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MULTICULTURAL ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT

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THE PROGRAM ON CONFLICT MANAGEMENT ALTERNATIVES

The Program on Conflict Management Alternatives was established in January, 1986 by a grant from the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, and additional funds from the University of Michigan. These basic grants were renewed in July, 1988 and again in July, 1991. The Program supports an agenda of research, application, and theory development. PCMA also establishes links among other university research and teaching efforts relevant to conflict management alternatives, and maintains liaison and collaboration with similar efforts in other Universities and Practitioner agencies. The Program staffers own work focuses explicitly on the relationship between social justice and social conflict, specifically: (a) the use of innovative settlement procedures and roles for disputants and third parties; (b) the institutionalization of innovative mechanisms and the adoption of organizational and community structures that permanently alter the way conflicts are managed; and (c) the fundamental differences and inequalities between parties that often create conflict and threaten its stable resolution.

We examine these issues primarily in United States' settings, in conflicts arising within and between families, organizations and communities, and between different racial, gender, and economic constituencies. These specific efforts are supported by a variety of research and action grants/contracts with governmental agencies, foundations, and private and public organizations/agencies.

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MULTICULTURAL ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT

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Introduction

The recent "resurgence" of racism and other forms of social injustice in our cities and towns, colleges and universities, and in our offices and plants, has renewed the interest and activity of those involved in efforts intended to promote social justice. This renewed interest has resulted in some new insights that resulted from some new ways of analyzing both past and present social dynamics. Social justice practitioners have also contributed to these new insights by focusing on what might be termed the limited success of the strategies used in the past. There are at least five learnings or observations that are worth citing here that can be attributed to these insights:

- The individual consciousness raising strategy has met with limited success in making significant improvement in the workplace environment for those recently given access to that environment (e.g. women, racial minorities, handicaped persons, etc.).
- 2. For there to be any lasting change in the workplace on a social justice agenda there needs to be direct and comprehensive change effort focused on the organization (or organizational unit - departments, etc.) as a system. These systems must be developed so that they can be in a position to direct, manage, and provide support for efforts intended to enhance and capitalize on the social diversity in the workplace.
- 3. "Traditional" organization development (OD) efforts have not made the kind of impact on social oppression in the workplace that its founders had hoped. The hope that OD action would employ an action research model and would dedicate itself to

the elimination of social injustice in the workplace seems to have gotten lost somewhere in its evolution.

- 4. There are a number of recent demographic analyses that tell us that our national, not to mention the global, population is undergoing some dramatic demographic changes. Those changes in this country are particularly relevant to those of us who have been consciously or unconsciously assuming that the White and male workforce will continue to be numerically dominate. Based on this information many organizations have already been aggressively positioning themselves to function or do business in a significantly more socially diverse marketplace. Other organizations have wisely begun to develop new recruitment, development and incentive programs that will appeal to a workforce with a wide range of cultural values, needs, and goals.
- 5. Some hard evidence is beginning to emerge that indicates that there is a direct relationship between the quantity and quality of the product or service that an organization is delivering and the organization's ability to provide a socially just working environment for all its employees.

These are just a few of the insights and observations that are driving the renewed efforts on the part of those interested in developing new ways to think about and work with organizations who are interested in pursuing the goal of becoming more socially just, or in the language of the times —to become a multicultural organization. This goal has spawned enough interest that we feel that it is time that we contribute to the development of what we call Multicultural Organization Development (MCOD) by presenting our perspective on this emerging field.

MCOD, as a field, currently consists of a fairly broad range of visions, definitions, assumptions, strategies, techniques, terminology, goals and objectives. Those interested in this area include students and practitioners of

organization development, internal and external organization consultants, and long-standing social justice activists and consultants. Given the state of this emerging field, getting a clear reading on just what it is can often be difficult and frustrating.

Our attempts to get a handle on the state of the field required that we integrate our past work with that of others who have been doing work under such titles as Managing Diversity, Affirmative Action Training, Equal Employment Opportunity consulting and training, racism and sexism awareness training, and cross-cultural training, just to name a few. This paper is an attempt to clarify and provide direction to the emerging field of MCOD. It presents a working description of a multicultural organization (MCO) and a model of the developmental levels and stages of movement from a monocultural to a multicultural organization.

