

Managerial Communication

Managerial Communication: Module: 1 Communication in the Workplace:

Importance of Communication skills:

1. Good communication **passes information along**. If you can effectively communicate, then people understand you much better, and whatever information you are trying to tell them will get across without being misunderstood. In business, this can prevent mistakes from being made by people who thought you said something else. In personal life, it can help you to let others know what you want.
2. Good communication **makes good relationships**. If you can effectively communicate, then other people know what you need and want, and you can let them know your feelings without being misunderstood. This prevents arguments, especially between couples, because it avoids all that "you should have known how I felt" sort of mind-reading arguments. If you can explain your thoughts and feelings, then you won't misunderstand each other.
3. Good communication **helps you get what you need**. If you can effectively communicate what you need or want, you are more likely to be successful in getting it. Effective communication also helps you to convince others to agree with you in a persuasive setting.
4. Good communication **gives you self-esteem**. People with effective communication skills are more confident, because they know that they can tell other people exactly what they need to, and they know that they are understanding those people better.
5. Good communication **helps you to think better**. In order to communicate effectively, you have to think ahead and organize your thoughts. This helps you learn how to organize, and how to plan ahead.
6. Good communication **makes peaceful communities**. If you can effectively communicate, then you can get along better with your neighbors - in your town or city, in your country, and in the world. Most wars are caused by people not communicating effectively and not being able to negotiate with each other.

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7. Communication skills are very important since every day in our life we need to communicate with different kinds of people around us. And having good communication skills can improve our relationship with them.
8. Also in every field, communication skill is very essential to succeed. Good communicator always has the high paying position.
9. If you can communicate well, you can decide whether or not you have understood what the teacher just said, and can then let the teacher know whether or not you need additional help. Communication is also vital to interactions between you and your peers - if you can communicate well, you are less likely to use violence and get into trouble.
10. Identification is one of the key ingredients of effective communication. Listeners can identify with what you are saying and with the way you are saying it. The ability to communicate is the primary factor that distinguishes human beings from animals. And it is the ability to communicate well that distinguishes one individual from another.
11. Communication skills are incredibly important, not only to students, but to everyone. The CEOs of top companies have stated that the primary things they look for when hiring new employees is how well they are able to communicate, according to several communications textbooks. Verbal communication is a large part of how you present yourself, and so having the appropriate skill set is beneficial in both your private and public lives.
12. If someone is unable to communicate well, it does not matter how brilliant or talented they are. They will not be able to live up to their full potential if they cannot present themselves well and adequately express their ideas.
13. Communication skill is very essential because it usually makes or breaks your career.
14. In work, communication skill is very important since you need to communicate with others and you need to deliver and get the right message.
15. Because if you can't communicate effectively, people won't listen to what you have to say and you will have very limited career options.

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Why business depends upon communication:

Communication is really the one, most important aspect of any relation. May that be a personal one or a professional one. In this article though, we shall stress upon the business world. Communication is a wide term to use, don't you think? What does communication entail in a business scenario and what is the importance of communication in a business organization? These, and some more issues of the same nature will be discussed and tackled in the following article. If you've been curious about the need and importance of business communication, then reading the following article will help.

Convey Messages

Simply put, communication allows a process to take place. The sender sends a message through a medium. The receiver receives it, processes it and then gives a feedback, which completes the communication process. Without this process, no two people could ever communicate effectively. There would be no information dispatched and hence no work done.

Clarity of Ideas

When one communicates with another in a business scenario, it is important to understand that the message has to be conveyed in such a way that there is complete clarity in what is being said. The message should be so clear that all doubts and vague and unclear thoughts will be dispelled. The communication process also allows for the person who has received the message to give a feedback and therefore the communication format achieves a 360 degree solution.

Get Work Done

It is only by adapting the varied communication processes like speech, body language, gestures and other feedback mediums that any work can be expected to get done. An instruction, for example, that is given by a boss to his subordinate needs to be carried through till the final stage of execution. If the process of communication and feedback is missing, an end result is never possible.

