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Theoretical Foundations of Leadership in TQM

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There is a raised awareness of the need for improvement within our organizations. This awareness has been the catalyst for many leaders to implement the Total Quality Management philosophy as a way of life in many organizations across the U.S and abroad. This paper discusses the leadership necessary to successfully make the transformation from the "way we've been doing things for the past thirty years "to the "total quality way." The discussion looks at many variables involved in leading this transformation and supports the Transformational Leadership Theory as the best leadership for implementing improvement strategy changes such as TQM.

Key Words: Total Quality Management, Leadership, Managing Change

Introduction

Throughout history leaders have emerged to deal with a gambit of needs. A few individuals that come to mind include Napoleon, Churchill, Martin Luther King, Joan of Arc, and perhaps, W. Edwards Deming. Each of these people, independent of their race, sex, creed, religion, or nationality, had a desire to make changes within their (systems) society. Even-though these leaders achieved differing levels of success, each of them had a clear vision, along with a well established, long-range plan for obtaining that vision. This author defines a vision as the desired future position of a system or organization some twenty-plus years in the future. In other words, a vision is where a leader wants to take his followers in terms of philosophy, goals, strategies, and the methodologies to obtain, maintain, and continuously improve this new system of values and management.

Leaders recognize that changes cannot be "trendy" nor can they be "quick fixes". Lasting and effective changes require extensive planning, effective leadership, and a constancy of purpose to see it through implementation. Two models currently being utilized for implementing change include Sink's (1992) Performance Improvement Planning Process (PIPP), a vital part of his Performance Management Process (PMP), and Deming/Shewhart's Plan-Do-Study-Act Model (PDSA).

Successful leaders throughout history have always had a vision for change from a current or existing state to a new enhanced state. These envisioned situations were developed with not only their followers in mind, but along with the leader's well thought out plan for obtaining, maintaining, and improving the desired change. The same holds true for those managers wishing to implement changes or adopt new styles of management or organizational systems such as Total Quality Management (TQM), the focus of this paper. This paper will identify the relative leadership theories required to support the implementation of TQM by first discussing the foundations of leadership. Second, this paper will attempt to determine what TQM actually

entails by developing an operational definition. This will be followed by a discussion of the implementation process of TQM. The fourth section of this paper will develop a correlation between the theories of leadership, TQM, and implementation procedures in order to offer thoughts on which leadership theories best support the Total Quality Management transformation. The paper will close by offering a summary and conclusions.

Foundations of Leadership

Prior to looking at the various theories of leading changes, one must define leadership. Leadership was broadly defined by Yukl (1989) as "influencing task objectives and strategies, influencing commitment and compliance in task behavior to achieve these objectives, influencing the culture of an organization." In simpler terms, leaders influence the actions and behaviors of their followers to obtain a shared vision or aim. According to Deming (1992), leadership must come from top-management and leaders must possess profound knowledge. By profound knowledge, Deming meant that one must have knowledge of systems, knowledge of variations (statistical thinking), knowledge of theory, and knowledge of psychology.

Leadership is quite different from managing. Leaders grow from mastering their own conflict that arises during their developing years using internal strength to survive. On the other hand, managers tend to perceive issues as positive progressions of events that must be planned, organized, scheduled, and controlled.

Leadership is based upon a common thread between those who lead and those who follow into the same moral and emotional commitments. A crucial element of leadership is the willingness of the leader to use their power in the best interest of all those involved within their organization (Zaleznik, 1989). Leadership should not be confused with heroism. Heroics come about as achieving outstanding levels of performance during dramatic situations, while leadership is the ability to foster superior performances time and time again. Leaders do so by constantly contributing to the thinking necessary to move organizations beyond problems to opportunities. In order to create the proper thinking perspective leaders must aggressively investigate and act on the current market to create opportunities. Now that we have discussed the principles of leader and leadership, let us identify some of the various leadership theories that have been linked to implementing change so that we can develop a higher level of understanding.

The Transformational Leadership Theory (Tichy and Devanna, 1986) contains four suggested personal characteristics of a leader: (a.) dominance, (b.) self-confidence, (c.) need for influence, and (d.) conviction of moral righteousness. These leaders are expected to deal with the paradox of predicting the unknown and sometimes unknowable.