Current Trends in the Field of MCOD

Our somewhat loose use of the term "field" is in someways representative of the current state of MCOD as a field. As with most new fields, MCOD is a loose network of thinkers and practitioners. While there are some individual consulting firms that have a concern for social justice or something like MCOD as part or all of their mission, (New Perspectives, Inc., KJA Associates, Janice Eddy, Inc., Pacific Management Systems, just to name a few) there do not appear to be any major professional organizations that are

dedicated to MCOD. While there is an occasional journal article on MCO's there are no journals dedicated to serving "the field." While we know of some examples of university level courses that speak to issues of social diversity in organizations, a few courses are in fact solely dedicated to MCOD (like our own), at present there is only one major program at the college or University level, The American institute for Managing Diversity, inc. at Morehouse College. And, while there are a number of practitioners engaged in a wide variety of activities that can be seen as falling under this conceptual umbrella, there have not been many attempts to describe the umbrella in ways that provide a useful framework for change as of yet.

Defining a MCO

A closer look at this emerging field of MCOD suggests that there are some threads that can be pulled together to form a common garment. We started the search for these threads by examining the existing definitions of MCO's. There seem to be four different definitions currently in use and each emphasizing a different theme or aspect of MCO.

Themes in MCO Definitions

- 1. Social/Cultural Representation
- 2. Valuing and Capitalizing on Differences
- 3. Eliminating Racism and Sexism
- 4. Diversity of "Stakeholders"

- 1. Social/Cultural Representation A multicultural Organization is one in which an equitable number of social or cultural groups are represented in the organization, making for cultural diversity, i.e., diversity of social/cultural perspectives, world views, life styles, language, and management styles.
- 2. Valuing and Capitalizing on Differences A multicultural organization is one whose self-interest is to enhance and maintain its effectiveness and growth. This is achieved by allowing for and nurturing the full inclusion and participation, at all levels, of the widest variety of cultural perspectives in the organization's work. Such an orientation promotes the full utilization and contribution of all available human resources towards its mission, internal operations and external interface with the environment.
- 3. Eliminating Racism and Sexism A multicultural organization is one that is dedicated to the elimination of all forms of racism and sexism in the workplace.
- 4. Diversity of Stakeholders A multicultural organization is an organization which includes people from diverse cultural backgrounds as "stakeholders" with legitimate claims to a share in the organization's mission and work. It is also a place where members of different cultural/social groups are actively included in the central decisions that shape the organization. The organization involves members of all cultural groups as equal partners in the enterprise and reflects a commitment to the empowerment of all people and the elimination of oppression and social injustice.

These themes with one addition are captured in a description of MCO's by Jackson and Hardiman, 1981. We believe that this description of a MCO can also serve as a guiding vision for MCOD practitioners.

A MULTICULTURAL ORGANIZATION

"A Vision"

A Multicultural Organization reflects the contributions and interests of diverse cultural and social groups in its mission, operations, and product or service.

A Multicultural Organization acts on a commitment to the eradication of social oppression in all forms within the organization. It is also sensitive to the possible violation of the interests of all cultural and social groups whether or not they are represented in the organization.

A Multicultural Organization is one where the members of diverse cultural and social groups are full participants at all levels of the organization, especially in those areas where decisions are made that shape the organization.

A Multicultural Organization follows through on its broader external social responsibilities including its support of efforts to eliminate all forms of social oppression. This also involves the support of efforts to expand the multicultural ideology.

<u>Levels and Stages in the Monocultural to Multicultural</u> <u>Development Process</u>

The process of becoming a multicultural organization is complex and difficult. As with most change processes, there are developmental stages that organizations move through.

Jackson and Hardiman (1981) have developed a model that describes the three levels and six stages in the monocultural to multicultural development process.

Levels: Mono to Multicultural Development in Organizations

Monocultural

Level One - The Monocultural Organization
No interest in being a multicultural organization.
Interested only in enhancing the dominance,
privilege, access of those in power. (White, men,
able bodied, etc.)

Level Two - The Non Discriminating Organization "Non-discrimination in a monocultural context." Interested in bringing people of different cultures in without changing the way things are.

