

# The Relationship Between Organizational Factors and Individual Innovation Performance: The Mediating Role of Proactive Behavior

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## ABSTRACT

Innovation is an activity with high investment and high risk. The innovation performance of employees depends on their proactive behavior, but the positive leadership and support factors of the organization can not be ignored. Through 1050 questionnaires of scientific and technological employees, this paper empirically analyzes the mechanism of organizational positive leadership and supporting factors on employees' personal proactive behavior and innovation performance. The results show that organizational positive leadership and support factors have a significant positive correlation with employees' individual proactive behavior and innovation performance. Proactive behavior plays an intermediary role between organizational positive leadership and support factors and individual innovation performance.

**Keywords:** *Positive leadership, Organizational support, Innovation performance, Proactive behavior*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

With the intense competition and the expansion of external environmental uncertainty, most enterprises realize the importance of innovation for high-quality and sustainable development. Enterprise innovation should ultimately be implemented on various work behaviors of individual employees [1]. Relying solely on employees' passive implementation of work requirements and leaders' instructions can no longer meet the requirements of enterprise innovation and development, which requires every employee to have proactive behavior [2].

Innovation is an activity with high investment and high risk [3]. Employees' individual innovation performance depends on their proactive behavior, but the positive leadership and support factors of the organization cannot be ignored. However, the existing literature on the interaction mechanism between the positive leadership and support factors of the organization and employees' individual proactive behavior and innovation performance is still lacking, which is an urgent problem to be solved.

This study will take the scientific and technological personnel and college teachers engaged in R & D in high-tech enterprises in Dawan District, Guangdong, Hong

Kong and Macao as the research object, and try to study the occurrence mechanism of proactive behavior and the relationship between proactive behavior and individual innovation performance from the two aspects of organizational environment positive leadership and organizational support, so as to build an organizational environment active leadership An empirical research framework for the comprehensive impact of organizational support on proactive behavior of science and technology employees and the relationship between proactive behavior and innovation performance. In order to provide new knowledge for the development of proactive behavior theory, and on this basis, provide practical reference for enterprise managers to stimulate proactive behavior and improve innovation performance.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL ASSUMPTIONS

### 2.1. Organizational factors and individual innovation performance

Positive leadership is a new concept developed to meet the new needs of the times for leadership [4]. Inclusive leadership is a leadership behavior characterized by openness, accessibility and accessibility in the interaction with subordinates [5], which can

effectively promote the innovation atmosphere of the organization and team [6], and has a positive impact on the organization and employees [7]. Transformational leadership is a leadership behavior that arouses the high-level needs of subordinates through idealized influence, charisma, intellectual stimulation and personalized care, so as to make them put organizational interests above personal interests, so as to show excellent performance [8], which helps to stimulate employees' potential, encourage employees to break the routine and try new ways to solve problems. It is conducive to the formation of an atmosphere of pursuing innovation in the organization [9]. Empowering leadership refers to the leadership behavior in which leaders share power with their subordinates [10], which can effectively improve employees' enthusiasm for innovation [11]. The above leadership style has been widely proved to have a positive effect on organizations and individuals, so it is called "positive leadership" [12].

Eisenberge (1986) believes that the sense of organizational support refers to "the overall feeling that employees in an organization attach importance to their contributions and care about their welfare" [13]. George (1993) believes that the sense of organizational support refers to "the assurance and confidence that employees get help from the organization when they work effectively and deal with stress situations" [14]. Bell et al. (2002) believe that the sense of organizational support is "employees' overall perception and belief in the recognition of employees by the organization, the recognition process of employees' performance and the corresponding treatment given to them" [15]. Ling Wenyun et al. (2006) believe that "the sense of organizational support is the employees' view of how the organization views their contributions and cares about their interests" [16]. To sum up, we believe that the sense of organizational support is the overall feeling of employees about the organization's help, welfare support and interest concerns. Because the sense of organizational support is to talk about the organization's support for employees from the perspective of employees, which has a direct and due effect on employees, the organizational support in this study refers to the sense of organizational support.