Avoid Misunderstandings

When two people work together, there is bound to be miscommunication at times, which can lead to misunderstandings and other problems in the workplace. Which naturally affects the work adversely and the business suffers. Communication offers a platform whereby all the

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misunderstandings can get cleared and one can hope for solutions. This is crucial if there has to be a success made of the plan.

Increase Productivity and Efficiency

When there is a proper communication process taking place then the productivity and efficiency of the employees increases. This is because the right information is dispelled and the correct action executed. Therefore there is no, or very less scope for mistakes to happen.

Employee Job Satisfaction

When there is scope for open communication at the work place. There is a clear path provided, whereby the seniors and subordinates can talk and solve workplace conflicts amongst themselves. If a surety is provided by the employers that open workplace communication will be given scope and it will be accepted in a healthy manner, then the problems and conflicts that a company faces will be dispelled and the productivity will increase, thereby increasing the profits as well. Along with that, the employees will have a scope for improvement in their work and duties. Every time they make a mistake or are unable to carry forth their duties effectively and they get a feedback and ways of improvement from their employers, they will begin to understand the pulse of the job and get better at it.

If you look at an overall picture of the business worlds then you will realize the importance of communication in business-no matter how big or small. The success and failure of any business truly depends on the modes of effective communication employed. If you have a business, you know what you need to do now.

Main categories of business communication:

Internal Communication: Internal communication is the type of communication in which interaction takes place within a corporate house. There are formal as well as informal channels of internal communication. Upward communication, downward communication and horizontal

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communication are considered to be the major types of internal communication.

Upward communication: In upward communication, the information is passed on from the junior level employees to the management of the company. This enables the employees to participate in the company's business and policies and give their valuable inputs. This kind of communication can help the employees gain confidence, and understand the functioning of the organization better.

Downward Communication: On the contrary, in downward communication, the flow of information is from the top-level management to the subordinates. This type of communication enables the organization benefit from the managerial expertise and experience of the top level management. However, the management should make sure that downward communication does not take away the employees freedom of expressing their views on certain aspects. So, giving some powers to the employees in spite of having downward communication is essential for growth of the organization.

Horizontal Communication: In the case of horizontal communication, we see an interaction and collaboration between people employed at the similar posts or communication between departments or sections. This helps them get their queries solved and gain knowledge from their colleagues. Interaction between workers must be promoted by the top management for exchange of ideas and new concepts.

External communication: External communication is when the company employees or officials get in touch with people outside the organization for the purpose of business expansion. The main advantage of such type of communication is that the management gets to know what are the expectations of the customers/clients in the market, and what the competitors are offering. With this information, the existing product range can be improved and new products can be developed and introduced.

Communication by Letters: Letter communication is a widely used technique to communicate with the outsiders. This makes the outsiders understand the points which the company

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management wishes to convey easily. Moreover, the company can have a copy of the letters with them as a proof of communication with outsiders.

Seminars and Exhibitions: The use of information or promotional seminars and exhibitions is one of the best modes of external communication. Seminars can help the organization display their products and have the company representatives explain their use to the customers in detail. This can help in solving any kinds of doubt which the consumers might have about the company's products.

E-mails: E-mails are yet another effective way of external communication in this age of advanced technology. E-mails can help us instantly reach out to several people at a time over long distances, and create awareness about the products and services of the company.

Meetings: For the listed entities, meetings and conferences with shareholders and stake holders can be the best ways of external communication that can bring in more business for the company. Meetings are the place where all points regarding the company fundamentals and expansion plans can be fully discussed with the outside parties like creditors.

The agencies with which the company gets in touch can include the government, common public and media. Posters, telegrams, proposals and fax are also considered to be the main elements of external communication.

Personal communication: While most communication within organization qualifies as internal or external operational, some communication is termed personal communication. Personal communication may not always work for the benefit of the organization, instead, is initiated whenever people come together. While personal communication may not directly affect the organization's long-term goals, it does affect them indirectly. Personal communication is an unofficial way to access personal attitudes of organizational personnel toward the actions and policies of the company. Furthermore, personal communication may also indirectly help alter the attitudes of staff, so productivity is increased.