Level Three - The Multicultural Organization
Emphasis on being a multicultural organization
has: a) diverse cultural representation,
b) equitable distribution of power and influence,
c) supports the elimination of oppression, and d)
supports multicultural perspectives in the larger
society.

Multicultural

STAGES OF MULTICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT IN ORGANIZATIONS

Within each of the levels, there are two stages. These stages describe the specific phases that describe an organization during its evolution toward becoming a multicultural organization.

The stages are sequential. Experiencing the learnings and limitations in each stage are seen as contributing to the ability and felt need of the organization to move to the next stage. Organizations may demonstrate indicators of one, some, or all of the stages in its many divisions, departments, regional offices, etc.

Level One Stage One - The Exclusionary Organization

The Exclusionary Organization has as its self interest the maintenance of domination of one group over other groups based on race, gender, culture or other social identity characteristics. The exclusionary organization often purports to eliminate the participation of members of oppressed groups in American society and to re-establish white male groups as the superior and dominate groups.

Exclusionary organizations often have the elimination of subordinate groups as part of their mission (e.g., the KKK). More familiar manifestations of the exclusionary organization can be witnessed in those organizations that have exclusionary membership policies and hiring practices. These organizations have explicit entrance requirements that are designed to exclude members of particular social groups. (e.g., until recently, the Rotary Club expressly prohibited women from their membership).

Level One Stage Two - "The Club"

"The Club" is the term used to describe the organization that stops short of advocating anything like White male supremacy, but does seek to establish and maintain the privilege of those who have traditionally held social power. This is done by developing and maintaining missions, policies, norms and procedures seen as "correct" from their perspective without giving consideration to any other groups' interests. Because all aspects of the organization are established by those members of White, male, able-bodied, etc. social groups, they tend to be most comfortable and supportive of the perspectives of those like them and those who seek to assimilate into that worldview. The social group and cultural group blases (e.g., race, gender, class, religious, etc.) in the organization's perspectives, procedures and culture are denied or explained as "right" or "normal" and not White, male, Christian, or anything else.

The Club allows a limited number of members from oppressed groups (e.g., women and racial minorities) into the organization, but they must share the "right" perspective and credentials. The organization will only accept those racial minorities that wish to actively assimilate into the appropriately assigned role in the White dominated system. These minorities are often described as "the exceptional one." The Club does not explicitly advocate the supremacy of certain groups as its sole or primary mission, thus change is not the threat to the organizations existence as it might be with the Exclusionary organization. However, it usually takes some form of external pressure or coercion, (i.e., litigation) before the organization will consider changing its inequitable structures and policies.

While race and gender are often thought to be the primary discriminators for the Club, it should be noted that this type of organization or organizational unit also discriminates against members of other oppressed social groups, e.g., Jews, disable people, the elderly, Gays and Lesbians, and members of the poor class.

Level Two Stage Three - Compliance Organization

The Compliance Organization is committed to removing some of the discrimination inherent in the "club" by providing access to women and minorities, but seeks to accomplish this objective without disturbing the actual structure, mission and culture of the organization. The organization is careful not to create "too many waves" or to offend or challenge its employee's or customer's racist, sexist, anti-semitic, etc. attitudes or behaviors.

The compliance organization usually attempts to change its organizational racial and gender profile by actively recruiting and hiring more racial minorities and women at the bottom of the organization. On occasion, they will hire or promote "token" racial minorities or women into management positions, usually staff positions. When the exception is made to place a woman, racial minority, or member of any other oppressed social group in a line position it is important that this person be a "team player" and that s/he be a "qualified" applicant. A "qualified team player" does not openly challenge the organization's mission and practices, and is usually 150% competent to do the job. Having a woman or racial minority that is 150% competent will help counteract the two prevailing assumptions operating in this type of organization: 1) that s/he was only hired to satisfy a quota, and 2) that s/he is automatically not as qualified as a White, and/or male counterpart.