In the 1970s, foreign scholars began to study individual innovation performance. Amabile et al. (1996) believed that "individual innovation performance is the objective result of a series of novel ideas implemented within the organization" [17]. Janssen (2000) believes that "individual innovation performance is to improve organizational group performance, mainly the generation, introduction and implementation of new ideas" [18]. Han Yi (2006) believes that "individual innovation performance includes innovation willingness, innovation action, innovation suggestions, innovation achievements and innovation thinking dissemination" [19]. Heng Yuanyuan (2012) believes that "individual innovation

performance is a series of individual innovation activities and their output, perceptible and measurable achievements that are valuable to the organization or team. These innovation activities need to go through various procedures or stages to produce performance" [20]. To sum up, we believe that individual innovation performance is the result of innovative ideas put forward and implemented by individual employees in order to improve enterprise performance.

Chen Wenpei (2014) found that leadership style has a significant positive impact on individual innovation performance [21]. Inclusive leadership style has a significant positive correlation with university scientific research performance [22]. Transformational leadership can affect employees' morale, ideals, interests and values, motivate employees to achieve performance higher than their initial expectations, and finally make them pay more attention to personal interests [23]. Empowered leadership can affect employees' task performance by influencing subordinates' self perception based on self-esteem and internal social status [24]. Janssen et al. (2004) found that organizational support can positively affect employees' innovation performance [25]. Yu et al. (2013) also confirmed the positive correlation between organizational support and employee creativity [26].

Through the above literature review and analysis, we speculate that positive leadership and organizational support can positively predict employees' individual innovation performance, so we assume:

H1: there is a significant positive correlation between organizational factors and individual innovation performance.

H1a: positive leadership is significantly positively correlated with individual innovation performance.

H1b: there is a significant positive correlation between organizational support and individual innovation performance.

## ***2.2. Proactive behavior and individual innovation performance***

There are different views on the definition of proactive behavior. Crant (2000) believes that "proactive behavior is an employee's self initiated, expected and proactive work behavior" [27]. Campbell (2000) believes that "proactive behavior is the intentional behavior of employees who are future oriented and try to change their situation" [28]. Fay et al. (2001) believe that "proactive behavior is a self initiated and proactive work behavior" [29]. Parker et al. (2001) believe that "proactive behavior is an employee's spontaneous, expected behavior aimed at changing or improving their own situation or situation" [30]. Belschak (2010) and others believe that "proactive behavior is the tendency of employees' internal stability to affect environmental changes, can actively complete

their work, and is willing to change the environment in time without environmental constraints" [31]. Fuller (2012) and others believe that "proactive behavior refers to spontaneous, future oriented and change oriented predictive behavior aimed at improving the environment or individual self" [32]. Based on the above points of view, we believe that proactive behavior is an individual employee's future oriented spontaneous change behavior.

Frese (2008) believes that "proactive behavior can have a key impact on individual innovation performance" [33]. If an individual can exercise autonomy at work, he will be more willing to try new ideas and his innovation performance is more likely to be improved [34].

According to the above literature review and analysis, we speculate that proactive behavior can positively predict employees' individual innovation performance, so we make the following assumptions:

H2: proactive behavior is significantly positively correlated with individual innovation performance.

### **2.3. Organizational factors and proactive behavior**

Liu Yang et al. (2016) found a significant positive correlation between inclusiveness and employee proactive behavior [35]. Strauss (2010) and other studies show that transformational leadership increases employees' self-evaluation of proactive behavior [36]; Den Hartog et al. (2012) found that transformational leadership can effectively promote employees' proactive behavior [37]. Leadership empowerment can promote employees' internal identity perception, make employees feel that their work content and contribution have been valued and supported by their superiors. It is an organizational "insider", so as to enhance employees' work motivation [38], improve employees' job satisfaction, strengthen organizational commitment, and enable employees to actively show their willingness to innovate and innovative behavior [24]. The sense of organizational support is the commitment of the organization, and the individual's perception of this commitment will affect their work and behavior performance [39]. If employees feel valued and cared by the organization, it will not only improve their sense of responsibility for carrying out routine work, but also increase their emotional investment in the organization, and even show independent innovation behavior without expected reward [40].

Based on the above literature review and analysis, we speculate that positive leadership and support factors in the organization can positively predict employees' proactive behavior, so we make the following assumptions:

H3: there is a significant positive correlation between organizational factors and proactive behavior effect.