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Communication networks of the organization:

Formal and Informal Communication Networks

1. **Networks**--structural means (patterns of interaction) that allow messages to flow within organizations. May include two people, small groups of people, or large numbers that flow outside the organization. We typically find ourselves involved with multiple organizational networks.

2. **Message Flow Directions**--

- Upward--subordinates to managers. Watch out for the tendency of “positive distortion” from employees. No one wants to make a bad impression on their supervisory and it is very human to put a positive spin in issues even when there is little to offer in that light.
- Downward--managers to subordinates. Try to provide “rationale for decisions” when possible. Studies show over and over that employees feel better about the organization when they know “why” they are doing things or “why” change is occurring.
- Horizontal—communication between employees or departments of the same status. This may become overly competitive for organizational resources like budgets, awards, recognition, etc. May not be a problem but it is top managements’ job to ensure the competition does not become counter-productive.

3. **Formal Networks**--Officially sanctioned; the organizational flow chart; company newsletters; memos; managers’ meetings; etc.

4. **Informal Networks**--arise due to the situation employees are in; emerge out of a need; no permanent structure; may be faster than formal networks; a spontaneous flow of information that may or may not be correct.

FORMAL COMMUNICATION NETWORKS

- The blue print of how communication flows within any organization. What would happen if this didn’t exist?

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- Carries task-oriented messages (specific job instructions; performance reviews)
- Carries maintenance-oriented messages (more generally-based policies and procedures on how to accomplish tasks)
- Carries human messages (keys on employee needs like new health care benefits; vacation schedules; etc.)

1. **Network Structures**--decentralized networks tend to be more efficient when involved in complex tasks; centralized ones often create higher worker dissatisfaction (feeling only marginally involved in the communication process)

(A) The Circle network--no single employee is key to the communication; decentralized; morale often high in such networks; better employee access to each other; fewer organizational roadblocks.

(B) The Chain network--step-by-step transmission of a message until it reaches its final designation.

(C) The Y network--short branches off the main trunk; still focuses on a centralized structure through one employee.

(D) The Wheel network--centralized flow outward from supervisor to small number of employees.

2. **Network Roles**--parts we perform within organizations.

(A) Liaisons--employees who connect two groups without belonging to either one of them. Often an influential, experienced person.

(B) Bridges--employees who belong to at least two groups and connect each group to clique to the other. Distortion may occur.

(C) Gatekeepers--employees who control the information flow. Secretaries are often key gatekeepers; may be others who have power to give or withhold information.

(D) Isolates--employees who have minimal contact with others; either by choice or because others try to avoid them.

(E) Boundary Spanners--sometimes called "cosmopolites"; those who connect the organization to its relevant environment. Common roles are sales and customer service reps, public relations workers, etc.

3. **Network Descriptors**--patterns of behavior that help reveal how communication flows within the organization networks.

(A) Dominance--how equal employees are to one another. High versus Low dominance. High dominance requires communication be directed to a single or few key members who then disseminate information to others. Low dominance suggests that employees are roughly equal to one another.

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(B) Centrality--centralized networks (wheel, Y, chain) require this; is there a key employee through whom communication flows...or not?

(C) Flexibility--how strictly organizations follow rules for communicating with others. High flex--allow variations; low flex would be very strict on how to communicate.

(D) Reachability--(don't try to look this up in your dictionaries at home!)

How many people must the message pass through before reaching its final destination? Low reachability has fewer intermediaries; high reachability has potential for greater distortion since many people in the process. By the way, don't try to find the word "reachability" in your dictionaries---another of those made-up words that academics like to use!

(E) Strength--frequency and duration of communication are the keys. Strong network would be frequent and thorough communication with employees; weak network would be rare and brief communication.

(F) Reciprocity--the degree to which employees and bosses agree on the nature of their relationship. High reciprocity would exist when both see their relationship essentially the same; low reciprocity would exist when one perceives the relationship quite differently than the other.

