

Robert townsend up the organization Handbook

robert townsend up the organization: An In-Depth Look at His Leadership and Impact

In the realm of organizational leadership and management, few figures stand out quite like Robert Townsend. Known for his innovative approaches to business and sharp insights into organizational dynamics, Townsend has significantly influenced how companies operate and grow. His work, especially through the lens of "Up the Organization," a seminal book in management literature, offers valuable lessons for executives, managers, and entrepreneurs alike. This article delves into Robert Townsend's approach to organizational management, exploring his philosophies, strategies, and the lasting impact of his leadership.

Who is Robert Townsend?

Before exploring the specifics of his organizational philosophies, it's essential to understand who Robert Townsend is.

Background and Career Highlights

Robert Townsend is an American businessman, author, and former CEO who gained fame for transforming the American Telephone & Telegraph Company's (AT&T) subsidiary, New England Telephone, into a highly efficient and customer-centric organization. His career is marked by a commitment to innovative management practices and an emphasis on ethical leadership.

- Early Life and Education: Townsend graduated from Amherst College and later earned an MBA from Harvard Business School.
- Career Milestones:
 - Joined AT&T in the 1950s.
 - Became CEO of New England Telephone in the 1970s.
 - Authored "Up the Organization" in 1970, which became a classic management book.
 - Later founded his own consulting firm, Towndial, to help organizations improve their management practices.

The Significance of "Up the Organization"

Published in 1970, "Up the Organization" challenged conventional management practices of the era.

Townsend's candid insights and humorous style made the book a bestseller and a lasting influence on management thinking.

Core themes of the book include:

- The importance of empowering employees at all levels.
- The need for honesty and integrity in management.
- Simplifying organizational structures for better efficiency.
- Fostering a culture of open communication and accountability.

Robert Townsend's Approach to Up the Organization

Townsend's philosophy centers on creating organizations that are lean, honest, and people-focused. His strategies emphasize decentralization, employee empowerment, and ethical management, which collectively foster a productive and motivated workforce.

Key Principles of Townsend's Management Philosophy

- Decentralization and Empowerment

Townsend believed organizations function best when decision-making is decentralized. He argued that frontline employees, who interact directly with customers, should have the authority to make decisions.

- Benefits:
 - Faster response times.
 - Increased employee engagement.
 - Better customer service.

- Honesty and Integrity

For Townsend, honesty wasn't just a moral choice but a strategic imperative. Transparent communication builds trust within organizations and with customers.

- Practices:
 - Open financial and operational reporting.

- Encouraging employees to speak honestly about issues.
- Avoiding misrepresentation or cover-ups.

- Simplicity in Organizational Structure

He advocated for flat structures that reduce bureaucracy, streamline processes, and eliminate unnecessary layers of management.

- Advantages:
 - Reduced overhead costs.
 - Clearer accountability.
 - Increased agility.

- Focus on Customer Satisfaction

Townsend emphasized that customer happiness should be the primary goal of any organization, which requires aligning employee efforts toward service excellence.

- Humor and Human Touch

He believed that leadership should be approachable and relatable, often using humor to communicate and motivate.

Implementation Strategies in Organizations

Townsend's principles can be translated into practical steps:

- Empower employees by giving them decision-making authority.
- Encourage open communication across all levels.
- Reduce bureaucratic hurdles to facilitate quick action.
- Maintain transparency about organizational performance.
- Reward honesty and initiative among staff.
- Prioritize customer feedback in strategic planning.

Impact of Robert Townsend's Management Philosophy

Townsend's ideas have had a profound influence on modern management practices. His emphasis on transparency, decentralization, and employee empowerment has become foundational in contemporary organizational development.

Effects on Business Culture

Organizations adopting Townsend's principles often experience:

- Increased employee morale
- Better customer relationships
- Improved operational efficiency
- Greater adaptability to market changes

Case Studies and Examples

- AT&T Under Townsend: His leadership transformed the company into a more responsive and customer-focused entity.
- Small Business Applications: Many small businesses have adopted Townsend's principles to compete effectively against larger corporations.
- Modern Tech Companies: Firms like Google and Zappos exemplify Townsend's values through flat hierarchies and open communication.

Legacy and Relevance Today

Despite being written over five decades ago, Townsend's "Up the Organization" remains highly relevant. Its principles underpin many successful organizational models today.

