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## Zen and the art of happiness pdf

For 20 years or more student management has labored to reduce its mystique, reduce our dependence on gut feel, and create a more scientific foundation for leadership behavior. All the time, practitioners are cautious in covering these pursuits; Casting a wary eye on textbook solutions, they argue that leadership is an art as much as science. However, even the most sceptical acknowledge that some benefit has been gained from these efforts. All management activities, from finance to human relations, have felt the impact of analytical investigations. One common theme in this development of management science is the desire to clear tools and processes that managers have historically employed intuitively. With just such a goal in mind, I launched in 1974 on a study of Japanese-managed companies in the US and Japan. The aim was to find out what elements of the communication and decision-making processes contributed to the high performance of Japanese companies. Several reputable observers in Japanese ways had attributed their success in part to practices such as bottom-up communication, extensive side communication in various functional areas, and the pronounced use of participatory-(or consensus) style decision-making, which supposedly leads to higher quality decisions and implementation. The study included interviews and surveys that were administered to more than 215 managers and 1400 employees in 26 companies and 10 sectors. I made a communications audit of the number of phone calls and face-to-face contacts initiated and received by executives of Japanese companies in Japan, their subsidiaries in the United States, and almost identical American companies aligned on an industry-by-industry basis. I play schooling the size and duration of meetings, as well as the volume of formal correspondence and informal notes, observe the frequency of interaction in management office areas and get managers' insights about the nature and quality of the decision-making and implementation process. What I a). First, Japanese-run companies in both countries are not much different from American companies: they use the phone to about the same degree and write about the same number of letters. In their decision-making processes, both in American subsidiaries and in Japan, the Japanese do not use the style of participation more than Americans do. Three times as many communications were initiated by lower-level management of Japanese companies, then percolated to the top. 2. Although the Japanese business leaders assessed the quality of their decision-making in the same way as their American counterparts, they considered that the quality of the implementation of these decisions was I was confused by these conclusions. How can the decision-making style (in particular the degree of participation) and the quality of decisions be the same for both groups, but the quality of implementation may vary? Apparently, the Japanese increased reliance on bottom-up communication was significant, but the causal link remained unclear. Senior CEO of Sony provided a clue. To be true, the Japanese manager said, perhaps 60% of the decisions I make are my decisions. But I keep my intentions secret. In discussions with subordinates, I ask questions, present facts and try to insulate them in my direction without revealing my position. Sometimes I end up changing my position as a result of dialogue. But regardless of the outcome, they feel part of the decision. Their involvement in the decision also increases the experience of their managers. Many others, American as well as Japanese, alluded in interviews on the same technique. It's not so much a difference, mirrored by the American, who ran a ball bearing plant in New Hampshire, where decisions are from top to bottom, because that's how the top-down decision maker goes on a touching base. If he starts with an open question, he can often lead his subordinates to a good solution. These statements, and others like them, have the genesis of this document. An important discovery of this study was not, as expected, that the Japanese do some things differently and better. Although this is limited, the more important it is that successful managers, regardless of their nationality, share common features related to sub-readings of the communication process. The term Zen in the title of this article is used imaginatively to denote these important nuances of interpersonal communication often enshrouded in veiled mystique. This phenomenon does not correspond to the analytical dimension of sequential deductive responses. Nor is it exactly similar to the dimension of human relations, which highlights the virtues of confrontation, participatory and openness. This differs from other, better-known dimensions of management as time is from the other three dimensions of physical space. When trying to explain the indirect dimension, I believe that the traditional language of leadership gets in the way. To work around the difficulties, it is useful to explore this dimension using the lens of the Eastern metaphor. After many interviews with American and Japanese leaders, I have come to believe that the perspective of imbedded Eastern philosophy, culture and values helps make the indirect dimension more visible. As Japanese leaders find some insights easily achieved in their Eastern mindset, American leaders, while often just as skillful, have to swim upstream so to speak. Uncertainty as a management tool for great learning management in the West is considered a symptom of various organizational ills whose cure has higher doses of rationality, specificity and decisiveness. But is confusion sometimes desirable? Confusion can be seen as an unknown shell around certain events. The Japanese have a word