

# Masquerading Moments: Excavating the Exponents of Industrial Training Exposure

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**Abstract:** The accommodation business is an impressive and equally a challenging industry. All things considered, the board graduates must be knowledgeable in principle just as down to earth. Be that as it may, the pre-necessities of the executives graduate don't just include scholastics yet in addition the flawlesseness of delicate aptitudes and the capacity to settle on choices at whatever point and wherever. Trainees will in general have immense trusts in their lives after school as hotel industry appears to depict a captivating world. Off camera, not every person is sufficiently blessed to have the option to get into the superstar life. In any case, many of them let go they had always wanted after the fulfilment of their perfunctory preparations. This article answers a portion of the significant inquiries like what is it that makes the understudies to flee from the business? Is it in light of the expanding rivalry or acknowledgment that the business isn't too charming? Or on the other hand is it that this age does not have what it needs to end up effective (Ready persistence and diligent work)?

**Keywords:** Industrial Training, Hotel Management, Skills.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Training is the art of acquiring skills and developing first-hand knowledge that relate to specific occupations. The main focus of training is to improve the capability, productivity and performance of an individual. Apart from the requirement of basic training during the academic course, individuals need to be trained throughout the work life in order to progress in their career and develop professionally. Thus, it helps in expanding the knowledge base of trainees.

The 70:20:10 Model is a learning and development model that is parallel to the proportional to the way people learn effectively. It explains that 70% of the learning occurs on the job due to the related experiences. This is achieved by working on tasks and problems in the scheduled routine. 20% of the learning ensues while interacting with others by means of feedback. The rest of the 10% of education is gained through formal education via courses and reading materials.

Industrial Training is a gateway to the real world of the hotel industry. It is a type of experiential training. The knowledge is imbibed through a concoction of experience, exposure and education. It is an important part of the academic curriculum that exposes students to the real life scenario of the industry and chisels them as per the requirements of the industry. The main motive for this part is to ensure that the students are made competent enough to join the industry once they graduate.

## II. OBJECTIVES

- To comprehend the training experience of students
- To focus on the factors under which the training experience can be segregated
- To analyse the dominance of the factors

### III. METHODOLOGY

The primary data for this research has been collected by means of a questionnaire. The questionnaire had been distributed amongst the B.Sc. (HHA) – II and III Year students of IHM Chennai on a simple random sampling basis so as to understand their training experience. The questionnaire consisted of 25 main questions related to the students' experiences during their training. It was a close ended questionnaire and each had 5 options, ranging from Strongly Disagree with the least score (1) to Strongly Agree with the maximum score (5).

This research has been analysed in a quantitative manner. The first level of analysis will be done by a descriptive analysis which will help summarize the data and find patterns. The second level of analysis will be an inferential analysis which will help in generalizing the results.

The secondary sources of data have been collected from the internet and published journals and articles.

### IV. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The job market is increasingly accentuating on work experience along with the appropriate paper qualifications. For freshers, the industrial exposure and experience is significant. Thus, Industrial Training is necessary in the higher learning institutions (**Saat and Ahmad, 2009**). Higher learning institutions have supplemented practical training or internship to their curriculums, which provides the students with the opportunity to translate the knowledge gained into practice through industrial training. The training period lasts from 4 months to about six months and it aims to develop the skills required by the industry. It plays an important role providing quality and professional workforce in the future (**Omar, et al., 2008**).

Advancements in work context are led by rapid changes in the information technology, work life and society which in turn affect the economic growth (**Lam & Ching, 2007**). Highly skilled individuals need to cope with the competitive market. As such, one must pay attention to their generic skills as well, along with their technical skills. According to **Robinson (2000)**, employability skills or generic skills are those basic skills that are required to obtain and sustain a job. The deficiency in generic skills can be overcome by complementing the academic program with an industrial exposure session.

The work experience will not be successful if students are given menial, boring tasks instead of exciting and worthwhile projects. The students may end up feeling discouraged and choose other career opportunities than being encouraged to gain skills (**Boud, Solomon, & Symes, 2001; Busby, 2003**). Therefore an emphasis should be placed on ensuring that the student is given meaningful tasks and an opportunity to train in various departments or sectors of the business (**Richardson, 2004**).