These transformational leaders motivate their followers (Bass, 1985) by: (a.) raising their followers consciousness about the importance of outcomes, (b.) showing the value of group or organizational focus over that of individual focus, (c.) raising the workers' needs so that they value challenges, responsibility, and growth. The Behavioral Theory of Leadership, a paradigm shift away from Trait Theory, includes two dimensions of leadership. One of these dimensions is that of the employee-oriented leader, which focuses on involving and supporting the individual

worker. Another application of the Behavioral Theory is Blake and Mouton's Managerial Grid (1978) that reflects leadership styles on the interaction of a concern for the production (getting the job done) and a concern for people. Blake and Mouton believe that this interaction determines the success of management. The higher the concerns for both production and people the more whole-istically focused the leader, resulting in more successes (See Figure 1).

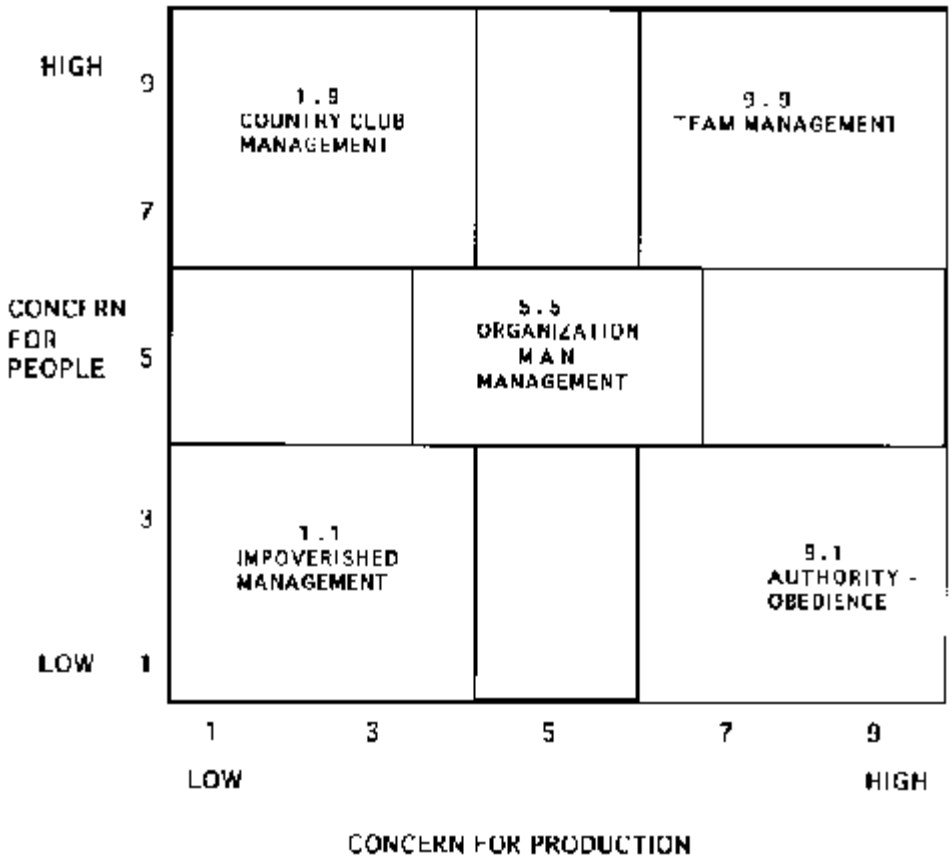

Figure 1. Blake and Mouton's Managerial Grid (1978)

Referring to the managerial grid, if someone has a high concern for the employees and a low concern for production, that person would find their management style in the corresponding segment of 1-9, a.k.a "country club management". This would be contrasted by the manager who has a high concern for production and a low concern for the employees, which results in what is characterized as an authoritarian type of manager in segment 9 - 1. Some of the principles incorporated in this theory include employee involvement, open communications, shared decision making and problem solving, teamwork, shared goals, and interdependence of teams or individuals, i.e... systems.