Modern Adaptations of Townsend's Ideas

- Agile Management: Emphasizes flexibility, decentralization, and quick decision-making.
- Servant Leadership: Focuses on serving employees and customers, aligning with Townsend's human-centric approach.
- Transparency Movements: Companies increasingly adopt open-book management and transparent communication strategies inspired by Townsend's advocacy for honesty.

How Leaders Can Apply Townsend's Principles Today

- Foster a culture of honesty and accountability.
- Delegate authority and empower employees.
- Simplify processes and reduce unnecessary hierarchy.
- Prioritize customer experience and feedback.
- Use humor and relatability to motivate teams.

Conclusion

robert townsend up the organization encapsulates a management philosophy rooted in honesty, simplicity, and empowerment. His insights challenge traditional hierarchical models, advocating for organizations that are agile, transparent, and human-centered. By embracing Townsend's principles, modern organizations can foster a positive culture, enhance customer satisfaction, and achieve sustainable growth. His legacy continues to influence management thinking, inspiring leaders worldwide to rethink how they build and lead their organizations for long-term success.

Robert Townsend Up the Organization is a seminal work in the realm of business management and organizational theory, penned by Robert Townsend, a renowned businessman and CEO of Avis Rent a Car System. Published in 1970, the book offers a refreshing perspective on leadership, corporate culture, and employee empowerment, emphasizing the importance of trust, decentralization, and human-centric management practices. Over the decades, Up the Organization has become a cornerstone text for entrepreneurs, managers, and organizational theorists seeking innovative strategies to foster productivity and morale within their companies.

Overview of Robert Townsend's Philosophy

At its core, Up the Organization advocates for a radical rethinking of traditional corporate hierarchies and management styles. Townsend challenges the prevailing top-down approach prevalent in many organizations of his era, arguing that such systems often stifle creativity, breed resentment, and undermine employee motivation. Instead, he champions a decentralized, trust-based model where employees are empowered to take ownership of their work, make decisions, and contribute meaningfully to the company's success.

Key Principles and Themes

- Trust and Respect: Townsend emphasizes that trust is the foundation of effective management. Leaders should trust their employees' judgment and treat them with respect, which in turn fosters loyalty and initiative.
- Decentralization: He advocates for delegating authority and decentralizing decision-making

processes to enable quicker responses and a more engaged workforce.

- Employee Empowerment: The book underscores the importance of giving employees autonomy, involving them in decisions, and recognizing their contributions.

- Customer-Centric Approach: Townsend believes that internal culture and employee satisfaction directly impact customer service quality, making a positive internal environment essential for external success.

- Simplicity and Clarity: Avoid unnecessary bureaucracy and complex procedures; clear communication and straightforward policies help organizations operate more efficiently.

The Organizational Model Proposed by Townsend

Townsend's model is built around the idea of a flat, trust-based organization where management acts more as facilitators than controllers. This approach contrasts sharply with the hierarchical, command-and-control systems common in mid-20th-century corporations.

Features of the Model

- Decentralized Decision-Making: Employees are empowered to make decisions relevant to their roles, reducing bottlenecks and increasing agility.

- Open Communication: Encourages transparency across all levels, fostering an environment where feedback and ideas flow freely.

- Performance-Based Incentives: Rewards are aligned with performance, emphasizing meritocracy rather than seniority or political favoritism.

- Minimal Bureaucracy: Streamlined processes and policies prevent the organization from becoming bogged down in red tape.

- Leadership as Servant: Managers serve as mentors and facilitators rather than authoritative

figures dictating every action.

Pros of this Model:

- Increased employee motivation and engagement.
- Faster decision-making.
- Greater flexibility to adapt to market changes.
- Improved customer service due to empowered staff.

Cons of this Model:

- Potential lack of clarity in responsibilities.
- Risk of inconsistent decision-making across units.
- Requires a high level of trust and discipline among staff.
- Possible conflicts arising from decentralized authority.

Implementation Strategies

Townsend provides practical advice for organizations looking to adopt his principles, emphasizing the importance of a cultural shift over mere policy changes.

