7 Keys to Selecting Top Talent

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Traditional interviews result in good hiring decisions only 14% of the time. The cost of employee turnover ranges from three to nine times a departing employee's annual salary, depending on job level and experience.

With proven statistics like these, no one can argue that finding the right talent for specific positions, and keeping them there, is key to business success. But how can you select the perfect person the first time? Based on real-life successes from HRGroup's clients, the seven keys are:

1. **Job benchmarking.** If the job could speak, what would it say is required for superior performance? Learn how to compile factual data on each unique position as a basis for comparison with qualified candidates

2. **Assessments**. Determine the best tools to make savvy talent selections—whether for sales, executive, management, supervisory, or entry-level positions—using a valid, reliable online process, available 24/7.

3. **Candidate evaluation.** Once you identify a candidate, administer an assessment to identify the exact behaviors, motivators and personal skills they possess.

4. **Job-fit analysis.** Compare each candidate's skills and characteristics to those of other candidates and, most importantly, to the job benchmark which indicates requirements for success in the specific position.

5. **Effective interviewing**. Explore techniques to ensure you ask the right performance-based questions in the right way.

6. **Applicant screening.** Since 53% of all job applications contain inaccurate information, don't overlook the importance of reference and background checks.

7. **One-third rule**. Find out what three critical steps you must take to select the one candidate who best fits the job.

#1 Break the "One Size Fits All" Recruiting Mold with *Job Benchmarking*

Why benchmark jobs?

- You'll never again hire someone who didn't meet your expectations.
- You'll consistently hire candidates scientifically proven to fit the job.
- You'll save resources, time and money with the ability to identify qualified candidates quickly and accurately.

Stay compliant

The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) suggests you "analyze the duties, functions and competencies relevant to jobs, then create objective, job-related qualification standards...consistently applied when choosing among candidates."

For executives, managers and sales reps

Job Benchmarking can be broken into four key phases, each contingent on the one prior, and you can duplicate the entire benchmarking process across all your positions.

1. **Set-up.** To make a successful hire, you must understand why the job exists, how success in the job is measured, the history of the position, and how it fits the company strategy. Start by identifying the job and subject matter experts. SMEs are internal employees with a direct connection to the job—at the level of executive, manager, or sales—whose expertise will help you create the job benchmark.

2. **Key Accountabilities.** In this step, you define, prioritize and weight the key accountabilities. Through discussion, the SMEs will define a comprehensive, yet succinct, job profile. This should include a group of 3–5 key accountabilities for the position, ranked by importance and time requirement.

3. **Assessment.** The SMEs respond to the Job Assessment, keeping the key accountabilities in mind. Based on a unique analysis combining all SME input, a multiple respondent report creates a benchmark for the job.

4. **Results.** You compare talent to the job benchmark by giving your candidates an assessment on the same scale as the job's. This will identify the characteristics an individual will bring to the job, allowing you to easily determine the best job fit, and identify coaching opportunities. Armed with this information, you're ready to hire.

For technicians, CSRs, project managers, and administrative staff

Another Job Benchmarking process used to improve your odds of hiring the best person for the job involves lower-level positions. These tests provide information on abilities, behaviors and dependability needed for the specific job.

Studies show most interviews do poorly at predicting actual job performance, and that valid and reliable tests/surveys help predict job performance better than interviews. These valid, reliable and short tests should shed light on the following:

Abilities

Identifying five crucial mental abilities like problem solving, vocabulary, arithmetic, word use, speed and accuracy in handling small details.

Behaviors

Evaluating key job behaviors under the categories of interpersonal skills, personality traits, and motivations.

Dependability

Showing four important attitudes:

1. work ethic
2. acting before thinking
3. potential for theft/stealing
4. possible substance abuse

The tests immediately generate computer-generated scores on candidates, and the results showcase your job, benchmarked against your organization's top performers and within national norms.

#2 Add Science to the Art of Hiring with *Assessments*

Evaluating job candidates with assessments increases your ability to accurately predict each individual's job performance and on-the-job success *before* hiring. This is especially valuable considering—as detailed later in this report—traditional interviews don't work well to hire effectively.