Another change leadership theory is that of Hersey and Blanchard's (1982) Situational Leadership Theory. This theory is founded on the interrelationships among (1) "amount of direction a leader gives (task behavior), (2) the amount of socio-emotional support (relationship behavior) a leader provides and (3) the maturity level of the followers on a specific task or objective." Task behavior is the level to which a leader provides explanations (one-way

communications) to each follower in terms of what, how, when and where tasks must be accomplished. Relationship behavior is the level to which a leader develops two-way communications for the accomplishment of the objectives by effectively establishing personal relations with their followers. Hersey and Blanchard define maturity as "the capacity to set high but attainable goals, willingness and ability to take responsibility, and education and/or experience of an individual or a group." The Situational Theory asserts that there is not a single leadership style for all occasions, but rather a style that is required for each type of situation. One can determine the desired leadership style by utilizing the Situational Leadership Model (See Figure 2).

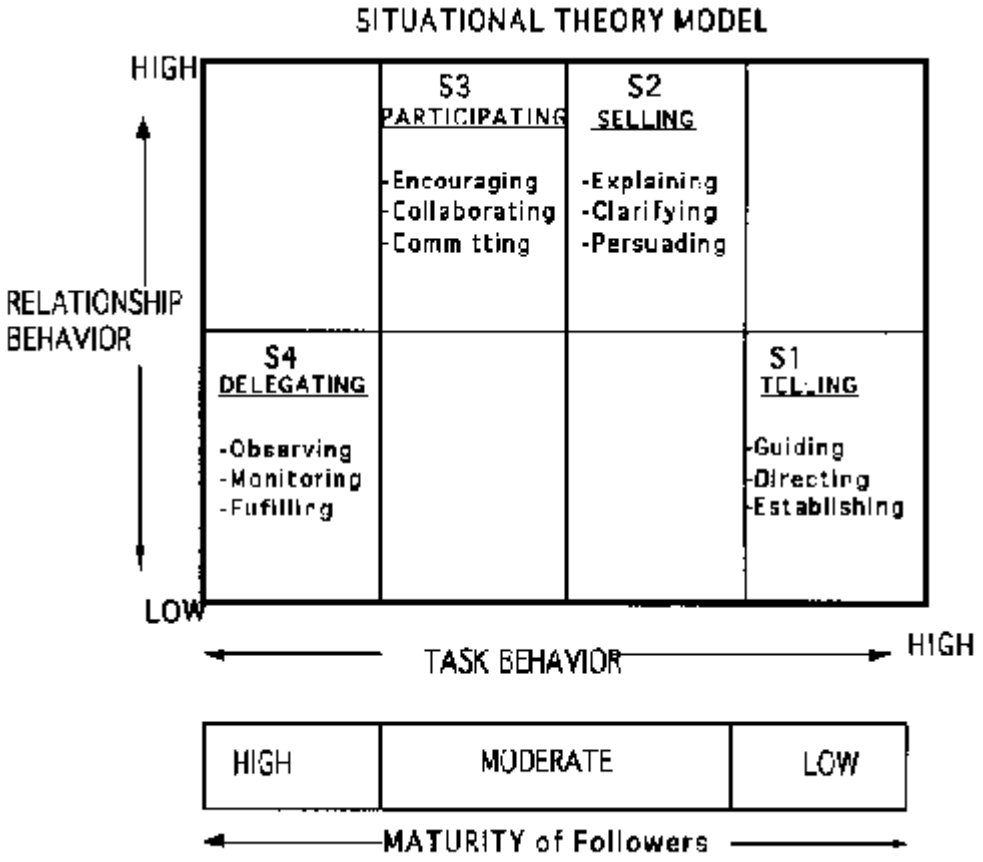

Figure 2. Situational Leadership Model by Hersey and Blancharl (1982)

Once the maturity level of the followers is established and the task/relationship behaviors of the leader are identified, the quadrant of the appropriate leadership style can be selected. The final theory that we will discuss is the New Leadership Paradigm (Sims, 1991). This paradigm describes that of the SuperLeader or leading others to lead themselves.

These SuperLeaders develop SuperFollowers who are skilled self-leaders utilizing some of these fundamentals:

- leader established vision
- leader defines goals for self and followers

- reinforces good performance
- uses constructive contingent reprimand
- manages and facilitates change
- enhances followers' sense of self-efficacy
- leaders use models to teach behavior
- promote self-management
- treat mistakes as learning opportunities
- encourage self-set goals

The presented leadership theories is in no way exhaustive, but offers a fair diversity on which we can develop our thoughts. More specifically, we can now look at TQM and its implementation process while keeping these theories in mind. In doing so, we should be able to successfully identify which theories (or portions thereof) can support the TQM transformation process.