In the tourism and hospitality industry, the success of firms is determined by the presence of skilled, enthusiastic, and committed workforce (**Kusluvan & Kusluvan, 2000**).

**Kusluvan and Kusluvan (2000)** acknowledge that working in the industry has a negative image in the eyes of potential recruits (**Aksu & Koksal, 2005; Getz, 1994; Kusluvan & Kusluvan, 2000**). It is critical for tourism and hospitality management graduates to have a positive attitude toward working in the industry. This can be achieved by using staff as the mechanism to gain an advantage over competitors (**Kusluvan & Kusluvan, 2000**).

**Fazio (1986)** also states that many authors have argued that perceptions and attitudes based on direct experience will help in the creation of a stronger and more realistic view of the industry and will therefore assist in predicting the future behaviour.

**Clemenz (2001)** studied the quality of training as perceived by the students and revealed that the gap between expectations and experiences is measurable by means of a concise scale.

In the study, "Training Effectiveness: An Empirical Examination of Factors Outside the Training Context", **Tracey and Cardenas (1996)** have noted that the work environment has a significant impact on the pre – training motivation given to the trainees. The pre – training motivation, in turn, influences the knowledge acquired by the trainees.

Pursuing a career in the industry is dependent on the internship experiences of the students as studied by **Farmaki (2018)** in "Tourism and Hospitality Internships: A Prologue to Career Intentions?" It also says that an internship's efficient design and informed management play a role in the career decision making process of individuals.

Industrial training is a hands – on experience that helps deal with the real life confrontation. **Collins (2002)** in “Gateway to the Real World, Industrial Training: Dilemmas and Problems” says that the success of the internship programs is in providing the realistic experience. The study examines the structure of internship system, its strengths and weaknesses and what can be done to improve the system.

“Effect of Internship on Career Perceptions on Hotel Management Students” is a research study that has aimed at understanding the challenges in the form of gaps in career perceptions, that need to be addressed in the industry. **Datta, Biswakarma and Nayak (2013)** have identified the general opinion of the students towards the industry. Working conditions, learning opportunities and compensations affect the opinion of the students.

Internships play a major role in developing students’ managerial competence. The competence values alter the effectiveness of an organization. “Assessing the Contribution of Internship in Developing Australian tourism and Hospitality Students’ Management Competence” by **Walo (2001)**, studies the relationship between internships and the development of managerial competencies an internship prepares students for future management roles.

**Srinivasan and Karmarkar (2014)** have contemplated the various career opportunities available in this field. In their research, “Changing Perceptions of Students towards the Hotel Management Course while Pursuing the Course”, have examined various aspects such as course content, working hours and other hardships that stand as obstacles to succeed in the industry. Internships are supposed to facilitate the transition of students from amateurs to professionals by helping gain actual industrial knowledge and developing individuals’ personality.

Reports also indicate that many hospitality and tourism management graduates fail to enter the industry upon graduation due to low job satisfaction, poor employment conditions, and absence of motivating factors. This results in high staff turnover and waste of trained and experienced personnel (**Doherty, Guerrier, Jamieson, Lashley& Lockwood, 2001; Pavesic&Brymer, 1990**).

Based on the finding by **Bubany, Krieshok, Black, and McKay (2008)**, perceived interests were of paramount concern in the crafting of career decisions. An assessment of interests would aid the student in identifying avenues for experiential engagement. Experiential engagement such as practicum or internship training may be a significant medium in developing interest to the students to further choose the industry to start a career after graduation. Furthermore, after participating in experiential activities, it may be helpful to themselves in determining how these experiences may have clarified, affirmed, or piqued interests, or influenced their confidence in either their career decision-making abilities or other work-related skills or abilities (**Bubany et al., 2008**).

Internship programme planning and industry involvement have the most profound influence on students' willingness to stay in the hospitality industry after graduation (**Chen, et al., 2012**).

A person’s management style is profoundly influenced by of that individual’s learning style. The management style is in turn defined by the individual’s skill and attitude. It is important to understand the learning style of students and managers so as to develop appropriate training programs for creative and innovative service delivery needed by the industry. This is because of the wide diversity in the nature and level of managerial tasks in the hospitality and tourism industry. (**Wong, et al., 2000**).