Assessing candidates with validated, reliable tools will capture how an individual will perform as well as what motivates them. You'll understand how to enhance their job performance and increase overall job performance.

Assessments are validated, cost-effective, and reliable processes which predict future performance and are benchmarked against top performers in your organization. The process commonly measures a candidate's work ethic/dependability, abilities, behaviors, motivators and personal skills.

Since one size does not fit all, you can choose among several assessments to meet your job-benchmarked position. *The following examples came from the assessment platform employed by the HRGroup.*

For executives, managers, and sales reps

Behaviors and *Motivators* assessments are perfect for determining best candidates for higher-level positions.

Behaviors measure the "how" of human behavior. It shows how a person:

- Solves problems (D, dominance)
- Interacts with people (I, influence)
- Plans and executes (S, steadiness)
- Works with data and guidelines (C, conscientiousness)

Removing biases and truly understanding the knowledge, intrinsic motivators, personal attributes, behaviors and hard skills required for superior performance is critical to hiring success.

Motivators include interests, attitudes, values, and rewards. These are broken down into six attitudes behind the motivators:

1. Theoretical
2. Utilitarian
3. Aesthetic
4. Social
5. Individual
6. Traditional

For technicians, CSRs, project managers, and administrative staff

The best tests for lower-level positions involve abilities, behaviors and dependability (ABD) assessments. These measure five crucial mental abilities:

1. Problem solving
2. Vocabulary
3. Arithmetic
4. Grammar
5. Speed and accuracy with small details

Some of the most commonly overlooked factors in the hiring process are a candidate's soft skills—they are as important as technical skills in producing superior performance—and assessments can capture them.

They also evaluate key **job behaviors:**

Personal traits
- Optimism
- Objectivity
- Rule-following preferences
- Focus on feeling vs. facts
- Poise

Interpersonal skills
- Friendliness
- Assertiveness
- Teamwork

Motivations
- Money
- Creativity
- Customer Service
- Power
- Knowledge

The third measurement area involves **dependability/attitudes:**
- Work ethic
- Impulsiveness
- Possible theft/stealing
- Possible substance abuse

Savvy companies today use pre-employment screening tools to help them avoid hiring mistakes by scientifically choosing the best candidates.

#3 Know Your Applicants...*Candidate Evaluation*

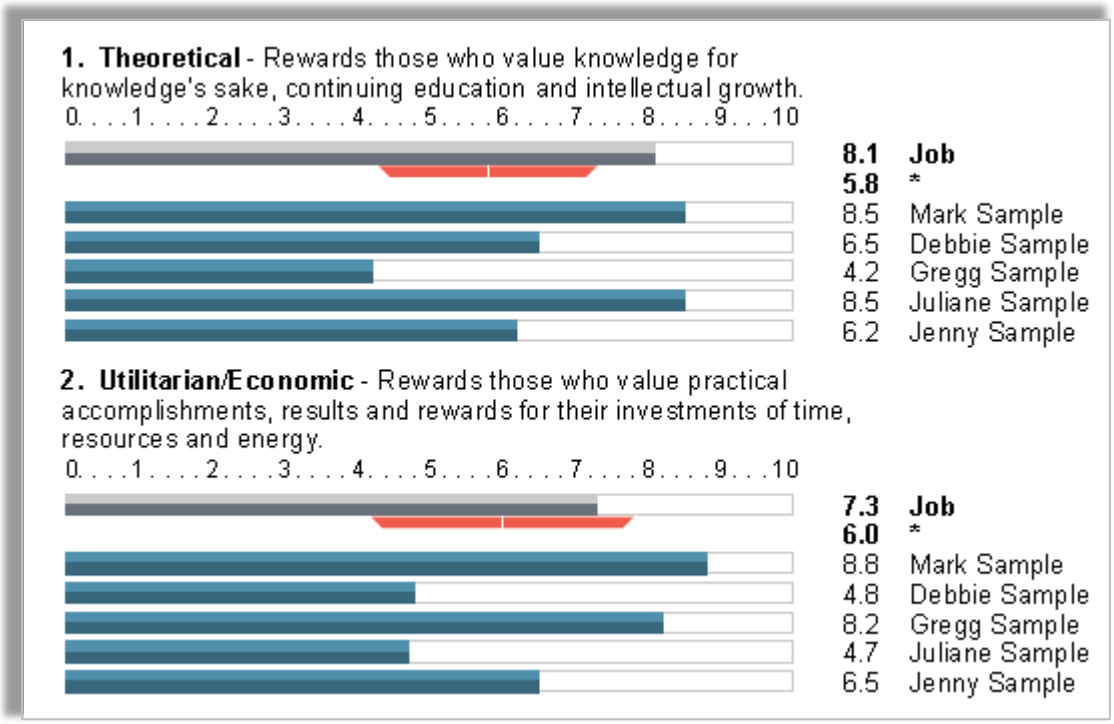
Knowing your candidates will help you avoid the costs of bad hiring decisions: lower productivity, higher training costs, more management time, lower sales volume, lower morale, and more.