(G) Symmetry--the degree of sharing information between bosses and workers. When communication flows upward and downward you have a symmetrical relationship; just downward would be asymmetrical.

(H) Openness--how open or connected the organization is to the outside environment. Some businesses are very dependent to the outside environment; others less so.

INFORMAL COMMUNICATION NETWORKS

"The Grapevine"

"People" networks; unpredictable in how they operate; the communication is often spontaneous and situationally derived; employees may choose to use these or not. Whether we do or not is often dependent upon (a) our proximity to the sender; and (b) whether we think the person is reliable and knowledgeable (do we trust them?).

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Management may use the grapevine (even though we tend to think of it as being an “employees network”) to tap into employee sentiment; to send up “trail balloons” and then either distance themselves or embrace the ideas depending upon employee reactions.

Gerald Goldhaber’s research findings on “grapevine” communication:

- It is fast....very fast!!
 - It is generally accurate...though varies from company to company.
 - It is an indicator of employee attitudes or sentiment
 - It usually travels by clusters (more later)
1. **Grapevine participants**--No real gender differences regarding who uses it more often. Secretaries are often key players in the grapevine--being bridges between workers and management. Managers may use the grapevine for “trial balloon” messages as mentioned earlier.
 2. **Effects of grapevine activity on the organization**--if formal networks don’t provide employees with information; the grapevine will step in and rumors persist. Morale can be affected adversely.
 3. **Factors involved in rumor dispersion**--why do rumors exist? What keeps them alive? Such reasons are (a) the importance of the message; (b) the ambiguity of the message; (c) the need for information in crisis times; (d) credibility of the person sending the rumor; (e) who is the focus of the rumor; and (f) the age of the rumor.
 4. **Factors that contribute the grapevine message distortion**--
 - (a) messages get condensed or shortened; stuff gets left out
 - (b) certain information gets highlighted; other gets less attention; depends of the needs of the sender
 - (c) messages may be added to; have gaps filled in as they move along
 - (d) selective perceptive--we may only “hear what we want to hear” and disregard the rest
 5. **Grapevine transmission patterns**--
 - (a) single-strand chain--I tell you a rumor and then you pass it along to another person, who then tells another, and on-and-on.... (pretty rare)
 - (b) gossip chain--I tell the class a rumor and you pass it along to others
 - (c) cluster transmission--most common; I tell two or more employees and you repeat this transmission process to others.

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6. Types of Organizational Rumors--

- (A) Anxiety rumors--reflect an uneasiness in employees (impending bad news on the horizon)
- (B) Wish-fulfillment rumors--good news may be on the horizon (as a group or for an individual)
- (C) Wedge-driving rumors--creates dissension; an "us vs. them" attitude in an organization.
- (D) Social rumors--juicy gossip about people; no direct company link.

7. Suggestions for how an organization can manage or control the grapevine--

Managers should or could.....

- (A) be sensitive to employee reactions; respond to high anxiety cases.
- (B) be open, honest and quick to respond (when possible) with employees.
- (C) seek out key "gatekeepers" in employee ranks for information dissemination.
- (D) take a proactive stance; keep employees updates via bulletins, meetings, newsletters, etc.

The seven C's of effective communication

There are **7 C's of effective communication** which are applicable to both written as well as oral communication.

These are as follows:

1. **Completeness** - The communication must be complete. It should convey all facts required by the audience. The sender of the message must take into consideration the receiver's mind set and convey the message accordingly. A complete communication has following features:
 - Complete communication develops and enhances reputation of an organization.
 - Moreover, they are cost saving as no crucial information is missing and no additional cost is incurred in conveying extra message if the communication is complete.
 - A complete communication always gives additional information wherever required. It leaves no questions in the mind of receiver.
 - Complete communication helps in better decision-making by the audience/readers/receivers of message as they get all desired and crucial information.
 - It persuades the audience.