Internships form an important aspect of the graduate/undergraduate courses. They are instrumental in framing the key competencies required by the graduates at the time of final placements. Internships are authoritative in charting the personal characteristics of the student’s vis-à-vis the requirements of the industry and allow them to work in a realistic environment (**Singh, et al., 2010**).

The current world that we live in is extremely dynamic. In order to adapt to the changing requirements of this generation, higher and general skills have to be added to the crafted curriculum as employees need to be more sensitive and responsive to the changing environments. In quintessence, a balance needs to be found between practice and theory. Also, the industry is not very attractive to the new generation of graduates, who favour a better work/life balance than that offered by the hospitality industry. For these reasons, the industry should also focus on developing a more attractive image in terms of role, wages and career development (**Whitelaw, et al., 2009**).

## V. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study focuses on analysing students' training experiences and identifying the factors that can recapitulate the training experience. This will help in the better understanding of their opinions towards the industry and will benefit in the detection of the aspects that should be developed so that training becomes a success, for all: the students, the institute and the industry.

## VI. NEED FOR TRAINING

Training changes a student, both academically and emotionally. Not only do the students get a first-hand experience of what it would be like to be working as an employee in the hotel but they also are exposed to the real world that lies beyond their sheltered lives. From a hotel's point of view, training is a crucial process which helps them in shaping employees for the future. It also stands as a promotional event where students tell others about their hotel by means of word of mouth communication. From the institute's viewpoint, training is that essential process which helps in further honing an individual's skills and makes them better suited for the industry. It also provides the students with the kind of exposure (face-to-face interaction with guests) that the institute may or may not be able to provide.

From the student's perspective, training is a part of the curriculum that has to be accomplished in order for them to receive their degrees. However, they fail to notice the underlying principles of training. Many of them do not even notice the changes that they've undergone. Training facilitates in the further development of their skills and helps them gain knowledge about the current way of functioning and so on. It also assists them in coming out of their shell and looking at the world from a closer distance. It shows them the reality of the industry and does not conceal any imperfections at all. Finally, training teaches the students as to how to survive in the industry, that is, through communication. It indirectly benefits in the improvement of communication skills of the students. Every minute element that an individual learns during their training is of utmost importance and is learning for lifetime.

## VII. FINDINGS

### *A. Rating the Training Experience*

Training is a crucial part of a Hospitality and Hotel Administration degree student's curriculum. It is essential that they undergo the training for the prescribed time period. Nevertheless, it is up to the students to make use of the training period optimistically or be pessimistic about it. However, there are factors that affect their opinions about their experiences. Thus, the students were provided with a scale ranging from 1 – 5 to rate their training experience of the hotel that they trained from. It was observed that around 50 students (46%) enjoyed their training and have given a rating of 5. Almost 42 students (38%) have voted for the next maximum rating of 4. Around 12% of the students felt that their training was neutral, neither as enjoyable as the others claimed, nor too disagreeable. Again, only 4% of the students seem to have not enjoyed their industrial exposure.

### *B. Provision of Study Materials*

Around 39 students (36%) agreed that they were given study materials to aid with their training. However, 33 students were not clear if they were provided with study materials or just the hotel pamphlets. 19% of the students (20) felt that they were not provided with any study material. However, equal percentages of the sample population were on the two ends of the scale and clashed in their opinion about the study materials. 7% (7 students) strongly disagreed about being given any sort of theoretical material whereas the rest of the 7% (8 students) strongly agreed that they were indeed provided with materials related to their course.

### *C. Opportunity to understand the real life scenario*

No amount of classroom theory or practical sessions will be able to provide even a miniscule version of the realistic scenario. As such, training is the only way, for a hotel management student, to understand the practical implications of working at a hotel. One of the main reasons is that only in the real life scenario will a student be able to interact with guests. Even if it is for a few minutes, it means a lot for the student and gives them an experience for life. Maximum numbers of students seem to have been satisfied with the exposure they received at their hotels. 93% of the students agreed that they were able to experience the actuality of the state of affairs in their training hotels, with 51% of them strongly in approval of the same. 6% of the students were unsure whether they received proper experience or not and only a mere 1% disagreed for the same.