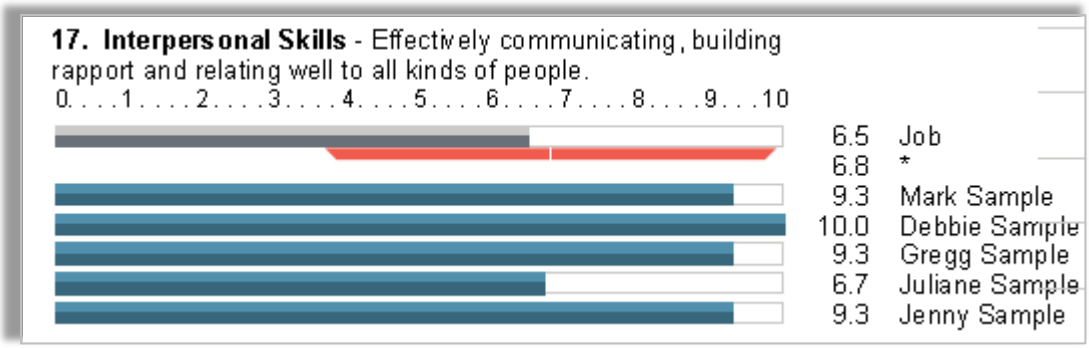
You can evaluate what you've learned about each applicant by looking at the assessments your candidates completed, and comparing each individual to other candidates, the job benchmark, or your organization's top performers.

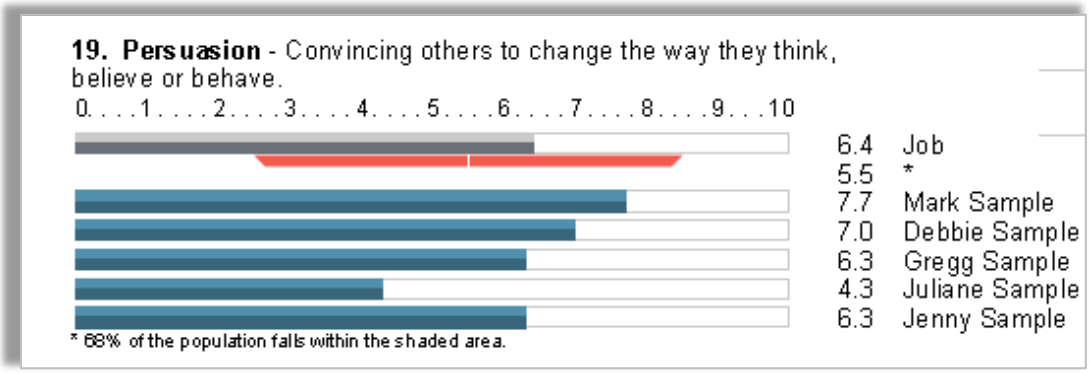
> The key to successful talent selection and management is knowledge of each person's unique behaviors, motivators and personal skills.

Based on the candidate's assessment responses, you'll receive reports that illuminate and amplify motivating factors inciting each candidate to action, and build on the strengths each person can bring to the work environment. The reports show the candidates' relative passion for each of the six motivators: Theoretical, Utilitarian, Aesthetic, Social, Individual, and Traditional. (See the #2 Assessments section.)

The following charts are an example of the type of data you'll receive in an assessment report.