H3a: there is a significant positive correlation between positive leadership and proactive behavior effect.

H3b: there was a significant positive correlation between organizational support and proactive behavior effect.

### **2.4. Mediating role of proactive behavior**

Inclusive leadership encourages employees to make their subordinates feel cared for, supported and understood, which helps them improve their work performance. Transformational leaders promote employees' innovative performance by encouraging employees' self-expression, accepting unorthodox ideas, inspiring employees by example [41]; It also supports innovation, gives employees full autonomy, encourages creative thinking, and completes or improves work in new ways [42]. Amabile et al. Found that an important antecedent variable of employee innovation is to obtain the power to participate in decision-making and the perception of autonomy [43]. Authorization can enable employees to lead and make decisions independently [8]. In order to repay the organization, they often have a high level of task motivation, resulting in more innovative behaviors [44]. Mckenny (2013) found that organizational support should include three dimensions: respect (emotional) support, welfare support and instrumental support [45]. Organizational support has a positive impact on employees' work attitude, work performance, work engagement and organizational citizenship behavior; Tian Xizhou et al. (2010) believe that if employees can feel the support from the organization, they will have a more sense of responsibility for the tasks assigned by the organization, increase work investment in their work, and have a direct or indirect impact on employees' innovative behavior [39].

According to the above literature review and analysis, we speculate that organizational factors will affect employees' individual innovation performance through the intermediary of employees' proactive behavior. Therefore, we make the following assumptions:

H4: proactive behavior plays an intermediary role in the relationship between organizational factors and individual innovation performance.

H4a: proactive behavior plays an intermediary role in the relationship between positive leadership and individual innovation performance.

H4b: Proactive behavior plays an intermediary role in the relationship between organizational support and individual innovation performance.

Based on the above assumptions, the empirical research framework is summarized as shown in Figure 1:

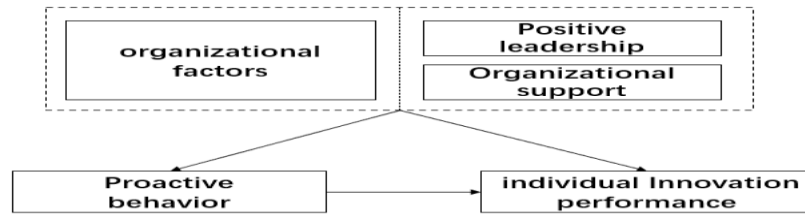


Figure 1 empirical research framework

### 3. RESEARCH DESIGN

#### 3.1. Research Sample

Taking the scientific and technological personnel and college teachers engaged in R & D in high-tech enterprises in Dawan District, Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao as the survey objects, we used the network platform "questionnaire star" to conduct data research, and collected 1050 answers by sending two-dimensional codes through wechat of students, friends and acquaintances, with a recovery rate of 90% and an effective rate of 100%.

The demographic characteristics of the final effective sample are as follows: ① gender: male (550, accounting for 52.38%) and female (500, accounting for 47.62%); ② Age: age ≤ 25 years old (20 persons, accounting for 1.9%), 25 < age ≤ 35 years old (380 persons, accounting for 36.19%), 35 < age ≤ 45 years old (500 persons, accounting for 47.62%), 45 < age (150 persons, accounting for 14.29%); ③ Education: Junior College (20, accounting for 1.9%), undergraduate (280, accounting for 26.67%), master (690, accounting for 65.71%), doctor (60, accounting for 5.72%); ④ Working years: less than 1 year (30 people, accounting for 2.86%), 1-5 years (160 people, accounting for 15.24%), 5-10 years (210 people, accounting for 20.0%), more than 10 years (650 people, accounting for 61.9%).

#### 3.2. Research Tools

On the basis of the existing maturity scale, we made the questionnaire title after appropriate adjustment according to needs. All variables were measured by Likert 5-point method.

##### 3.2.1. Positive leadership.

Inclusive leaders mainly refer to Carmelie (2010) [5] scale and set three questions from the perspective of openness, usefulness and accessibility, such as "your superiors are willing to listen to new ideas". Transformational leaders mainly refer to the multifactor Behavior Questionnaire (CMLQ) [8] prepared by Bass (1985), and set three questions from the three dimensions of leadership charm, personalized care and intellectual

stimulation, such as "your superior makes you feel optimistic about the future". Referring to the scale prepared by Aheame et al. (2005) [46], authorized leaders set two topics from the perspectives of promoting participatory decision-making and providing autonomy, such as "your superior allows you to work in your own way".