#### ***D. Assistance with developing and honing of skills and knowledge***

One of the main purposes of training is to cultivate knowledge and refine basic skills in order to prepare the trainees (students) for their career in the industry. Therefore, it is of utmost importance that the outcome of the industrial exposure is constructive in this aspect. As the norm, around 90% of the sample population agreed that the training period was beneficial for them in this attribute whereas only some (1.8%) of the students felt that they did not gain any sort of enlightening by means of their training. Another 7.5% felt that they were not sure if they were given this opportunity or if they failed to recognise it.

#### ***E. Trained as per curriculum syllabus***

The curriculum syllabus aims at the motivating and confidence building in student trainees. It is also prescribed that the student trainees realize their key area of interest which will help them during placements and choose the area in which they would like to begin their career in the hostel industry. 43% of the students felt their training was pretty much aligned to the prescribed syllabus whereas only a meagre 0.9% felt that it went completely off the track. 29.9% students felt that their syllabus requirements were fulfilled but 11.2% opposed to this viewpoint. Around 15% of the sample population neither seemed to have assented to nor were they conflicted towards this dogma.

#### ***F. Properly organized training schedule***

Training must be undertaken in a very organized format. An unplanned process does nothing but create bedlam and ends up not fulfilling the criteria for which it was arranged in the first place, that is, learning. As such, proper blueprint must be designed and executed in order to ensure that the student trainees absorb all facets of their prescribed syllabus. Around 77% of the students were in favour of the statement. Nevertheless, 12% were against it. Yet another 11% seemed to neither agree nor disagree.

#### ***G. Proper Briefing before and after the shift***

Briefing refers to a process in which information and instructions are passed from the employees of one shift to those arriving for the consequent shift. Trainees also need to be kept in the loop as they are also involved with the hotel till their internship is complete. Around 52.6% of the sample population came to an agreement that they were provided with a proper briefing before and after the shift but 18.7% of the students were distressed about the same. Another 18.7% were on the fence regarding this matter.

#### ***H. Awareness about the role to be performed***

Training necessitates for the students to perform tasks. However, not knowing the specifics about the task and the role that that particular task would play in the functioning of the hotel will not only aggravate the students and result in them in not carrying out the task appropriately but also make them victims of ignorance. Maximum of the students (81.3%) seemed to be aware of the roles that they were expected to perform though 4.7% of the students seemed to not have understood their role. Yet another 14% were non-aligned with their understanding.

#### ***I. More Exposure to practical sessions than theoretical sessions***

The term 'Industrial Training Exposure' in a way creates a practical scenario. However, every practical is successful only with the support of some kind of substantial theoretical material. Theoretical know-how must be supplemented with practical sessions and vice versa so that the concepts are crystal clear and they remain deep rooted in a student's mind. Again, maximum students (87%) felt that they received more exposure than theoretical sessions whereas only 2% felt that they had lesser practical sessions. Another 11% of the students seemed to have obtained equal amounts of practical exposure and theory sessions.

#### ***J. Mentally prepared for rigorous work***

The hotel industry works continuously 24/7 with no halts in its functioning. Being in the service sector, the employees must toil hard so as to please its customers and ensure that they return back. As such, one of the most important traits required in a hotel management graduate is their inclination towards accepting the hard truths of the industry. As industrial exposure is a trainee's first encounter with the real life scenario, it must also assist them in understanding the nature of work that the industry demands from them. 79.4% of the students seem to have understood the challenges that the students would have to face in the future, as employees, and seem to have already resolved their mind regarding the same. A minor 7.5% of the students still have not gotten used to the thought that the industry is very arduous whereas around 13.7% of the students seemed to have been half – minded about that concept.



***K. Up-to-date with the currently used techniques and skills***

The industry is ever changing. Thus, there are high chances that a concept mastered a month ago may even be of use in the current day. Books may not be updated that quickly but the industry, on the other hand, definitely incorporates new concepts as and when required so as to be at par with the competition. As such, another one of the main requirements for a training curriculum is for students to go beyond their textbook information and understand the concepts and skills being used practically in the present world. Roughly 89% of the sampled population felt that their training hotel was, in fact, up-to-date with the current trends in the industry whereas 2% disagreed for the same. Only 9% of the students seemed to have not understood if their training hotel incorporated new trends or not.