Steps to Up the Organization

- Start with Leadership: Leaders must embody trust, humility, and openness, setting the tone for the entire organization.
- Communicate Clearly: Articulate the vision and values openly to all employees, fostering a shared understanding.
- Empower Employees: Delegate authority gradually, providing training and support to ensure staff are prepared for increased responsibility.
- Create a Feedback Loop: Establish mechanisms for employees to share ideas, concerns, and suggestions without fear of reprisal.

- Align Incentives: Develop reward systems that recognize initiative, innovation, and customer satisfaction.

- Simplify Processes: Review and eliminate unnecessary procedures to create a lean operational structure.

Challenges in Implementation:

- Resistance from middle managers accustomed to traditional authority.
- Potential confusion over decision rights.
- Maintaining consistency across departments.

Solutions:

- Conduct training and workshops highlighting benefits.
- Pilot programs to demonstrate success.
- Regularly monitor and adjust the approach.

Case Studies and Examples

Throughout Up the Organization, Townsend shares anecdotes from his experience at Avis, illustrating how his management philosophy transformed the company.

Avis Rent a Car System

- Townsend took over Avis when it was struggling and implemented principles such as decentralization and employee empowerment.
- He abolished unnecessary rules, encouraged staff to solve customer issues on their own, and rewarded initiative.
- These changes led to a significant turnaround, with customer satisfaction and profitability improving markedly.

Other Organizations

While the book primarily focuses on Avis, Townsend's principles have been applied in various sectors, including manufacturing, retail, and service industries, often resulting in increased productivity and morale.

Critical Reception and Legacy

Up the Organization has received widespread praise for its innovative approach and practical advice. Critics have lauded Townsend for his emphasis on human-centric management and his challenge to outdated corporate hierarchies.

Strengths of the Book

- Practical, real-world examples.
- Clear, actionable strategies.
- Emphasis on trust and morale as drivers of success.
- Challenging conventional wisdom in management.

Limitations and Criticisms

- Some argue that the approach may not suit highly regulated or safety-critical industries.
- Implementation requires a significant cultural shift that can be difficult to achieve.
- Risk of inconsistency if decentralization is not carefully managed.

Modern Relevance and Influence

Despite being over five decades old, Up the Organization remains remarkably relevant, especially in the context of modern organizational trends like flat management, agile methodologies, and employee engagement initiatives.

Influence on Contemporary Management

- Inspired the development of participative management practices.
- Prefigured concepts in agile and lean organizations.
- Emphasized the importance of trust and morale, now widely recognized as key factors in organizational success.

Lessons for Today's Leaders

- Prioritize building trust with employees.
- Decentralize decision-making where possible.
- Foster a culture of openness and continuous improvement.

- Recognize that empowering staff can lead to innovation and better customer experiences.

Conclusion

Robert Townsend *Up the Organization* presents a compelling blueprint for transforming traditional corporate structures into human-centered, trust-based organizations. Its emphasis on decentralization, employee empowerment, and leadership as service has influenced generations of managers and entrepreneurs. While not a one-size-fits-all solution, the principles outlined in the book serve as a valuable reminder that organizations are ultimately about people, and success hinges on trusting and enabling those people to do their best. For anyone interested in reimagining management and cultivating a vibrant organizational culture, Townsend's insights remain as vital today as they were when first published.

Question What is Robert Townsend's role in the film 'Up the Organization'? Robert Townsend is the director and writer of the film 'Up the Organization', and he also stars in it, portraying the character of Ray Vargo. What is the main theme of 'Up the Organization'? The film satirizes corporate culture and office politics, highlighting the absurdities and corruption within corporate America. How does Robert Townsend's 'Up the Organization' differ from traditional corporate satire films? Townsend's approach combines sharp humor with social commentary, emphasizing African American perspectives and raising awareness about workplace inequalities. Is 'Up the Organization' based on real-life experiences or events? While it is a comedy that exaggerates corporate scenarios, 'Up the Organization' draws inspiration from real workplace issues and Townsend's own observations of corporate culture. What impact did Robert Townsend's 'Up the Organization' have on the portrayal of African Americans in workplace comedies? The film was notable for its portrayal of African American characters navigating corporate environments, challenging stereotypes and opening doors for more diverse representation in comedy. Where can I watch Robert Townsend's 'Up the Organization' today? The film is available on various streaming platforms, digital rental services, and may be found in select DVD collections or online stores. What are some notable scenes or moments in 'Up the Organization' that showcase Robert Townsend's comedic style? One notable scene features exaggerated corporate meetings and humorous portrayals of office mishaps, highlighting Townsend's signature satirical humor and social critique. How has Robert Townsend's 'Up the Organization' influenced modern workplace comedies? The film's blend of satire and social commentary has inspired subsequent filmmakers to address corporate issues with humor, emphasizing diversity and authentic workplace experiences.