for ma, for which there is no English translation. The word is valuable because it gives a clear place to an unknown aspect of things. In English we can refer to an empty space between a chair and a table; The Japanese do not say the room is empty, but full of nothing. However, amusing illustration, it goes to the main issue. Westerners talk about what is not known mainly in terms of what is known (for example, the space between the chair and the table), but most eastern languages give the honor of the unknown itself. Consider this Tao poem: Thirty spokes are made one by one with holes in the hub along with vacancies between them, they form a wheel. The use of clay in casting cans comes from the hollow of its absence; Doors, windows, the house are used for their emptiness: Thus we are helped by what does not use what is.2 Of course, there are many situations that the driver finds himself in, where being clear and decisive is not only useful but necessary. However, there are considerable advantages to having a dual reference frame, recognising both clear and unclear values. It must be borne in mind that in some situations uncertainty can serve better than absolute clarity. If the executive has too much data available for processing people, he must simplify. If he has looked at, say, different price schemes for 12 months and has identified all the options available to him, it may be time to decide on one of them. Deciding in these circumstances has the advantage of reducing wheel spinning, simplifying things, and resolving anxiety for yourself and others. But there is another type of problem, such as combining manufacturing and engineering departments, where experience may suggest that the issue is more complex than the bare facts suggest. Often question cultures around changes that excite human feelings. In these circumstances, uncertainties are useful. Instead of embracing the solution, the administrator can take an interim step to decide what to do. The procedure process, on the other hand, generates additional information: You are moving towards your goal using a sequence of tentative steps instead of bold actions. The difference is between enough data to decide and there is enough data to continue. Where the executive's perception of the problem and means of implementation include groups of with different powers (e.g. trade unions and professional groups) and the distribution of powers is such that he lacks full control, successful implementation usually requires temporary measures. The name of the ambiguity helps to make the provisional action lawful. Uncertainty is two important connotations about leadership. First, it is a useful concept when thinking about how we deal with others, verbally and in writing. Secondly, it provides a way to legitimize the loose rein that the driver allows in certain organizational situations where the agreement takes time to develop or where further understanding is needed before convincing steps can be taken. Maps at the table To watch qualified managers use the confusion is to see the art form in action. Carefully choosing his words, constructing the exact tension between oblique and special, he clings his way across difficult terrain. In critiquing subordinate work, for example, an executive sometimes feels it is desirable to come close enough to the point to ensure that the downstream receives the message, but not as close as the crowd to him and cause defensiveness. The Japanese manager conducts dialogue in circles, expanding and narrowing them to match the downstream sensitivity to feedback. He may say: I would like you to reflect a little further on your proposal. Translated into Western thought patterns, this sentence should be read, You're dead wrong, and you better come up with a better idea. 3 The first approach allows the subordinate to stand with his pride intact. Part of our drive clearly stems from the Western exhibition that it is a matter of honor to get the cards on the table. This attitude is based on the assumption that no matter how much it hurts, it is good for you; and a good driver's mark is his ability to give and make negative feedback. There is no doubt that there is a lot of merit in this traditional wisdom. But the lesson between the mythology of our leadership and our foibles as humans is often the true state of affairs. It is desirable to get the facts and know where one stands. But it is also for a person to feel threatened, especially when personal vulnerability is an issue. There is no reason to believe that Westerners have less pride than the Japanese have or feel humiliation less poignantly than the Japanese do. An American Management Association poll shows that issues related to self-esteem mattered very more than two-thirds of individuals sampled.4 Eastern cultures are sensitive to the concept of the face; Westerners, however, see it as a sign of weakness. However, a look back at cases where an individual, publicly embarrassed by another, hurt himself and the organization only even scores. Evidence suggests that clearly crowding a person in the corner in many cases can be not only unreasonable, but also Delivering yourself on the need to speak the truth often masks a self-serving sense of brute integrity. Clearing the air can be useful clearer than others that are starkly open. The issue of livestock integrity is not only the result of a certain cultural tendency to speak clearly and harshly, nor is it fully explained in terms of our assumptions about authority and hierarchy and the relationship between bosses and subordinates. On a deeper level, it has a component of sexism. In our culture, a simple, simple, simplistic confrontation — a kind of high noon shoot-'em-out — is confused with the notions of what masculinity is. Unfortunately, shoot-'em-outs are best when the other guy dies. If