##### 3.2.2. Organizational support.

Mainly referring to the scale developed by Eisenberger et al. (1986) [13] and Ling Wenyun et al. (2006) [16], three topics are set from three aspects: instrumental support, emotional support and welfare support, such as "your unit cares about you and often provides work support".

##### 3.2.3. Proactive behavior.

Mainly referring to the scale prepared by Parker (2010) [47], three topics are set from the perspectives of initiative, foresight and innovation, such as "you often discuss and seek resources or support that can realize new ideas".

##### 3.2.4. Individual innovation performance.

Referring mainly to the scale prepared by Janssen [48] and Han Yi [49], four topics are set, such as "you will promote your innovative ideas step by step".

### 4. DATA ANALYSIS

#### 4.1. Reliability Analysis

We use Cronbach 'alpha to test the reliability of the measurement items. The reliability test results are shown in Table 1.

It can be seen from table 1 that the positive leadership reliability coefficient is 0.923, the organizational support reliability coefficient is 0.861, the proactive behavior reliability coefficient is 0.823, and the individual innovation performance reliability coefficient is 0.881, all of which are greater than 0.8. Therefore, it shows that the reliability quality of the research data is high and can be used for further analysis.

**Table 1** Test Value of Cronbach's a Coefficient of Research Variable

Scale	Cases	Cronbach's a Coefficient
Positive leadership	8	0.923
Organizational support	3	0.861
Proactive behavior	3	0.823
Individual innovation performance	4	0.881

**4.2. Validity Analysis**

KMO value and Bartlett sphericity test were used for validity verification. The validity test results are shown in Table 2.

It can be seen from table 2 that the KMO value of positive leadership is 0.913, greater than 0.9, indicating good validity; The KMO value of organizational support

is 0.696, and the KMO value of proactive behavior is 0.685, which is greater than 0.6, indicating that the validity is acceptable; The KMO value of individual innovation performance is 0.802, greater than 0.8, indicating that the validity of the research data is very good. Bartlett's sphericity test of positive leadership, organizational support, proactive behavior and individual innovation performance reached a significant level of 0.000, which was suitable for factor analysis, indicating that the four scales used in this study had good validity.

**Table 2** KMO and Bartlett Values of Study Variables

		Positive leadership	Organizational support	Proactive behavior	Individual innovation performance
KMO value		0.913	0.696	0.685	0.802
Bartlett Sphericity test	Approximate chi-square	588.562	155.640	120.646	242.078
	df	28	3	3	6
	p value	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000

**4.3. Homologous Deviation Analysis**

During homology deviation analysis, Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) method is mainly used, which puts all measurement items in one factor and then analyzes them. If the measurement shows that the fitting indexes of the model, such as chi square degree of freedom ratio, RMSEA, RMR and CFI, cannot meet the standard, it indicates that the model fitting is poor, It means that all measured items should not belong to the same factor, so it means that there is no homologous method deviation in the data.

This time, all 18 measurement items are put into one

factor for confirmatory factor analysis, and the model fitting indicators are obtained, as shown in Table 3.

Table 3 shows that the chi square degree of freedom value is 4.742, which is higher than the standard (< 3), and the four index values of GFI, CFI, NFI and NNfi are all lower than 0.7, with obvious deviation from the standard value (greater than 0.9), RMSEA value greater than 0.10, RMR value greater than 0.05, which is also the standard value. Other indicators such as AGFI, IFI, PGFI and PNFI are also lower than 0.7, and the serious deviation is greater than 0.9, which indicates that the model fitting quality is very poor, and the scale data in this study can not be focused into one factor, that is, there is no common method deviation.