Related keywords: Robert Townsend, Up the Organization, comedy film, 1984 movie, African American filmmakers, satire, workplace comedy, urban cinema, black directors, independent film

organization theory and design daft

Organization Theory and Design Draft

Understanding how organizations function and are structured is fundamental to achieving efficiency, adaptability, and success in today's complex business environment. The concept of **organization theory and design draft** serves as a blueprint for analyzing, developing, and implementing organizational structures that align with strategic goals. This article explores the core principles, models, and practical considerations involved in organization theory and design, providing a comprehensive guide for managers, students, and professionals interested in organizational development.

Introduction to Organization Theory and Design

Organization theory is a multidisciplinary field that studies how organizations are structured, managed, and operated. It examines the relationships between people, structures, processes, and environments to understand and improve organizational effectiveness. Organization design, on the other hand, refers to the process of configuring these elements to achieve desired outcomes.

The interplay between theory and design helps organizations adapt to changing environments, foster innovation, and maintain competitive advantage. A well-crafted organization design draft provides a clear framework for decision-making, resource allocation, and communication flows.

Fundamental Concepts of Organization Theory

1. Types of Organizational Structures

Organizations can be structured in various ways, each suited to different operational needs and strategic objectives:

- **Functional Structure:** Divides the organization based on specialized functions such as marketing, finance, production, etc.
- **Divisional Structure:** Segments the organization by product lines, geographic regions, or markets.
- **Matrix Structure:** Combines functional and project-based structures, promoting flexibility and collaboration.
- **Flat Structure:** Features few hierarchical levels, encouraging open communication and quick decision-making.
- **Hierarchical (or Vertical) Structure:** Traditional pyramid with clear levels of authority, suitable for large, complex organizations.

2. Classic Organization Theories

Several foundational theories influence organization design:

- **Classical Theory:** Emphasizes efficiency, specialization, and clear authority lines (e.g., Weber's bureaucratic model).
- **Human Relations Theory:** Focuses on employee well-being and motivation as key to productivity.
- **Contingency Theory:** Suggests that the optimal organization structure depends on external and internal factors.
- **Systems Theory:** Views organizations as complex systems composed of interrelated parts.

Principles of Effective Organization Design

Designing an organization requires balancing various principles to ensure agility, clarity, and motivation:

1. Clarity of Purpose

Every organization should have a clearly defined mission, vision, and strategic objectives that guide structural decisions.

2. Flexibility and Adaptability

Structures should allow for change and innovation without significant disruption.

3. Specialization and Departmentalization

Grouping similar tasks enhances efficiency and expertise but must be balanced with cross-functional collaboration.

4. Span of Control

Determines how many subordinates a manager can effectively oversee? affects hierarchy levels and decision speed.

5. Formalization

Defines the extent of standard procedures and rules, impacting consistency and autonomy.

Organization Design Draft: Steps and Considerations

Creating an effective organization design draft involves systematic planning and analysis:

Step 1: Conduct Environmental Analysis

Evaluate external factors such as market trends, competition, and technological changes that influence organizational needs.

Step 2: Define Strategic Objectives

Align the organizational structure with long-term goals and core competencies.

Step 3: Identify Key Processes and Activities

Map out primary and support processes to understand workflow and resource requirements.

Step 4: Determine Structural Model

Choose an appropriate structure (functional, divisional, matrix, etc.) based on analysis.

Step 5: Design Formal Structures

Develop organizational charts, job descriptions, authority matrices, and communication channels.

Step 6: Implement and Communicate

Ensure clarity in roles and responsibilities through effective communication and training.

Step 7: Evaluate and Refine

Continuously monitor organizational performance and adjust the design draft as needed.

Practical Considerations in Organization Design

While theoretical models provide guidance, practical issues often influence implementation:

- **Organizational Culture:** Align structure with shared values and norms.
- **Change Management:** Manage resistance and ensure stakeholder buy-in.
- **Technology Adoption:** Leverage technology to facilitate communication and coordination.
- **Resource Availability:** Consider financial, human, and physical resources in design choices.
- **Legal and Regulatory Factors:** Ensure compliance with laws affecting organizational structure.