you have to work with this person based on macho confrontations complicate life tremendously. In contrast, uncertainty, referring to sensitivity and feelings, is claimed to be a woman in the Western world. But if we set aside stereotypes and reflect on the effects of these two types of behavior on organizational life, we can discover that primitive concepts of masculinity work no better in the office in the long run than they do in bed. Is brute integrity and clear communication worth the price of listener goodwill, open-mindedness, and openness to change? Clear communication is a cultural assumption, not a linguistic requirement. Many leaders develop the skills needed to change their position across the spectrum from unequivocal ambiguity. More Ura Than Omote. In the past I noted the ambiguity of the value of allowing time and space in certain situations to take a clearer shape or achieve accommodation on their own. Some relaxation of the definition of relationships between things may allow the functioning of the arrangement to evolve, but premature action can freeze things into rigidity. For example, one of the most persistent suffering American organizations is the tendency to make official statements. Most things one doesn't announce themselves. The Japanese manager is culturally equipped with a couple of concepts, omote (front) and ura (behind the scenes). These ideas correspond to the Latin concepts de jure and de facto, with one important difference: the Japanese think of uru as forming a real life; omote is a solemn function for the benefit of others. Japan's relegate making announcements to the secondary site, which follows after all the events have taken place behind the scenes. You Americans are excited to announce things, said one Japanese leader in the study. It fixes all stir. The other day we decided to try having our human resources department handle some of the requests that were traditionally handled by manufacturing people. Our American vice president insisted on announcing it. Well, the production department was dealt with their personnel files and got their backs. Rumors began about whether the staff people had ascended in building the empire, and so on. Given the system's temporary names, why not just start with peaceful asking that some questions relate to staff? A long time ago, the informal organization will get used to the new flow. Of course, you can't do it all the time, but for a while it definitely works. To announce what you want to happen, you have to announce many things that you don't know about yet. If some processes and relationships are allowed to take their shape in the first place, however, your statement will probably only be made once because you will be only confirming what has already happened. Consider how different attempts at organizational change could continue if they embraced eastern orientation. Instead of turning the spotlight on the intended movement, parading revised organization charts and job descriptions, management could reassign tasks gradually, gradually shift the boundaries between functions, and issue a statement only when the desired changes had become a de facto reality. In some situations it is a better way. Impossible some will argue. People resist change. By just announcing your intentions, you can reach the organization line. But is it really consistent? Undoubtedly, decrees play a role in some organizational activities. But more often than not, the sudden lurch to a new order highlights an informal process of resistance that works with lasting efficiency. One is just a look at the Department of Health, Education and Welfare to illustrate this phenomenon. Congressional mandates and 20 years worth of frustrated presidents have not significantly changed the nature of the three distinct offices that make up this agency. The foregoing to achieve gradual change, rather than starting with head-on asserting, goes deep into eastern culture. This provides the driver with context to think about outflanking organizational obstacles and time allowing them to anoint. It's good to exist like water, suggests Tao saying. The back does come, again and again, wearing down the rigid force that can't give to withstand it. 5 Such an orientation can accept the inevitability of obstacles, rather than viewing them with righteous indignation—as some Western leaders seek to do. And as Tao put it suggests, acceptance does not say fatalistic resignation. Rather, it points to the value of patiently flowing with the solution, but in due course it overcomes obstacles in its path. To get recognition, give it away One way to think about the rewards employees receive is in terms of tribation: promotion, pay, and recognition. Of the three shapes the first two do not respond to the day-to-day operation of the organisation. Promotions and wage increases are rarely less frequent than six months apart. On a daily basis, recognition is most respected and sought after. In an American Management Association survey, to which I referred earlier, 49% of respondents indicated that recognition of what they did was their most important consideration. Recognition can become an increasingly important fringe benefit because the central challenge facing American society is how to reward people during a period of slowed growth when employees win promotions and generate less often. Enriching our recognition and its role can provide useful guidance. Recognition is a powerful operational incentive. People who live in organizations develop uncanny sensibility wherever it flows. If you ask a person to change, one of the most important rewards you can give in return is recognition. If, on the contrary, you try to cause change, but you are considered unassertion to share recognition, you are not able to get very far. It's an ironic axiom of organizations