Level Two Stage Four - Affirmative Action Organization

The Affirmative Action organization is also committed to eliminating the discriminatory practices and inherent "riggedness" in The Club by actively recruiting and promoting women, racial minorities and members of other social groups typically denied access into our organizations. Moreover, the affirmative action (AA) organization goes beyond recruiting and hiring strategies; an active role is taken in supporting the growth and development of these new employees by initiating programs that increase their chances of success and by actively supporting their mobility. In addition to the support provided to the women, racial minorities and other socially oppressed groups, all employees are encouraged to think and behave in a non-oppressive manner. The organization may conduct racism and sexism awareness programs toward this end.

The AA organization expands its concept of who is oppressed beyond Blacks and women. This organization begins to think of diversity as including the disabled, Latino's Asians/Asian Americans-Pacific Islanders, Native Americans, the elderly, and other socially oppressed groups.

Although the AA organization is committed to increasing access for members of diverse groups and increasing the chances that they will succeed by removing those hostile attitudes and behaviors, all members of this organization are still required to conform to the norms and practices derived from the dominate groups worldview.

Level Three Stage Five - Redefining Organization

The redefining Organization is a system in transition. This organization is not satisfied with being just "anti-racist" or "anti-sexist." It is committed to examining all its activities for their impact on all its members' ability to participate in and contribute to the growth and success of the organization

The Redefining organization begins to question the limitations of the cultural perspective as it is manifest in its mission, structure, management, technology, psycho-social dynamics and product or service. It seeks to fully explore the significance and potential benefits of a diverse multicultural workforce. This organization actively engages in visioning, planning and problem-solving activities directed toward the realization of a multicultural organization.

The Redefining organization is committed to developing and implementing policies and practices that share power with all of the diverse groups in the organization. The Redefining organization searches for alternative modes of organizing that guarantee the inclusion, participation and empowerment of all its members.

Level Three Stage Six - Multicultural Organization

The Multicultural Organization reflects the contributions and interests of diverse cultural and social groups in its mission, operations, and product or service delivery. The members of diverse cultural and social groups are an influential part of all levels of the organization, especially in those areas where decisions are made that shape the organization.

It acts on a commitment to the eradication of social oppression in all forms within the organization. Moreover, it is sensitive to the possible violation of the interests of all cultural and social groups whether or not they are represented in the organization. Thus it follows through on its broader social responsibility. Specifically, this includes its responsibility to support efforts designed to eliminate all forms of social oppression. This also involves the support of efforts designed to expand the concept of multiculturalism.

APPLYING THE MULTICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT MODEL IN ORGANIZATIONS

Multicultural Organization Development (MCOD) is the process of assisting an organization in moving from its present level and stage of development in order to become a fully multicultural organization. MCOD uses organization change technology and principles to help eliminate or diminish the negative impact of monocultural characteristics of an organization and develop and strengthen the multicultural characteristics of each stage.

The role of the MCOD change agent is:

- * To assist in assessing the present stage of multicultural development.
- * To help organization members make choices about the level they want to achieve.
- * To assist in change efforts within the context of organizational goals and limitations.
- * To assist organization members envision and assess risk and possibilities in becoming a fully multicultural organization.

The MCOD model can assist internal and external change agents to diagnose and strategize for social change in organizations. For example Table 1 presents three specific dimensions of organization change to be considered in MCOD

Three Dimensions of Organization Change at Each Phase of the MCOD Process

Multicultural	System and environment	Ecological planning MC autonomous teams and self- mamgement sytems	Synergistic problem solving Alternative work structures
Redefining	System: -mission -values -structures	Visioning and strategic planning Skills for managing differences MC team building	Value clarification Conflict management skills
Affirmative Action	System: -structures -rewards -relationships -climate	Performance appraisal systems Racism and "isms" Career development programs	MCO systems diagnosis Intergroup relations
Compliance	Personnel and other systems and mechanisms	EEO audits EEO training goal setting and action planning "Minority" training	Law and policy analysis Education Bargaining
The Club	Upper level management or Members of oppressed groups	Management training Support and CR groups	Confronting and Interrupting offersive behavior
Exclusionary	-	!	;
	Target of Change	Types of MCOD Interventions	Required Skills

efforts: the target of change, types of appropriate interventions, and skills needed at each stage of the change effort. These and other important dimensions in the application of the MCOD model in the process of multicultural organization change are discussed.

Target of Change

As we move from a monocultural to a nondiscriminatory and later to a multicultural level in MCOD, the strategy for organizational change shifts from targeting change at the individual level to targeting change at the systems level, to targeting change at the interface between organization and environment.