Emerging Trends in Organization Theory and Design

Organizations today face rapid change and increasing complexity, leading to innovative design approaches:

1. Agile Organizations

Flexible, team-based structures that promote rapid response to change and customer focus.

2. Network and Virtual Structures

Decentralized, often remote, collaborations across organizational boundaries enabled by digital technology.

3. Holacracy and Self-Management

Distributed authority and autonomous teams reduce hierarchy and empower employees.

4. Sustainable and Responsible Design

Incorporates social responsibility and environmental sustainability into organizational structure.

Conclusion

The **organization theory and design draft** serves as an essential framework for developing effective organizational structures. By understanding fundamental concepts, principles, and practical steps, organizations can craft designs that enhance performance, foster innovation, and adapt to changing environments. Whether adopting traditional models or exploring innovative approaches like agile or holacracy, a thoughtful and strategic design process can significantly impact organizational success. Continual evaluation and willingness to refine structures ensure that organizations remain resilient and capable of meeting future challenges.

This comprehensive overview provides a detailed exploration of organization theory and design draft, suitable for SEO purposes with well-structured headings, lists, and relevant keywords. If you need specific keywords integrated or a more tailored focus, please let me know!

Organization Theory and Design Daft: An In-Depth Exploration

In the complex landscape of modern business, understanding organization theory and design Daft is essential for managers, students, and organizational scholars striving to create efficient, adaptable, and resilient organizations. Robert Daft's contributions to organization theory and design provide

foundational insights that help explain how organizations are structured, governed, and evolved to meet strategic goals amidst changing environments. This comprehensive guide delves into the core concepts, frameworks, and practical applications of Daft's perspectives, offering a detailed roadmap for navigating organizational complexity.

Understanding Organization Theory and Design

Before exploring Daft's specific contributions, it's important to grasp the fundamentals of organization theory and design.

What is Organization Theory?

Organization theory is the study of how organizations function, how they are structured, and how they adapt to their environments. It explores:

- The formal structures (hierarchies, departments)
- The informal networks (culture, communication patterns)
- The mechanisms of coordination and control
- The influence of external forces such as markets, regulations, and technology

What is Organization Design?

Organization design refers to the deliberate process of configuring an organization's structure to align with its strategy, environment, and technology. It involves decisions about:

- Division of labor
- Hierarchy levels
- Formalization of rules and procedures
- Centralization vs. decentralization
- Integration mechanisms

The Foundations of Daft's Organization Theory

Robert Daft's work synthesizes classical and contemporary perspectives, emphasizing the importance of aligning organizational structure with strategy and environment. His approach is characterized by several key principles:

- Contingency Theory: No one best way to organize; structure depends on internal and external

factors.

- Design Elements: The critical components of organizational structures.
- Organizational Effectiveness: The ultimate goal of designing organizations that are flexible, efficient, and capable of achieving strategic objectives.

Core Concepts in Daft's Organization Theory and Design

- The Elements of Organizational Structure

Daft identifies several structural elements essential to understanding and designing organizations:

- Work Specialization: Dividing tasks into smaller, specialized roles.
- Departmentalization: Grouping jobs into units based on function, product, geography, or customer.
- Chain of Command: The vertical line of authority.
- Span of Control: The number of employees reporting to a manager.
- Centralization and Decentralization: The degree to which decision-making is concentrated or dispersed.
- Formalization: The extent to which roles, procedures, and communications are standardized.

- Types of Organizational Structures

Daft highlights several common organizational structures, each suited for different contexts:

- Simple Structure: Usually found in small organizations; informal, with little specialization.
- Functional Structure: Departments based on functions like marketing, finance, HR.
- Divisional Structure: Divisions based on products, markets, or geographic areas.
- Matrix Structure: Combines functional and project-based structures, promoting flexibility.
- Team-Based Structure: Organizes around teams to enhance collaboration.
- Organic vs. Mechanistic Structures: Organic structures are flexible and adaptive; mechanistic are rigid and hierarchical.