This type of report also indicates each candidate's level of development in 23 personal skills, which contribute to superior performance in many jobs. You'll see each skill ranked on a four-level scale from "well-developed" to "needs development."

Computers have manuals—why not people? You must understand each person's unique behaviors, motivators and competencies.

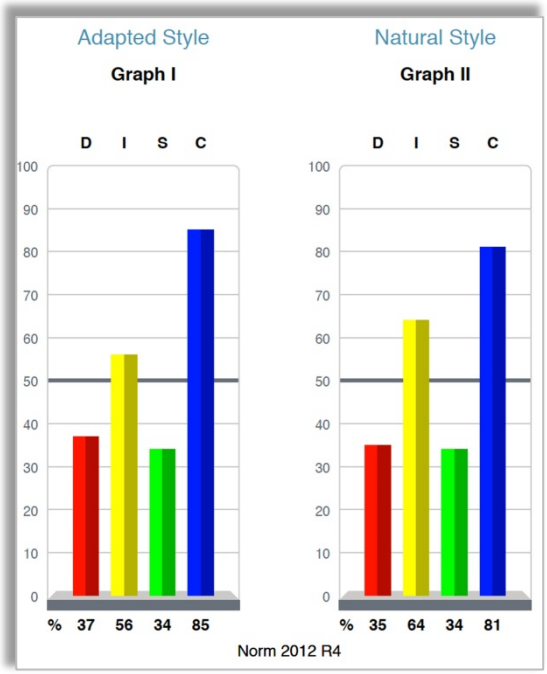
#4 *Job-Fit Analysis* | Not just a term, it's a patent.

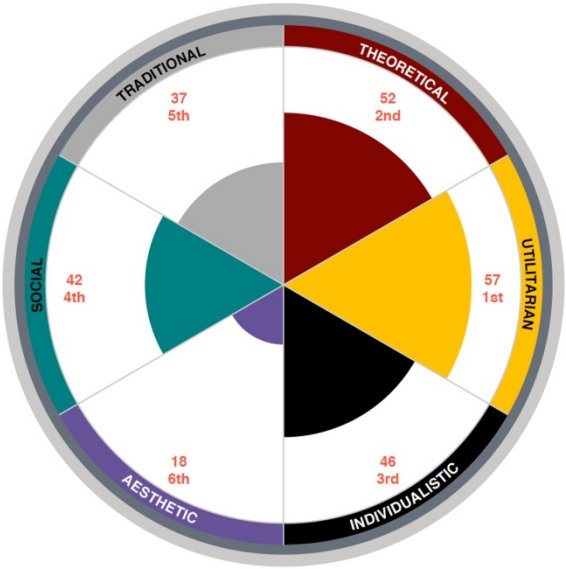
The worst thing you can do is try to put a good worker in the wrong job.

You've completed your job benchmark, candidate assessment and evaluation. Now it's time to look specifically at your candidates and decide on the perfect fit.

This example shows a system reporting on three main areas: Behaviors, Motivators and Competencies.

Behaviors
Research shows the most effective people are those who understand their strengths and weaknesses so they can develop strategies to meet the demands of their environment. You can discover this through a report measuring the four dimensions of normal behavior, or DISC styles: dominance, influence, steadiness and conscientiousness.





Motivators
Knowledge of an individual's motivators helps tell you why they do things. The system includes measurements on the relative prominence of the six basic interests or motivators shown before: Theoretical, Utilitarian, Aesthetic, Social, Individual, and Traditional. (See the #2 Assessments section.)

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Competencies

For many jobs, personal skills rank on the same level of importance as technical skills in producing superior performance. And, an individual's hierarchy of competencies, and a good knowledge of them, is vital to an employee's career success.

This patented system identifies, prioritizes and calibrates performance, allowing for an exceptional fit.

You can positively impact your bottom line if your selection process consistently produces qualified candidates strategically matched to the job.

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Development Indicator

This section of your report shows your development level of 23 personal skills based on your responses to the questionnaire. The 23 personal skills have been categorized into four levels; based on means and standard deviations. Well Developed, Developed, Moderately Developed and Needs Development.