An effective intervention at the Club Stage Is to Increase awareness of racism and sexism through educational and training programs (an individual level intervention). Establishing mechanisms that the rewards to support for the affirmative action agenda is an effective intervention in the affirmative action organization (a systems level intervention). An appropriate strategy in the multicultural stage is to align internal mechanisms, mission, relations with the environment, and the multicultural agenda of an organization (a macro systems level intervention).

Type of Intervention

The further we move in the continuum towards developing a multicultural organization the more need there is to use innovative strategies and new forms of intervening with

organizations (racism and sexism workshops alone will not do). An example is the use of the action research model to set up multiracial-multigender diagnostic teams which are representative of the diversity encountered in the organization. The task of the teams is to diagnose, problem solve, develop action plans, and to support the implementation and evaluation of affirmative action change goals. The intervention is usually facilitated by an outside consultant. (Alderfer, et al, 1980)

In the redefining and multicultural stages, interventions should stress working in diverse teams to develop multicultural visions and goals, designing and implementing alternative organization structures, and developing strategic plans which consider the impact of the socio-political environment on the organization. Innovative organization change interventions which are relevant in the multicultural stage, but are not so commonly used in multicultural change efforts are:

* Ecological diagnosis and planning:

Focusing attention on Internal dynamics and planning within the context of critical external events and boundaries related to the mission of the organization. (Brown and Covey, 1986)

* Alternative work structures:

Implementing flat structures and other forms of organizing work which increases participation, control and ownership of all organizational members. These include matrix and parallel organizations (Stein and Kanter, 1980); worker councils and cooperatives (Bernstein, 1980); autonomous work groups (Trist, 1977); action learning groups (Morgan and Ramirez, 1983)

* Ideological negotiations:

Resolving conflicts of interests among organization members by directly or indirectly addressing value and ideological differences. (Brown and Brown, 1983)

* Strategic management:

A management approach based on aligning the components of an organization, its mission and strategies, its structures, and human resources - technically, politically and culturally - in order to achieve organizational effectiveness. (Tichy, 1983)

* Multicultural team building:

Enhancing the effectiveness of working teams by addressing task and relationship issues paying special attention to cultural differences. (Halverson, 1986)

Skills, Knowledge and Attitudes Needed

The knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to implement change also vary according to different levels and stages of multicultural change. Change agents working in monocultural organizations need thorough knowledge of EEO/AA guidelines and discriminatory practices, but at the multicultural stage they need to know about and be able to work with alternative cultural systems. Appropriate skills to develop in a monocultural organization are bargaining, negotiation and the coercive use of power. In a multicultural organization conflict management skills need to be developed to include synergistic problem solving, value clarification, consensus building and other collaborative strategies for managing differences.

Role and Strategies of Change Agents

The role and strategies of change agents also vary according to the different stages in the multicultural development process. For example, during the initial stages of development from "monocultural" to "nondiscriminatory", the change agent plays different roles: provocateur and politico in the exclusionary and club stages; evaluator and monitor in the compliance stage; educator and action researcher in the affirmative action stage. When the organization is at the redefining or multicultural stages, the change agent functions more as a collaborator and committed participant exploring, experimenting and problem solving in multidisciplinary change teams.

Diagnostic Clues and Indicators

Different stages in the multicultural development model suggest specific diagnostic indicators to help assess the organizational stage in the MCOD process, and to develop appropriate interventions. For example, what is the status of members of socially oppressed groups in the organization? Are they treated as tokens (club stage), invited guests (compliance stage) or as legitimate members of the organization with diverse cultural perspectives (multicultural stage)?

Another important diagnostic dimension to attend to is the learning climate in the organization. Compliance stage organizations often find themselves "reinventing the wheel" or complaining about "how we tried that before and it did not

work." At this stage there is a need to develop processes and mechanisms to institutionalize changes. In the affirmative action stage, members show a mixture of confusion and insights about the dynamics of social oppression and change in organizations; they often feel puzzled and conflicted about the degree of "progress" they have achieved in becoming "multicultural." In this case, collective mechanisms for increasing organizational learning need to be developed -- the nondiscriminatory practices and gains made so far must be maintained. In the redefining stage, organization members sometimes feel frustrated and "at the end of their learning" capacity. Change agents can help redefine the learning task in terms of a new stage of multicultural development so that members can redirect their energy and celebrate their accomplishments. Finally, in multicultural organizations, there is a need to incorporate organizational learning as a way of life, as systems are always in constant need of reassessment and modification in response to internal and external environmental changes and demands.