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2. **Conciseness** - Conciseness means wordiness, i.e, communicating what you want to convey in least possible words without forgoing the other C's of communication. Conciseness is a necessity for effective communication. Concise communication has following features:

- It is both time-saving as well as cost-saving.
- It underlines and highlights the main message as it avoids using excessive and needless words.
- Concise communication provides short and essential message in limited words to the audience.
- Concise message is more appealing and comprehensible to the audience.
- Concise message is non-repetitive in nature.

3. **Consideration** - Consideration implies “stepping into the shoes of others”. Effective communication must take the audience into consideration, i.e, the audience's view points, background, mind-set, education level, etc. Make an attempt to envisage your audience, their requirements, emotions as well as problems. Ensure that the self-respect of the audience is maintained and their emotions are not at harm. Modify your words in message to suit the audience's needs while making your message complete. Features of considerate communication are as follows:

- Emphasize on “you” approach.
- Empathize with the audience and exhibit interest in the audience. This will stimulate a positive reaction from the audience.
- Show optimism towards your audience. Emphasize on “what is possible” rather than “what is impossible”. Lay stress on positive words such as jovial, committed, thanks, warm, healthy, help, etc.

4. **Clarity** - Clarity implies emphasizing on a specific message or goal at a time, rather than trying to achieve too much at once. Clarity in communication has following features:

- It makes understanding easier.
- Complete clarity of thoughts and ideas enhances the meaning of message.

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- Clear message makes use of exact, appropriate and concrete words.
5. **Concreteness** - Concrete communication implies being particular and clear rather than fuzzy and general. Concreteness strengthens the confidence. Concrete message has following features:
- It is supported with specific facts and figures.
 - It makes use of words that are clear and that build the reputation.
 - Concrete messages are not misinterpreted.
6. **Courtesy** - Courtesy in message implies the message should show the sender's expression as well as should respect the receiver. The sender of the message should be sincerely polite, judicious, reflective and enthusiastic. Courteous message has following features:
- Courtesy implies taking into consideration both viewpoints as well as feelings of the receiver of the message.
 - Courteous message is positive and focused at the audience.
 - It makes use of terms showing respect for the receiver of message.
 - It is not at all biased.
7. **Correctness** - Correctness in communication implies that there are no grammatical errors in communication. Correct communication has following features:
- The message is exact, correct and well-timed.
 - If the communication is correct, it boosts up the confidence level.
 - Correct message has greater impact on the audience/ readers.
 - It checks for the precision and accurateness of facts and figures used in the message.
 - It makes use of appropriate and correct language in the message.

Awareness of these 7 C's of communication makes you an effective communicator.

Business Communication Process

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Effective communication is vital to all businesses. The communication process involves:

If the right message does not get to the right person, in the right format, then this could affect the overall efficiency of the business. Worse still, the wrong messages might be passed on to the wrong people. This could actually harm the business.

There are a number of parts to any communication. For instance, sending a text message involves:

- the sender - the person writing the text
- the receiver - the person to whom the message is addressed
- the content of the message - for example, news, information, an invitation
- the format of the message - in this example it is text but many other different ways are possible
- the communication channel through which the message is sent - in this case a mobile phone network
- the medium - how the message will be sent, in this case it is in writing.

It is vital that each part of the message is correctly chosen and in place. If not, the message may not be received or understood. Sending a text to someone without a mobile phone will obviously fail.

It is important for a business to choose how and when it will send messages to intended receivers. For example, a building society will only send information about a new savings product to its members by text or email, if they have specifically chosen to receive communication by that method. Sending information by this method to people who cannot receive text or email could result in losing an opportunity to sell a new product.

Barriers to Communication

1. **The use of jargon.** Over-complicated, unfamiliar and/or technical terms.
2. **Emotional barriers and taboos.** Some people may find it difficult to express their emotions and some topics may be completely 'off-limits' or taboo.

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3. **Lack of attention, interest, distractions, or irrelevance to the receiver.**
4. **Differences in perception and viewpoint.**
5. **Physical disabilities such as hearing problems or speech difficulties.**
6. **Physical barriers to non-verbal communication.** Not being able to see the non-verbal cues, gestures, posture and general body language can make communication less effective.
7. **Language differences and the difficulty in understanding unfamiliar accents.**
8. **Expectations and prejudices which may lead to false assumptions or stereotyping.** People often hear what they expect to hear rather than what is actually said and jump to incorrect conclusions.
9. **Cultural differences.** The norms of social interaction vary greatly in different cultures, as do the way in which emotions are expressed. For example, the concept of personal space varies between cultures and between different social settings.