**Table 3** CFA Analysis Model Fitting Index

Index	$\chi^2$	df	p	$\chi^2/df$	GFI	RMSEA	RMR	CFI	NFI	NNFI
Judge Standard	-	-	>0.05	<3	>0.9	<0.10	<0.05	>0.9	>0.9	>0.9
Value	640.109	135	0.000	4.742	0.526	0.189	0.094	0.618	0.567	0.568
Other Index	TLI	AGFI	IFI	PGFI	PNFI	SRMR	AIC	BIC		
Judge Level	>0.9	>0.9	>0.9	>0.9	>0.9	<0.1	越小越好	越小越好		
Value	0.568	0.400	0.624	0.416	0.500	0.167	3868.627	3964.169		

4.4. Correlation Analysis

Pearson correlation coefficient is mainly used to study the correlation between positive leadership,

organizational support, proactive behavior and individual innovation performance. The Pearson values of research variables are shown in Table 4.

Table 4 Pearson Values of Study Variables

	Positive leadership	Organizational support	Proactive behavior	Individual innovation performance
Positive leadership	1			
Organizational support	0.715**	1		
Proactive behavior	0.526**	0.596**	1	
Individual innovation performance	0.370**	0.439**	0.749**	1

\* p<0.05 \*\* p<0.01

It can be seen from table 4 that individual innovation performance and positive leadership, organizational support and proactive behavior, proactive behavior and positive leadership and organizational support are significant (P < 0.01), and the correlation coefficient values are higher than 0.3, which shows that individual innovation performance and positive leadership, organizational support, proactive behavior, proactive behavior and positive leadership There is a significant positive correlation between organizational support.

variables, positive leadership, organizational support, proactive behavior are taken as independent variables, and individual innovation performance is taken as dependent variables. The K value is taken as 0.990. The results are shown in Table 5.

4.5. Regression Analysis and Hypothesis test

It can be seen from table 4 that the correlation coefficient between positive leadership and organizational support is 0.715, much greater than 0.6, and the correlation between them is very high. As independent variables, positive leadership and organizational support are prone to collinearity of independent variables in linear regression analysis, which will lead to serious deviation or even completely opposite conclusions in data research. Therefore, ridge regression, a more scientific research method, is used for regression analysis.

As can be seen from table 5, the regression coefficient of active leadership is 0.053 (t = 2.039, P = 0.044 < 0.05), which means that positive leadership will have a significant positive impact on individual innovation performance. Therefore, it is assumed that H1a: there is a significant positive correlation between positive leadership and individual innovation performance. The regression coefficient of organizational support is 0.076 (t = 3.100, P = 0.003 < 0.01), which means that organizational support will have a significant positive impact on individual innovation performance. Therefore, it is assumed that H1b: there is a significant positive correlation between organizational support and individual innovation performance, and H1: there is a significant positive correlation between organizational factors and individual innovation performance.

4.5.1. Ridge regression analysis of positive leadership, organizational support, proactive behavior and individual innovation performance

In ridge regression analysis, gender, age, working years and educational background are taken as control

It can also be seen from table 5 that the regression coefficient of proactive behavior is 0.327 (t = 9.254, P = 0.000 < 0.01), which means that proactive behavior will have a significant positive impact on individual innovation performance. It also proves that the hypothesis H2: proactive behavior has a significant positive correlation with individual innovation performance.

Table 5 Ridge Regression Analysis Results of Positive Leadership, Organizational Support, Proactive Behavior and Individual Innovation Performance

	Non standardized coefficient		Standardization coefficient	t	p	R <sup>2</sup>	Adjust R <sup>2</sup>	F
	B	Standard error Beta	Beta					
constant	1.900	0.248	-	7.656	0.000**	0.458	0.419	F(7,97)= 11.728, p=0.000
Gender	-0.058	0.042	-0.050	-1.359	0.177			
Age	0.037	0.026	0.046	1.395	0.166			
Working years	0.034	0.023	0.050	1.495	0.138			
education	-0.011	0.037	-0.011	-0.306	0.760			

	Non standardized coefficient		Standardization coefficient	t	p	R <sup>2</sup>	Adjust R <sup>2</sup>	F
	B	Standard error Beta	Beta					
Positive leadership	0.053	0.026	0.068	2.039	0.044*			
Organizational support	0.076	0.024	0.100	3.100	0.003**			
Proactive behavior	0.327	0.035	0.323	9.254	0.000**			
Dependent variable: individual innovation performance								
* p<0.05 ** p<0.01								

4.5.2. Ridge regression analysis of active leadership, organizational support and proactive behavior

In Ridge regression analysis, gender, age, working years and educational background are taken as control variables, positive leadership and organizational support are taken as independent variables, and proactive behavior is taken as dependent variable. The K value is taken as 0.990. The results are shown in Table 6.