What Is Total Quality Management?

According to Sink (1992), "Total Quality Management (TQM) is the management—planning, organizing, leading, controlling, innovating, and so forth— of performance at five key checkpoints in your organization." (See Figure 3).

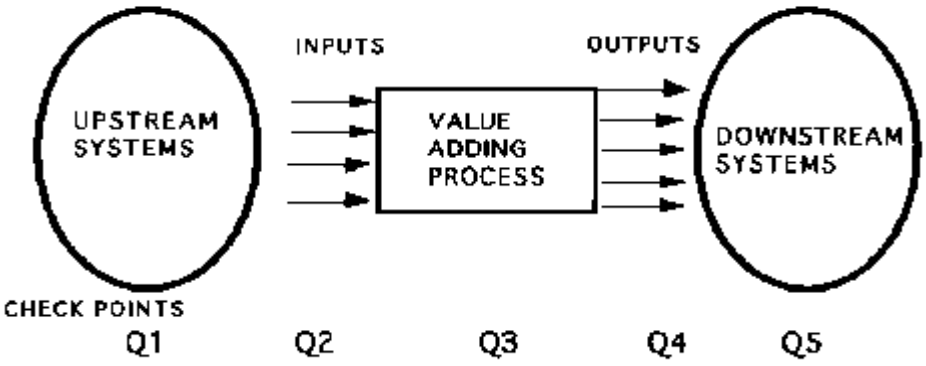

Figure 3. Sink's Five Checkpoints to Total Quality

The five key quality checkpoints he is referring to are:

Q1: Upstream Systems - those from who you receive your inputs.
Q2: Inputs - those used for producing your goods or services.
Q3: Value Adding Processes - converting inputs to outputs.
Q4: Outputs - that which your organization produces.
Q5: Downstream Systems - those who receive your product or services.

TQM is not a process or procedure, but rather a philosophy. Even though Deming never used the "TQM" term in one of his four-day seminars (Oct. 27-30, 1992 - Charlotte, NC), one could sense Deming's underlying goals on quality. He continually referred to the fact that customers are

unaware of what to expect from providers in terms of quality, but "they (customers) are rapid learners" in terms of what to expect. This concept can be applied to both internal and external customers. During this seminar a video was shown entitled "Made in Japan Wholistically", featuring Dr. Yoshida, one of Deming's students. Dr. Yoshida made a point that the major difference between American and Japanese leadership styles is that while the Americans focus on "acceptability" the Japanese focus on the most desirability" of the goods or services. This applies directly to quality, while Americans are used to "acceptable" standards, the Japanese are accustomed to "desirable" ones. It became apparent that Deming and Yoshida shared the belief that by reducing performance variations one can improve quality. More specifically, Deming eludes to quality in eight of his fourteen points and reiterated several times that "quality must be everyone's job" and that "quality does not come from inspection, but from improving the process," again the reduction in performance variation. Since quality is in the "eyes of the beholder", TQM can be different things to different people, but our operational definition for this paper will be the philosophy and supporting strategy for continually improving the performance of all areas or levels of the organization or system. Given these views on TQM, we will now look at some of the implementation considerations that may be addressed in the transformation to TQM.

Transformation to Total Quality

As previously mentioned, in order for an organization to implement long-lasting change it must have a plan or method. According to Peter Scholtes, "TQM implementation takes forever, its never ending." Scholtes also suggests that leaders should not have to sell TQM to their followers, the followers should want to steal it (Scholtes, 1992). The foundations of Total Quality Management rest on the individual workers and their participation, leaders must create the proper environment for their followers to contribute. With this in mind, a brief look at the timing of participative efforts is warranted here.

Rosabeth Kanter (1983) identified several conditions as "appropriate" for participation / involvement; some of which include:

1. A need exists to gain from new sources of expertise, experience, and background.
2. When a collaboration of efforts will multiply the individuals performance through providing assistance, backup, or stimulation.
3. Participation allows all of those who feel that they can contribute to a subject the opportunity to get involved.
4. Participation is ideal for building a consensus on a controversial issue, both in terms of problem-solving and decision-making.
5. Participation lends itself to addressing conflicting interests, approaches, or desired outcomes.
6. Participation is beneficial when a need exists to develop, educate, and train people. Sharing ideas to create new skills or better ways of doing things.