Barriers to Communication:

Most people would agree that communication between two individuals should be simple. It's important to remember that there are differences between talking and communicating. When you communicate, you are successful in getting your point across to the person you're talking to. When we talk, we tend to erect barriers that hinder our ability to communicate. There are seven of these types of barriers to effective communication.

1. Physical barriers are easy to spot – doors that are closed, walls that are erected, and distance between people all work against the goal of effective communication. While most agree that people need their own personal areas in the workplace, setting up an office to remove physical barriers is the first step towards opening communication. Many professionals who work in industries that thrive on collaborative communication, such as architecture, purposefully design their workspaces around an “open office” plan. This layout eschews cubicles in favor of desks grouped around a central meeting space. While each individual has their own dedicated work space, there are no visible barriers to prevent collaboration with their co-workers. This encourages greater openness and frequently creates closer working bonds.

2. Perceptual barriers, in contrast, are internal. If you go into a situation thinking that the person you are talking to isn't going to understand or be interested in what you have to say, you

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may end up subconsciously sabotaging your effort to make your point. You will employ language that is sarcastic, dismissive, or even obtuse, thereby alienating your conversational partner. Think of movie scenarios in which someone yells clipped phrases at a person they believe is deaf. The person yelling ends up looking ridiculous while failing to communicate anything of substance.

3. Emotional barriers can be tough to overcome, but are important to put aside to engage in conversations. We are often taught to fear the words coming out of our own mouths, as in the phrase “anything you say can and will be used against you.” Overcoming this fear is difficult, but necessary. The trick is to have full confidence in what you are saying and your qualifications in saying it. People often pick up on insecurity. By believing in yourself and what you have to say, you will be able to communicate clearly without becoming overly involved in your emotions.

4. Cultural barriers are a result of living in an ever shrinking world. Different cultures, whether they be a societal culture of a race or simply the work culture of a company, can hinder developed communication if two different cultures clash. In these cases, it is important to find a common ground to work from. In work situations, identifying a problem and coming up with a highly efficient way to solve it can quickly topple any cultural or institutional barriers. Quite simply, people like results.

5. Language barriers seem pretty self-inherent, but there are often hidden language barriers that we aren't always aware of. If you work in an industry that is heavy in jargon or technical language, care should be taken to avoid these words when speaking with someone from outside the industry. Without being patronizing, imagine explaining a situation in your industry to a child. How would you convey these concepts without relying on jargon? A clear, direct narrative is preferable to an incomprehensible slew of specialty terms.

6. Gender barriers have become less of an issue in recent years, but there is still the possibility for a man to misconstrue the words of a woman, or vice versa. Men and women tend to form their thoughts differently, and this must be taken into account when communicating. This difference has to do with how the brain of each sex is formed during gestation. In general, men are better at spatial visualization and abstract concepts such as math, while women excel at language-based thinking and emotional identification. However, successful professionals in highly competitive fields tend to have similar thought processes regardless of their gender.

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7. Interpersonal barriers are what ultimately keep us from reaching out to each other and opening ourselves up, not just to be heard, but to hear others. Oddly enough, this can be the most difficult area to change. Some people spend their entire lives attempting to overcome a poor self-image or a series of deeply rooted prejudices about their place in the world. They are unable to form genuine connections with people because they have too many false perceptions blocking the way. Luckily, the cure for this is more communication. By engaging with others, we learn what our actual strengths and weaknesses are. This allows us to put forth our ideas in a clear, straightforward manner.

Communication is not a one-way street. To have others open up to you, you must be open yourself. By overcoming these barriers to communication, you can ensure that the statement you are making is not just heard, but also understood, by the person you are speaking with. In this way, you can be confident that your point has been expressed



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