that if you're willing to give up recognition, in return you'll gain more power to achieve effective change. The eastern mindset embodies the dual nature of recognition, as this Tao proverb shows: a wise man has the simple wisdom of which other men seek. Without taking credit is accredited. With no claim is acclaimed.6 We are all familiar with the pronounced recognition of the great prize that modern organizational knights vie for. B.L.T. is the recognition of a sandwich ... bright lights and trumpets, that is. When you get a bly, everyone knows about it. But Eastern thinking reminds us of a second breed that could be called implicit recognition. It is subtle, but no less tangible, and it is obtained over time. In its positive way is reputation is trustworthy, qualified to make things happen in the organization, and accomplished to get things done with people. In its negative manifestation of the person is considered to be the one who uses people, the tendency to cutting corners, and from about their self. Implicit recognition can be given in a variety of ways that may seem insignificant, with the exception of the beneficiary. Efforts to seek out others' opinions, for example, declare respect for their insights. Likewise, an invitation to attend a major meeting from which that person might otherwise be excluded. The phenomenon of implicit recognition usually plays an important role in organisations that operate smoothly. Problems arise when organizations overemphasize incentives, if attention to pronounced recognition and undermines in terms of implicit recognition. As a result, all team members are trying to grab the ball and no blocks. They rarely win consistently. But why do you want to from others, what will they give you voluntarily? When you make sure you get the credit you deserve, in the long run you get less of it than you otherwise. The Eastern perspective provides additional insight. It reminds us that the real organization you work for is an organization called yourself. The problems and problems of the organization that you are working on are out there and one here is not two separate things. They grow against excellence together. The sense of implied about accommodation and time and the feeling expressed on the yoke are woven together as strands of wicker ropes, alternatively appearing and disappearing from sight, but part of everything. Good leaders learn the art and management of science, not just one or the other. Leaders Go Straight-Around Circle Western concept management includes several images of strength, toughness, determination and clarity of vision. In American leadership teaching, leaders are seen as lonely figures capable of decisive action in the face of cruelty.7 Eastern thinking views leadership in significantly different ways. As Western leaders are thought to be chosen from those who are outstanding, Eastern cultural values leaders who stand in rather than stand out. In Judeo-Christian cultures, words very almost possess holiness. Men are willing to sacrifice for, live, and die for words. We cling to them and make them swell with meaning; they are light shafts that give shape to our empirical darkness. Anthony G. Athos of Harvard Business School notes the difference between two everyday words, choice and decision. Leaders, we are taught, to make decisions; lovers to choose. The previous term means craftsmanship; the latter makes a difficult choice between choices in which we can get a few things by just giving up others.8 Attoma's insight is particularly important for leaders, because the word decision and the phrase decision-making conjure up a broad dwelling meaning. The right decision makers, our mythology tells us, are commanding the facts, are aware of the options, and choose the best one of them. The Japanese, however, don't even have a term in decision-making in western sense. This linguistic curiosity reflects something deeper, a cultural tendency to recognise the uncertainty that has arisen when our situations are incomplete. Faced with a difficult compromise, the Japanese choose one over each other; Westerners like to think that they decide. The teaching of the Eastern leadership more fully acknowledges the inevitable sense of imperfection resulting from choice. It sensitizes its leaders with the illusions of mastery and trains them to suspect the added belief that something is always truly decided. Since mythology management tends to cast solutions as the fixed and definitive, Eastern philosophical tradition emphasizes individual accommodation in a constantly unfolding set of measures. Think of this perspective as a leader of these two cultures as the effects go about living up to your cultural demands. Eastern leaders accept uncertainty. Faced with the need to juggle, they do so with the affirmation that experience is consistent with what leadership is all about. Faced with the same set of events, some American managers may feel uncomfortable. This problem is exacerbated by the fact that there are no cultural grounds for thinking about certain activities in which knowledge of the situation is impossible or completely undesirable. (Also, their language is not attuned to the expression of this type of thinking.) The presentation of Western mastery and mastery is closely related to deeply rooted assumptions about themselves. For some Westerners and, of course, many who move to management positions, professional life is dedicated to strengthening the ego, trying to defend and maintain control over their environment and destiny. By contrast, the eastern reference view frame pragmatically match ego constraints as virtue. To easterner, exaggerated force is not clearly the desired attribute. This forepeel of power can be equated with the strength of coral reefs, which survive the immense forces of the sea and wind during typhoons. Reefs