	Personal Skills Ranking
1	Goal Orientation
2	Conflict Management
3	Negotiation
4	Self-Management (time and priorities)
5	Diplomacy
6	Customer Service
7	Personal Effectiveness
8	Persuasion
9	Planning/Organizing
10	Management
11	Decision Making
12	Empathy
13	Written Communication
14	Leadership
15	Analytical Problem Solving
16	Interpersonal Skills
17	Employee Development/Coaching
18	Presenting
19	Creativity/Innovation
20	Flexibility
21	Continuous Learning
22	Teamwork
23	Futuristic Thinking

Note: Don't be concerned if you have not developed all 23 personal skills. Research has proven that individuals seldom develop all 23. Development of the most important personal skills needed for your personal and professional life is what is critical.

Well Developed | Developed | Moderately Developed | Needs Development

#5 *Traditional Interviews* and Why They Don't Work!

When it comes to predicting the validity of employee hires, studies show traditional interviews result in a good hire only 14% of the time, yet 90% of all hiring decisions are made from such interviews.

> You can waste time needlessly interviewing prospective employees whose talents are not suited to job openings.

When you test a candidate's ability, a good hire happens 53% of the time, with behavioral testing at 38%, and with reference checks 26%. By combining several methods in the selection process results in the best decision. Why? Traditional interviews are often unstructured, with questions designed to prompt a meaningful response, not prepared in advance. Plus, the interviewer may talk too much instead of actively listening.

You must know what you want *before* you begin the interview. This involves effective practices with multiple interviewers and structured interviews using performance-based (behavioral) questions. Your line of questioning should reveal past performance—the single greatest predictor of future performance.

> Finding the right talent for specific jobs is not just desirable, but *essential* to business success.

Traditional questions

- Tell me about yourself.
- This job requires someone who can work as part of a team. Is this you?
- Are you a self-starter?
- Candidates will only respond to these types of questions with answers they think you want to hear.

Performance-based questions

- Describe the most difficult work problem you've ever encountered. What steps did you take towards developing solutions?
- Give me an example of your work on a project team. What was your role? Describe the team process/outcome and how you influenced the other team members.
- Give me an example of when you went out of your way for a customer, and the outcome.

Taboo questions

For legal reasons, you should never ask questions about the following topics:

- Race
- Age
- Gender
- Genetic Information
- Marital Status
- Family Plans
- Ethnicity
- Native Language
- Birthplace
- Religion
- Disability
- Bankruptcy

#6 Don't Overlook - *Reference Checks* and *Background Screening*

Did you know…

- 53% of all job applications contain *inaccurate* information.
- 34% of all application forms contain outright lies about experience, education, and ability to perform essential functions on the job.
- 9% of job applicants falsely claimed a college degree, listed false employers, or identified nonexistent jobs.
- 11% of job applicants misrepresented why they left a former employer.

Make the effort!

With proven statistics like these, you will find it well worth your time and money to thoroughly check into your candidates. Use all the tools available to you, including social networking sites, like LinkedIn. These powerful research resources serve as good initial indicators about the quality of your candidate.

Also, asking the *right* questions while conducting reference checks can provide valuable information you need to make an informed decision on the best candidate.