Conditions Which Support Multicultural Change

Different stages of multicultural development suggest different conditions which support change. Conditions that support change in the monocultural stages tend to be external environmental demands, such as political decisions, litigation or legislative decrees. On the other hand,

conditions that support change in the multicultural stages are more encompassing: paradigm shifts, alternative world views, commitment from top management, interracial coalitions, a critical mass of organizational members with a change agenda, and world wide socio-political changes.

The Role of Values in Multicultural Organizational Development

In multicultural organization development, attention must be paid to the fit between the change agent values and the MCOD change process. In addition to being clear about the possibilities and the stages in multicultural organizational change, the values we bring to the change process need to be considered. We have found that the different assumptions and values change agents hold about the nature of society and the need for change greatly influence how MCOD is defined and implemented. Different assumptions reflect different visions which in turn define possibilities and challenges in the multicultural change effort. An example of such different sets of assumptions which impact the approach of MCOD is discussed and summarized in Table 2.

Table Two

CHANGE AGENT ASSUMPTIONS IN MCOD

	Monocultural N	on-discriminatory	<u>Multicultural</u>
Nature of Society	Harmonious < Similar < Interests	 >	Conflictive Different Interests
	Needs to improve<> but basically Ok		Oppressive Alienating Needs Radical Change
Oppression Liberation	Dominance	Desegregation	Pluralism
Model	Assimilation	Integration	Diversity
Self Interest in Change	Survival and Social Acceptability	Adaptation and Full Utilizatio of Human Resour	n Empowerment
Values and Ideology	Basic rights <- of individual		Interdependence
	Best Person is< Rewarded	·>	Ecological Survival
	Efficiency and Economic Survival	<>	Development of Human and Societal Potential

Consider a change agent who believes that society is basically harmonious, where people have basically similar interests, and that though in need of reform, society is

basically good and sane. Change is conceived as a slow,
 evolutionary process in which modifications are gradually
 introduced; their effectiveness and appropriateness are

assessed through time. Values this change agent holds dear are basic individual rights, the "best person" is rewarded, efficiency, and economic survival.

A change agent with this world view is likely to hold the nondiscriminatory level of MCOD as the vision of the future, since this type of organization embodies individualistic values and guarantees equal opportunities for all. This change agent will define the organizational change goal as: to integrate members of diverse groups in order to better utilize their resources, increase organizational effectiveness, and contribute to a better society.

On the other hand, consider a change agent who believes that society is basically alienating and depriving for many members. Conflict of interests have not been adequately resolved, and fundamental changes are needed in order to address the problems that threaten the survival of humanity. Values this change agent holds dear are: interdependence, better distribution of resources, ecological and global survival, and the realization of human potential.

This change agent is likely to see the need for a new and different type of organization, representative of different cultural models in the world, with new and maybe unexplored structures which support equitable distribution of

resources and the self-realization of all its members. For this change agent, the vision of a multicultural organization implies a paradigm shift; it involves having a radically different vision of an organization from that which is now dominant in our society, that is, hierarchical, profit and product centered. The organizational change goal in this case is: to transform the organization in order to enhance human diversity, social justice, and the realization of a humane society.

Summary

The multicultural development model is a framework for organizations confronting change in a multicultural environment and workforce. We believe that the use of the multicultural development model can help us: a) increase our understanding of the dynamics of social change in organizations, b) guide and expand our vision of a socially diverse and nonoppressive organization, c) assist change agents in developing options and implementing appropriate roles and strategies in multicultural change efforts, and d) identify important issues that need to be addressed in the process of change towards becoming a multicultural organization.

Multicultural organization development can make important contributions to increasing organizational productivity and quality of work life. Multicultural organization development can also serve to bridge the gap

between work and the organizing activity, social change and the socially responsible organizations of the future.

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