Table 6 Ridge Regression Analysis Results of Positive Leadership, Organizational Support and Proactive Behavior

	Non standardized coefficient		Standardization coefficient	t	p	R <sup>2</sup>	Adjust R <sup>2</sup>	F
	B	Standard error Beta	Beta					
constant	2.395	0.236	-	10.168	0.000**			
Gender	-0.001	0.046	-0.001	-0.018	0.986			
Age	0.042	0.029	0.053	1.459	0.148			
Working years	0.022	0.025	0.033	0.904	0.368	0.336	0.296	F(6,98)=8.281, p=0.000
education	0.011	0.040	0.011	0.268	0.789			
Positive leadership	0.141	0.029	0.182	4.920	0.000**			
Organizational support	0.176	0.028	0.235	6.383	0.000**			
Dependent variable: proactive behavior								
* p<0.05 ** p<0.01								

As can be seen from table 6, the regression coefficient of positive leadership is 0.141 (t = 4.920, P = 0.000 < 0.01), which means that positive leadership will have a significant positive impact on proactive behavior. Therefore, it is assumed that H3a: there is a significant positive correlation between positive leadership and proactive behavior. The regression coefficient of organizational support is 0.176 (t = 6.383, P = 0.000 < 0.01), which means that organizational support will also have a significant positive impact on proactive behavior. Therefore, assuming that H3b: organizational

support has a significant positive correlation with proactive behavior, it is certainly true that H3: organizational factor has a significant positive correlation with proactive behavior.

4.6. Mediating effect Test

The bootstrap sampling test method is used to study the intermediary effect. The sampling times are 5000 times. The results are shown in Table 7.

Table 7 shows the mediating effect test of proactive behavior for the impact of positive leadership on individual innovation performance. The 95% interval does not include the number 0 (95% CI: 0.200 ~ 0.438). Therefore, it shows that proactive behavior has an

mediating effect when the impact of positive leadership on individual innovation performance, and positive leadership will first affect proactive behavior, Then, proactive behavior is used to affect individual innovation performance, so H4 is assumed.

Table 7 relevant values of bootstrap sampling inspection method

Items	Effect	Boot SE	BootLLCI	BootULCI	Z	P
Positive leadership ⇒ proactive behavior ⇒ individual innovation	0.318	0.061	0.200	0.438	5.196	0.000

Items	Effect	Boot SE	BootLLCI	BootULCI	Z	P
performance						
Organizational support⇒ proactive behavior⇒ individual innovation performance	0.342	0.061	0.223	0.463	5.609	0.000
Note: BootLLCI refers to the lower limit of 95% interval of bootstrap sampling, and BootULCI refers to the upper limit of 95% interval of bootstrap sampling.						

## 5. CONCLUSION

Angle innovation. Previous studies have considered the role of inclusive leadership, transformational leadership and empowerment leadership on individual innovation performance and proactive behavior. In this study, we innovatively integrate the three leadership styles through the concept of positive leadership, so that we can consider the role of leadership on individual proactive behavior and innovation performance from a higher level and broader perspective.

It is confirmed that the positive leadership and support environment in the organization is significantly positively correlated with individual proactive behavior and innovation performance. Through empirical methods, we have verified the significance of positive leadership and support environment in the organization to individual proactive behavior and innovation performance, and also explored the significance of individual scientific and technological employees, as the main body of enterprise innovation, taking advantage of their proactive behavior to actively adapt and transform the environment, create higher individual innovation performance and realize enterprise performance, so as to expand individual Research on organization in enterprise innovation situation.

It is confirmed that proactive behavior plays an intermediary role in the relationship between positive leadership and support factors and individual innovation performance. Through empirical methods, we verify that although the positive leadership and support environment in the organization can play a role in individual innovation performance, it mainly depends on the intermediary role of employees' individual proactive behavior, which not only deepens the research on the impact of employees' individual proactive behavior, but also widens the path for enterprises to improve employees' individual innovation performance

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## A Brief Introduction to the Author

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