Kanter's list does not include some items that others recognize as being crucial to the appropriateness of participation. First, the proper culture must exist that supports such employee

interaction. It has been written that participative management fails, not because of the idea, but due to the lack of a proper design, or even more so, the lack of the proper management culture. This reinforces the point made earlier about the leaders role in developing and maintaining the proper culture to foster employee contribution.

In addition, J. Richard Hackman (1986) has come up with a much broader list of conditions that support participation and should exist, or be developed, in order for participation to be appropriate. According to Hackman's research, the following five conditions support effective self-management, the highest form of participation programs:

1. The overall direction of the work is clear and engaging.
2. The structure of the performing unit fosters competent performance, through the design of the task, the composition of the unit, and sent expectations of regarding the management of performance processes.
3. The organizational context supports competent work, through the reward, education, and information systems.
4. Expert coaching and consultation are available and are provided at appropriate times.
5. Material resources are adequate and available.

Actively implementing TQM Philosophies and participative efforts also be expected to have more relevance in environments that are undergoing both technical and social change. Technical and social changes have been much the case for the construction industry. By tapping those people closest to the technological or social situation, organizations can more effectively move to improve performance.

Two methods introduced earlier in this paper were Sink's (1992) Performance Improvement Planning Process (PIPP) shown in Figure 4, and the Deming/Shewhart Plan-Do-Study-Act Model (PDSA)

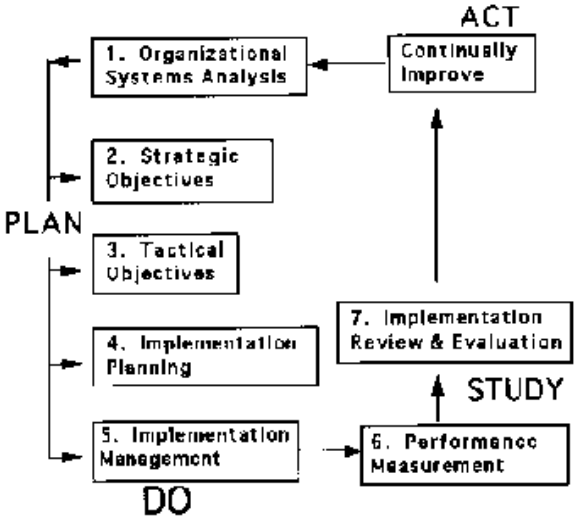

Figure 4. Performance Improvement Planning Process with PDSA Overlay
Since the focus of this paper is leadership theories, we will not spend a lot of time discussing these models, but will offer some major points that must be considered if an organization is to be

successful in the TQM implementation process. According to Gambrell and Stevens (1992), "A manager must learn to understand the nature of the change and take a proactive role in communication before, during, and after the change. The more the human side of change is understood, the better positioned one will be to complete and provide a positive work environment." Proper leadership during all stages of change is expected by the employees and requires vital communicating of the reasons behind such a change. This helps ensure that the employees can identify where they fit into the transformed organization and which of their skills are transferable. If one wanted a shopping list of issues that must be addressed when considering a transformation, it would include, but is not limited to, the following items:

- Must have Top Management level commitment and support for the effort to change.
- Must have a vision, constancy of purpose, and a planned strategy of implementation.
- Must obtain a critical mass of profound knowledge -masters'.
- Leaders must "walk the talk" and be exemplars.
- Make the efforts a living plan of continuous improvement.
- Patience and perseverance are key behaviors required.
- Must develop the infrastructure to support the change.
- Identify and eliminate the roadblocks to success.
- Go beyond the quick fix mentality by addressing lessons learned.
- The philosophy is a quality vision.
- The goal is total customer satisfaction.
- The strategy is to focus on the process.
- Must focus on the long term and eliminate short-term mentality.

Perhaps, one of the simplest ways to look at the implementation of total quality management comes from Jagdish Parikh (1991) a self-management author. Parikh developed what is known as the Dissonance Factor Theory. According to the model shown in Figure 5, matching what one wants to do with what one has to do and are capable of doing will inevitably bring about satisfaction and joy for the person. Using this theory, an effective leader implementing TQM must:

- ask their followers what it is they want to do,
- help their followers become capable of doing those things they want to do through effective training programs, and
- then require that the follower does it regularly. Thereby creating a situation for the follower that maximizes their potential for joy.