do not try to resist the sea, such as the defiant walls of human steel and concrete. Instead, the reef extends wedges down the sea direction. Waves devilt from these wedges, to each other. So power, rather than directed at the reef, is directed toward itself. The reef does not insist on standing higher than the sea. In typhoons, waves wash over the reef. And it survives. Let things flow. Success takes place straight around the circle, says the Chinese adage. How often do organizations force events to precipitate unnecessary resistance and even crisis? However, the predecessor of Western leadership, fuelled by the high value of being placed on a logical, chastised, purpose-blinded action, hinders many of the leaps before they look.9 Dam in the river. By the time the water rises, until the trickle finds its way around the obstruction, gradually increasing the flow and effect until its initial course is resumed. Executives, of course, do not watch torrents of frustration and energy needlessly build up behind organizational obstruction. But perhaps the solution is not always dynamite away obstruction; sometimes it has to track the path around it with a slight touch, enough to get the trickle flowing. Let the flow of events do the rest of the work. By adopting an alternative management concept, managers may, if necessary, choose to seek a promotional location in the false sense of mastery over events. Employees of the Idiosyncracys vs. Systems Typical Western organization prides itself on being made a science of secular value efficiency and objectivity. In an effort to cope with the slow growth and economic uncertainty of recent years, organisations have stepped up their emphasis on efficiency. Another set of forces has placed emphasis on objectivity, including rules aimed at eliminating all forms of discrimination. The dilemma is how to treat people as equals without treating them like the same thing. Many organisations seem to be insensitive to this difference. As a result, they, like white bread or pure sugar, become sweet and slightly unhealthy; all the essential human elements seem to get refined away. I must admit that many Western leaders are deeply concerned about the people who work for them. In a survey of American drivers, psychologist Jay Hall found that those most highly valued interpersonal skills are generally considered to be the most competent of their bosses. Good managers, Hall wrote, use an integrative style of management in which production goals and people's needs are equally important. 10 Of course, organisations need effective systems to carry out their tasks. But enough is enough, and more can be too much. The human touch is often lacking, and its lack of variety of isolation and denial. Lonely people perform instrumental functions as if they were truly interchangeable with a large machine. The explanation, I think, is that the increasing physical density of workers in our well-appointed offices and automated factories has nothing to do with psychic distance. Hard-edged procedures enhance this sense of alienness. Japanese companies, despite their apparent dexterity in the adoption of Western technology, have not followed the Western model, which is concerned about the trade-offs between human relations and secular efficiency. Of the more than 600 American employees Japanese corporations interviewed in my study (including 100 executives and 500 employees) almost all expressed an understanding of a more personalized approach to their employers. The Japanese have a name that describes the quality of special master pots that make the perfect bowl. The bowl is endowed with ever so small imperfections that constantly remind you of the object's connection to the 1st creator's humanity. The captain knows that the fullness of mass-produced bowls is less satisfying than those that bend slightly. In this context, it could be said that The Japanese companies are leaning slightly. The Japanese distinguish between our organization and their company and company name. In their minds the term organization refers only to the system; the concept of the undertaking also ensues its underlying nature. The nature of the company describes a sense of shared values for a long time implemented by the group roles. The result is an institutional way of doing things that are different from what would only require efficiency. A company can accomplish the same tasks as an organization does, but it takes up more space, moves with more weight, and reflects a commitment to greater ends than just the performance of a mission. In Japan, companies are considered to be taking all employees. (In the United States, the prevailing view is that they take an employee.) Relationships are similar to the binding power of the family. Lacking such philosophy, Western organizations tend to rely on what bureaucracy does best in combating system solutions rather than dealing with idiosyncratic demands of human nature. The result can isolate people in a lonely illusion of objectivity. Is the bottom line a unit of measure? From Japan's vantage point, the sense of incompleteness in our working lives stems from the difference between what many people are looking for and what most Western organizations provide. Most people bring three types of needs to their organizational existence: be rewarded for what they achieve, be accepted as a unique person, and be judged not only for the function performed, but also as a human being. The term remuneration, as used here, refers to material payments that one receives from an organisation (such as salaries and promotions) in exchange for services provided. I use this narrow, rather instrumental definition of rewards to distinguish it from acceptance and appreciation, representing other types of benefits to be sought. In this context, acceptance refers