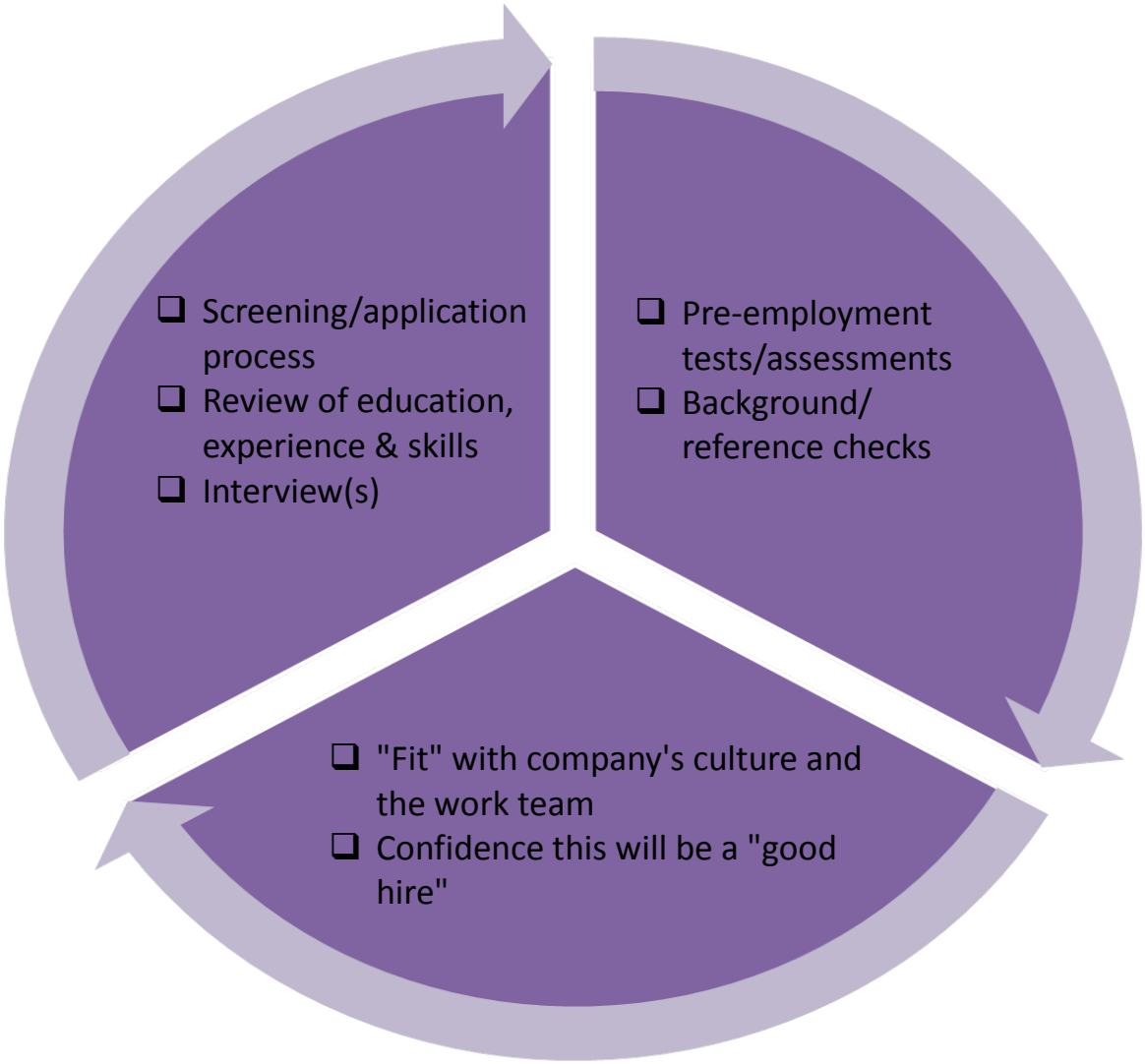
Here are seven sample questions to consider when checking references:

1. How long have you known the candidate?
2. What was the nature of your working relationship?
3. What is your opinion of his/her abilities for this specific job?
4. Strengths?
5. Weaknesses?
6. If we hire the candidate, what recommendations can you provide to help me manage him/her?
7. Other comments?

#7 Making the Hiring Decision…The *"One-Third Rule"*

When you're ready to hire your next employee, no matter what level of position, using the One-Third Rule will ensure you make the right decision.

You should never make a hiring decision simply because you like the person or because they are like you. You must consider all the components:



When you've considered all of the available information, you can congratulate yourself because you've just hired a top performer!

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HRGroup expertise and research confirms there is a direct relationship between how organizations manage their workforce and their financial success. HRGroup works with organizations to improve their performance and profitability through the selection and development of superior individual and workforce performance.

HRGroup can help security integrator companies in the areas of:

- Recruiting and Selecting Top Talent
- Leadership Development
- Compensation Program Effectiveness

View this article in Security Systems News to see how HRGroup successfully helped a PSA Security Network Owner company.

Bonus Offer

Learn how to measure a potential employee's behaviors, motivators and personal skills. Experience a free, personal assessment and a one-on-one debriefing simply by contacting HRGroup.

For nearly four decades, PSA Security Network has been a growing organization providing systems integration companies with a national presence, exceptional equipment selection, competitive pricing, services, and industry-leading training.

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