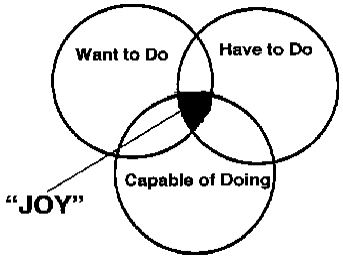

Figure 5. Dissonance Factor Theory Model

Correlating Theories and Implementation

The leadership theories that have been presented must now be correlated with implementation procedures to provide insight into which theories best support implementing TQM. Each of the Leadership theories discussed in this paper made reference to at least one of the thirteen items listed above. For example, in covering the Transformational Leader Theory proposed by Bass (1985), it is discovered that each of the three motivating basis of its followers fit the TQM mold. These components dealt with "raising" either the consciousness of the workers about their outcomes, their individual growth, or their focus to that of the system and not the individual. Another example is that of the Behavioral Theory as it poses this type of leader to be "employee-oriented" by focusing on involving and supporting the workers. This would be necessary to implement TQM on a lasting basis. Also under the Behavioral Theory it is suggested that the most successful leaders have a high concern for both production and their followers, which is again a needed trait for successful implementation. In looking at the Situational Theory, it appears that the most beneficial leader style would be a combination of the S2- SELLING and S3- PARTICIPATING categories, each of which contains traits that would enhance the TQM implementation process. Some of these traits include encouraging, collaborating, committing, guiding, directing, and establishing. Even the New Leadership Paradigm offers some of the desired leadership qualities necessary for implementing TQM, while also containing some attributes that could prove harmful to the transformation. First, the supporting traits include: leader established vision, manages and facilitates change, promotes self-management, and treats mistakes as learning opportunities. On the other hand, some New Leadership Paradigms that could be harmful to the TQM transformation because they go against the TQM philosophy as a whole are: leader defines goals for the followers, this goes against a shared goal, reinforces good performance, this could be a form of a reward system or ranking, and use of constrictive reprimand, which goes strictly against the belief of driving out fear in a TQM environment.

Perhaps the simplest and most practical TQM implementation leadership style could come from following Parikh's Dissonance Factor Theory. Utilizing this as a basis for leadership and managing the transformation encourages a leader to understand their followers through the proper identification of their desires (what they want to do). Followed by ensuring them that they are capable of doing it by providing the followers with effective training. Finally the leader would close the transformation cycle by requiring their followers to utilize these desired skills in the completion of the change as well as in their daily job responsibilities. By effectively addressing the areas of what followers want to accomplish and making them capable of doing so, then requiring them to do it, you in fact have managed change and quality totally.

Summary and Conclusions

The paper first discussed how the leaders throughout history dealt with the challenges that they faced. It was then pointed out that there are no "quick fixes" and that successful leaders had an extensive plan. Next the paper looked at some of the leadership theories and their underlining principles. This was followed by an attempt to define Total Quality Management and its implementation procedures. In the final section of the paper we were able to draw some limited connections from the theories to the implementation process, bringing us to the point where we must make a conclusion. Each of the theories investigated have some of the desirable traits required for leading a change or transformation. It may not be conclusive as to whether one style

of leadership is most suited for implementing TQM, one that appears to be very close would have to be that of the Transformational Theory by Bass (1985). This style included three very important issues concerning "raising" the consciousness of the workers, their sense of outcomes, and focus on the organization and not the individuals. However, after facilitating and observing the implementation of Total Quality Management into a number of organizations, this author must support the use of the Dissonance Factor Theory as the ideal basis for leading the transformation to TQM. This theory provides a very clear method, while focusing on three key employee related components, the employee's desires, training, and utilizing their skills in fulfilling their roles and responsibilities.

This is not to suggest that the other leadership styles would fail, but that they may lend themselves to a different culture better than that of the TQM environment. Nonetheless, management must give the transformation the utmost commitment or it shall fail, no matter which leadership style is used. Remember, sometimes the simplest ideas foster the greatest performances.

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