***L. Confidence in performing tasks***

During training, students learn to perform tasks in the way the industry follows the task process. Certain standard operating procedures as taught theoretically are not strictly followed during the actual working period. A few other procedures that are not taught in college are followed in the industry. As such, usually when a student returns back to college after their internship period, they are inclined towards being more confident about performing tasks and supervising other to properly accomplish the tasks than before. Approximately 86% of the sample population concurred to have felt confident while performing tasks whereas only 6% were against that notion. The rest of the 8% sensed that they did not find any change in their attitude towards task performances.

***M. Continuous effort to create a comfortable working environment***

The students may or may not have visited hotels as guests. As such, they would have only seen the calm and composed side of the hotels. However, the internship period is the first time for all the students to see the backside of the industry, to understand how hotels run and by whom the hotels are run. Thus, an initial introduction to the chaotic backside might come off as a shock to the students. Therefore, it becomes essential that they are kept comfortable in whichever operational area that they are trained at so that their shock does not turn into repulsion and consequently decide on never returning to the industry. The hotels must have realised this aspect as maximum of the students (52.3%) have agreed that they realised that the hotel was putting in a continuous effort in order to create a comfortable working environment for them. 29.9% of the students felt that no such effort had been taken to make them feel secure and yet another 17.8% felt neither way.

***N. Determination to work beyond shift hours***

The training period, somehow, strengthens a person mentally. It helps in making a person realise the amount of hard work that the industry demands from a person and it moulds their minds accordingly. As the hotel industry works 24/7 and pauses are practically impossible, one must have the determination to work beyond the stipulated time period if need be. This aspect is introduced during the training period itself. Approximately 56% of the students agree that they have reduced their expectations of having fixed working hours where around 20% still have not gotten the hang of it. Yet another 24% seem to feel indifferent about the same.

***O. Safe transport service after late night shifts***

For the common folk, the hotel industry comes with a statutory warning that says that the industry is not safe for women. As such the industry has been taking efforts to keep them safe. However, since late night shift is a new concept for all the trainees, be it male or female, some effort seems to have been taken in order to make them feel safe while returning back home. Around 53.3% of the sampled population agreed to this statement while 27.2% disagreed. 20.6% of the students seemed to be unconcerned about the same.

***P. Requirement on focus for improving policies regarding trainees***

Trainees are usually given menial tasks which are sometimes not valuable to the learning based on their curriculum syllabus. They are perceived as economical employees and are thus made to perform tasks that employees do and much more but at the cost of being distinguished as trainees. It is, thus, crucial that there is an improvement in policies relating to trainees so that they are entrusted with the responsibilities that a trainee must be allocated with. A maximum of 87% of students felt the need for improvement in policies whereas a mere 2.8% thought that no improvement was required. A mere 10.3% seemed to have been in a conflict as to whether improvements in policies regarding trainees were required or not.

***Q. Capability to work in a team***

Another characteristic that a trainee is bound to imbibe during the training period is as to how to work in a team. This aspect calls for adjustment and understanding of opinions from all members of a team. Nearly 97% of the students found that they had cultivated this characteristic in them by means of their task processing during the training whereas a mere 2% strongly disagreed. Only 1% were uncertain about having acquired that quality.

***R. Ability to reach out to superiors from various departments***

Another crucial part of the internship is to be able to create a contact with the employees working in the hotel. They are just as valuable as the same age acquaintances. The ability to reach out to the superiors from the various departments shows how much the employees are ready to make the trainees feel comfortable. Around 86.9% said that they were able to reach out to the superiors from various departments whereas 2.8% felt that they felt a little uncomfortable in interacting with the superiors. 10.3% seemed to be on the fence regarding this statement.

## **VIII. CONCLUSION**

Training is a very essential aspect of the curriculum syllabus. The students are prescribed to undergo their training at 5 star hotels. The main objective of the training programme is to familiarize the students with the actual working environment so that they can gain practical exposure and build and develop their skills. This study aspires to create a deeper understanding about the students' training experiences by segregating the data collected into 5 categories:

***A. Knowledge acquisition***

This category focuses on the facets that are involved in the assimilation of knowledge. Knowledge acquisition is the main outcome that an individual expects to receive at the end of his/ her training. It is obvious that the classroom teaching will extensively vary from what an individual would learn during their training period, which is based on experiential learning in general.

