws that contribute to derailment: difficulty meeting business objectives; problems with interpersonal relationships; difficulty building and leading a team; inability to adapt and change effectively in organizations; and being unable to manage outside of one's current function. The leaders surveyed in Singapore, India and the U.S. reported low potential for derailment in their organizations. Good news, at last: derailment is not a cause for major concern.

What does this all mean? The leaders in this study let us know they do not think the leadership in their organizations is prepared for the future – a stunning and somewhat troubling finding. For researchers at the Center for Creative Leadership, however, it provides strong evidence to support the need for leadership development, which is our mission. There is no doubt these leaders are working in highly unpredictable business environments.

Critical forces that are intensifying the need for skill development include: increased competition brought by globalization; the use of advanced technology; the need to deal with rapid economic change and developments; the flattening of organizational structures; changes in workforce demographics; and global competition for skilled workers. Globalization has changed the nature of work, the workforce, and the workplace – all resulting in changes in the nature of leadership. Competition for skilled workers is being experienced worldwide and the result for economically booming countries like India is a shortage of leaders. Similarly, the mean age of the North American workforce is increasing, resulting in predictions of an upcoming talent shortage. Further contributing to the leadership crisis is the lack of effective talent management. A recent survey indicated that the current state of talent management is in disarray (DDI, 2006). Most companies know the correct steps for successful talent management (e.g., early identification of leadership potential, coaching and development, etc.) but most are failing to incorporate them.

Suggestions for Bridging the Leadership Gap

There is a direct link between an organization's ability to provide leaders with the development opportunities they most value and the overall strength of the leadership (Corporate Leadership Council, 2001). What can organizations do?

- Diagnose leadership development needs. Identify the capabilities leaders need now *and in the future* to execute and sustain the organization's strategy.

- Develop clear, specific goals and strategies for individual leadership development. Assess managers' strengths and weaknesses as leaders against the core competencies identified in the diagnosis step.
- Excel at recruiting, identifying and developing talent, performance management and retention.
- Evaluate how well these efforts are paying off across the organization. What additional resources are needed? What metrics are in place to assess impact?
- Provide a continuous loop of feedback, coaching and assessment towards goal attainment.

THE METHOD AND ANALYSIS

Number of participating managers: 2,200

Country of residence: Singapore: 43%
India: 20%
U.S.: 37%

Industry breakdown: Financial services: 63%
Information technology: 37%

Gender: Male: 71%
Female: 29%

Organizational level: Mid-level managers: 52%
Upper-middle managers: 30%
Senior-level managers: 13%
Executive-level managers: 5%

Data were collected from a modified version of Benchmarks® a 360-degree tool that assesses the characteristics of successful executives. Using a 9-point, Likert-type response format (1 = extremely small amount and 9 = extremely large amount), managers rated the level of skills peers in their organization are currently demonstrating and what they need to be more effective. Using a 7-point, Likert-type response format (1 = not at all important and 7 = critically important), managers also rated the importance of the leadership skills for implementing the organization's strategy as well as what is generally important within the organization.

Acknowledgement

The Center for Creative Leadership gratefully acknowledges the Singapore Economic Development Board for their support of this research.

Reference

Barrett, A. & Beeson, J. (2001). *Developing Business Leadership for 2010*. New York: The Conference Board.

Wellins, R.S. & Caver, K. (2006). *DDI Survey Findings From The Conference Board 2006 Talent Management Strategies Conference*. Developmental Dimensions International, Inc. (DDI).

More information

If you would like to learn more about this research or take part in a leadership effectiveness survey to diagnosis your organization, please contact us at cclasia@ccl.org

Program Offerings

Individuals attending our open-enrollment programs benefit from a thorough assessment of their leadership strengths and developmental needs in a confidential, secure environment. They also work with a diverse and experienced staff that provides a variety of learning methods and opportunities. The practical application of learnings to their work environment, as well as the interactions with executives and managers from other organizations, provides specialized, targeted and action-oriented strategies. For more information, visit our Web site at www.ccl.org/asia, e-mail asiaregs@ccl.org or call **+65 6854 6000**.

Custom Solutions

For further information on how CCL-Asia can deliver tailored educational solutions for specific organizational leadership challenges, please e-mail cclasia@ccl.org or telephone **+65 6854 6000**.

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM (LDP)[®] www.ccl.org/asialdp

2009 SCHEDULE	
DATE	LOCATION
14 - 18 September	Singapore
26 - 30 October	Singapore
30 Nov - 4 Dec	Singapore

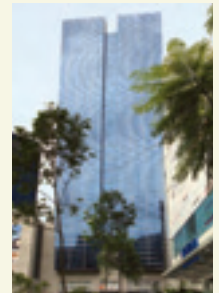
2010 SCHEDULE	
DATE	LOCATION
11 - 15 January	Singapore
1 - 5 February	Singapore
8 - 12 March	Singapore



About the Center for Creative Leadership (CCL)[®]

CCL has been delivering programs in Asia since the 1980s. The increased importance of Asia in the world economy and the central role played by Asian managers – as a result of global expansion and integration – provided the impetus for the establishment in 2003 of CCL's Singapore campus.

The Center for Creative Leadership is a top-ranked, global provider of executive education that unlocks individual and organizational potential through its exclusive focus on leadership education and research. Founded in 1970 as a nonprofit, educational institution, CCL helps clients worldwide cultivate creative leadership – the capacity to achieve more than imagined by thinking and acting beyond boundaries – through an array of programs, products and other services. Ranked among the world's top providers of executive education by *BusinessWeek* and the *Financial Times*, CCL is headquartered in Greensboro, N.C., with campuses in Colorado Springs, Colo.; San Diego, Calif.; Brussels, Belgium; and Singapore. Its work is supported by more than 450 faculty members and staff.



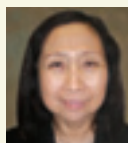
CCL-Asia-Pacific
Singapore

Staff

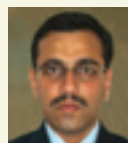
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TC Yeo
Senior Enterprise Associate



Eleanor Alandy
Coaching Talent Director



Anupam Sirbhahiya
Regional Director



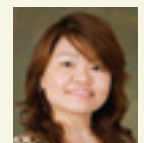
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Editorial Team: Joyce Jenkins, Angelina Pereira, Flontina Miller, Stephen Martin and Jane Koo

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