to quality, which is known in the human sense, rather than simply assessing the function one performs. The employee considers acceptance when people and organizations know him for who he is and will allow this uniqueness in his relationship with him. The assessment goes a step further by conveying not only the approval given by others about a person's distinctness, but also the assessment of it in a positive and supportive way. In an effort to express my commitment to the people of Japanese companies in the United States, I spent an average of more than three times as much per employee in social and recreational facilities and activities than their American counterparts (\$48.85 per employee per year, compared to \$14.85). Some of these programmes may have been largely symbolic, but many also contributed to an increase in the number of out-of-work contacts. The benefit was to personalize the company in question. A perhaps more direct means of ensuring acceptance and recognition is Japan's policy of supporting the control phases at the level of supervision. As a result of this practice, workers and their needs had twice as much contact as in American companies, as determined by (30.1 versus 13.5). The supervisors of companies managed by Japan worked more often with subordinates, engaged more extensively in personal consultations, and allowed more interaction between workers than American companies.11 What was the outcome? The evidence is diverse enough to please both skeptics and advocates. There was no difference in production: average output per unit of labour was roughly the same. In addition, Japanese companies experienced slightly higher tardiness and absenteeism. As for job satisfaction, the results were more favorable to Japanese-run companies in the United States. Their managers and employees expressed much greater satisfaction at their work than their counterparts in American companies. Why bother, it might be asked if the result has no effect on the bottom line? By Eastern standards the bottom line misses the point. It was Socrates (not the Eastern philosopher) who pointed out that man is a measure of all things. The eastern perspective brings its importance to a more complete view. On the Eastern mind, it's the man, not the bottom line, that's the main measure of all things. He is not the source of all things, because some who view a man in a complete team of their own destiny could proclaim. Nor does he object to the facilitator of all things, as some organizations seem to assume weighing his contributions against their costs. Japanese, but while relevant to the bottom line, there is no single-minded thing about it, as many Westerners are. Rather, he continues with a dual understanding that there is a second book in which success is debited or credited for his contribution to the quality of relationships that go on. So a professional leader defines his role not only as one who performs certain organizational tasks, but also as an essential intermediary in the social structure. Are Feathers More Effective Than Sledgehammers? This discussion has used Eastern ideas as a metaphor for exploring process management. One of the main themes is that it is not only specific concepts such as uncertainty or implicit recognition that can be useful, but also the cultural context that underpins these developments. I have tried to suggest that the combination of culture, words, philosophies and values gives each of us a special perspective. The eastern perspective is accepted not because it is the best, but because it sheds a different light on some aspects of leadership. The Eastern perspective provides not so much for a new toolkit (because, as I have noted repeatedly, many qualified American leaders use these tools), but rather legitimacy in using these tools in some situations where they are appropriate. The point of the East's vantage point is where the leaders live. This vantage point dwells on the chemistry of human relationships, as well as on the and it provides a mindset that adds special value to people's needs, as well as to systems and economic requirements. Appreciation for the foundations of this perspective is essential to the direction of this article. Because if they are related to our traditional set of Western assumptions, many of the ideas here become empty methods. Management assumptions act as fences, keeping some things and other things out of our understanding. As we have seen, there are many fences, not made of wood, but styled with our words, values and leadership ideology. I argue that a nontrivial set of management problems could be better understood if viewed from the other side of our Western fence. Undoubtedly, a very high level of personal development is necessary to embrace both of these perspectives, know when each is suitable, and acquire the skills that each requires. This is a sign of a cautionary note to the Western leader: in addition to approaching things purposively, fixing problems crisply, and setting his goals clearly (which is desirable but not always sufficient qualities to manage all problems skillfully), he may also wish, given that our Western world view less diminishes our sensitivity and skills in managing certain types of problems. Such an understanding can allow us to avoid the use of sledgehammers when feathers will do. Eastern ideas provide a metaphor for gaining such skills. Truth lurks in metaphors. 12 1. For a detailed report on these findings see my article In Communications and Decision Making Across Cultures: Japanese-American Comparisons, Administrative Science Quarterly, press release. 2. Witter Bynner, The Way of Life According to Lao Tzu (New York: Capricorn Books, 1944), p. 30. Frank Gibney, Japanese and Their Language, Encounter, March 1975, p. 33. G. 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