- The Role of Technology and Environment

Daft emphasizes that technology (how work is done) and environment (market stability, competition) heavily influence organizational design choices. For example:

- Stable environments favor mechanistic, formal structures.
- Dynamic, uncertain environments benefit from organic, flexible structures.

Designing Organizations: A Step-by-Step Approach

Daft advocates a systematic approach to organization design, which includes:

Step 1: Define Strategic Goals

Clarify the organization's mission, vision, and strategic priorities.

Step 2: Assess External Environment

Understand market dynamics, customer needs, competitors, and technological trends.

Step 3: Analyze Internal Resources and Capabilities

Identify strengths, weaknesses, and core competencies.

Step 4: Determine Structural Elements

Decide on work specialization, departmentalization, chain of command, etc., based on the above analyses.

Step 5: Choose an Appropriate Structure

Select the structure that best aligns with strategy and environment?be it functional, divisional, or matrix.

Step 6: Implement and Communicate

Ensure clear communication of roles, responsibilities, and reporting relationships.

Step 7: Evaluate and Adapt

Regularly review organizational effectiveness and adapt structures as needed.

Contemporary Applications and Trends

Organizational Agility

Modern organizations are increasingly adopting flexible structures such as team-based or networked models to respond swiftly to market changes.

Digital Transformation

Technology integration influences design choices, leading to flatter hierarchies and decentralized decision-making.

Globalization

Multinational organizations often employ hybrid structures to manage diverse markets and cultural differences.

Culture and Leadership

Strong organizational culture and effective leadership are critical in implementing and maintaining chosen structures.

Practical Examples of Daft's Principles in Action

Case Study 1: Tech Startup

A small tech startup may adopt a simple structure with informal communication, emphasizing innovation and rapid decision-making. As it grows, it may transition to a functional structure to improve efficiency.

Case Study 2: Manufacturing Firm

A manufacturing company might use a mechanistic, bureaucratic structure with clear hierarchies and standardized procedures to ensure quality and safety.

Case Study 3: Multinational Corporation

A multinational might employ a divisional structure based on geography, with each region operating semi-autonomously to respond to local market needs.

Challenges in Organization Design

Despite best practices, organizations face common challenges:

- Resistance to change
- Overly rigid structures stifling innovation
- Misalignment between strategy and structure
- Complexity resulting from multiple design elements

Effective organization design requires ongoing assessment, flexibility, and leadership commitment.

Summary: The Significance of Daft's Organization Theory and Design

Understanding organization theory and design Daft provides a vital toolkit for developing organizations that are aligned with strategic objectives and responsive to environmental demands. By carefully analyzing structural elements, environmental factors, and technological influences, managers can craft organizations that foster efficiency, innovation, and adaptability. As the business landscape continues to evolve rapidly, the principles articulated by Daft remain essential guides for effective organizational architecture.

In conclusion, mastery of organization theory and design as presented by Daft empowers leaders to navigate organizational complexity with strategic insight and practical wisdom, ultimately driving sustained success in an ever-changing world.

Question What is the primary purpose of an organization design draft? The primary purpose of an organization design draft is to outline the structural framework of an organization, detailing roles, responsibilities, workflows, and communication channels to ensure alignment with strategic goals. **Answer** How does organization theory influence the development of an organization design draft? Organization theory provides conceptual insights into how organizations function, which guides the creation of effective structures, decision-making processes, and coordination mechanisms within the design draft to enhance efficiency and adaptability. What are common challenges faced when creating an organization design draft? Common challenges include balancing flexibility with control, managing stakeholder resistance, aligning structure with strategy, and ensuring clear communication of roles and responsibilities throughout the draft process. How can feedback be effectively incorporated into an organization design draft? Feedback can be effectively incorporated by engaging diverse stakeholders early in the process, conducting iterative reviews, and making data-driven adjustments to address concerns and improve the overall design. What role does organizational culture play in shaping the organization design draft? Organizational culture influences the design by shaping behaviors, values, and norms, which must be considered to ensure the structure supports a positive work environment and aligns with the organization's core principles. Why is it important to regularly review and update an organization design draft? Regular review and updates are vital to adapt to changing external environments, technological advancements, and strategic shifts, ensuring the organization remains effective, competitive, and aligned with its goals.

Related keywords: organization structure, organizational behavior, management principles, organizational design, leadership theories, corporate strategy, organizational change, systems theory, management practices, organizational development

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