***B. Training process***

Even though the end result of the training programme is the same, the process that each hotel follows might differ. A few activities form the base of any training programme. The training begins with an induction programme followed by orientation wherein the trainees are introduced to the hotel and its employees. They are made familiar with the know-who and know - abouts of the hotel. Then they are allocated to their departments to which they must report from the next day onwards. The departments are supposed to be changed on a monthly basis but realistically, it so happens that the departments are changed as per the requirements. The trainees are supposed to get their performance appraisal forms filled and signed by the concerned department heads. Finally, they are awarded with their certificate of excellence for having completed their training on the day of clearance.

***C. Exposure to the industry***

Industrial training has been made as an essential part of the curriculum with the only intention to give the students an opportunity to discover the real industrial scenario and practically learn about the functions of the hotel.

The hotel industry as a whole is a very meticulous yet painstaking industry. Being a service industry, taking halts are practically impossible. Young students must register this fact in their minds. The training hotels help register this fact by showing the trainees the service industrial world as it is. Again, this is not for the faint hearted or students with feeble determination.

***D. Organizational culture***

The organizational culture of a hotel is very fundamental in recreating the experience of an individual. It is due to the kind of organizational culture that a hotel hosts that the trainees are able to grow or remain exactly where they were when they started.

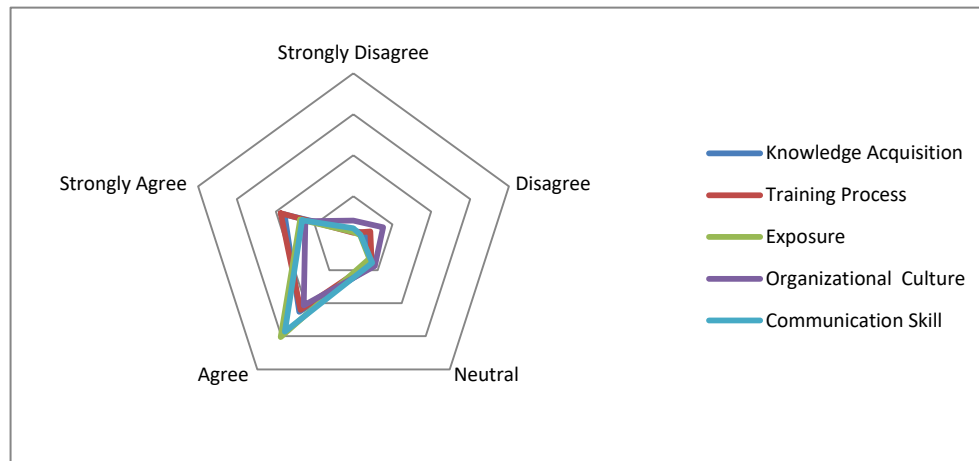
The management style influences the organizational culture greatly and the way a higher official behaves with his subordinates affects the way his subordinates deal with their subordinates. It is a trickle down structure. As such, an organizational culture is created. The two extremes of an organizational culture could be a secured, at ease environment and a hostile environment.

### E. Communication skill

One of the core aspects that a student trainee learns is the skill of communication. By interacting with other student trainees and the employees at hotel, an individual becomes proficient at communication skills. They learn how to introduce themselves to others formally, how to interact with people in a formal setting and how to create bonds that will persist for a lifetime.

### F. Graphical Analysis

The chart explains the closeness of the five main factors that determine the training experience.



**Fig. 1: Chart depicting the closeness of the factors that determine the training experience**

According to the chart, Knowledge Acquisition and Training Process are very closely overlapping each other. Exposure and Communication skills seem to be on the same page. Organizational skill envelopes the other factors.

This shows that the Knowledge acquisition is interrelated to Training process. If the training process is effective, then its success is determined by the knowledge an individual acquires during the training programme. Communication skill enhances the level of exposure an individual can receive during training. If the individual masters the art of communication, it becomes easier for them to understand their industrial experiences. Organizational Culture blankets the rest of the factors as the other factors would not exist without it. The presence of an Organizational Culture defines the communication in the hotel and also gives a clear cut view of the training process. Communication in turn shapes the exposure that the students receive and on the other hand, training process influences the knowledge acquired by the students during the training period.

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