Contribution of Linkedin on Recruitment and Selection

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ABSTRACT

Linkedin has become one of the most known social networking portals in terms of global professional connections, networking, job postings, hiring and much more in relevance to employment opportunities. This research was an attempt to identify the utility of Linkedin on selection and recruitment. Also, this study has taken the employers' and the prospective candidates for job and employees' perspective, including factors such as recruitment, selection, job opportunities, internal official communication on Linkedin, professional networking, ease of access, less expensive communication tool etc. Linkedin users (285 respondents) were randomly selected from the region of Karachi and were provided the employer's and employee's survey questions to be filled respectively. The results revealed that Linkedin is still not adopted in businesses for the recruitment purposes. It is currently being used by some giant multinational companies for job postings, recruitment and maintaining professional connections.

Keywords: Social Networking, Linkedin, Recruitment, Selection, Professional networking.

JEL Classification: D71, J01, O15

Introduction

Generally, social networking websites are commonly being used for communication, which can be personal, professional and one's own interest. These sites include an interface, where individual makes their profile and connects to his/her own interests groups and peers/friends/colleagues/family. There are several social events, societies and organizations where one can connect to. It has become one of the strongest communication portal as various leading organizations are using these portals to communicate to a larger audience easily and voice out their organizational agendas.

With each passing minute the world around us is improving its technology, which is creating a difference in the society. Internet has played the most important role is creating the difference.

Human resource practices have also taken the use of this technology and revised their way of job advertisements, postings, internal and external hiring, recruitment and selection. The well-known social networking websites namely Facebook, Linkedin, Twitter are being

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using by the HR departments for online job posting, testing and various other job opportunities insights. This has completely changed the conventional way of Recruitment and Selection. Globally, organizations are already using these portals to post a new job opportunity, which has made its reach quite accessible for the employer and the employee as well but on the other side. Facebook has the most registered users on the whole but preferably for job-orientation and professional communication, Linkedin is used and followed on. As in previous years, internet was already being used for filling in the required selection and recruitment forms, emailing personal and professional details to the organization for selection etc and now social networking sites have made things more easy in terms of communicating. As seen and being observed that email is now one of the traditional and most common means of communication over the internet. In addition, new means of communication have been adopted such as text messaging, instant messaging, blogs, wikis, podcasts, and Really Simple Syndication (RSS) feeds (Cachinko, 2011).

There has been a research carried out to find out the use of e-recruitment by the society of human resource management and it was evident that half of the organizations are using the different internet portals for job postings. 15% respondents are already using social networking websites and 40% are likely to start using it.

Linkedin in regards to professional community expansion has thrived a long way and continues to grow its professional network around the globe. Initially, Linkedin started in 2003, with 17 million experienced and qualified professionals representing 150 industries globally. This online portal also initiates its network access through making one's own profile and accessing different professional groups, organizations, mentors and related job opportunities access. Linkedin being the focal addresser of Human resource management practices online is being investigated in this study. This research in specific is studying whether currently Linkedin is actually contributing in the recruitment and selection process in different industries of Karachi.

Literature Review

Recruitment and Selection

Recruitment and selection has always been the buzzing word and work in the Human Resource department (Bratton & Gold, 1999). Recruitment and selection is the process in which the right candidates are selected for the job opening identified by the Human Resource department of the organization (Font & Hook, 2008). Font and Hook (2008) identified that recruitment and selection go hand in hand because screening out the right candidate for the right job vacancy encompasses both activities, which are bound for acquiring new employees with the necessary aptitude, qualification and skills (Anderson, 1994). Thus, recruitment is source through which the right candidate is selected from the pool of the candidates (Whitehill, 1991).

Recruitment is the process of attracting prospective employees and stimulating them for applying job in an organization (Kumari, 2012, p. 34). External and Internal recruitments are done as decided by the human resources department and the requirement by the organization.

Recruitment process

There are 14 steps considered in recruitment process to be complete. Foremost step is to identify if there is a vacancy in the organization and getting the vacancy approved by the head of the department of the organization. Second step is to identify the job specifications, job description and policy related to the recruitment of the position and a method for the process for submissions from the job applicants to screening, test, interviewing and final

decision for selecting the right candidate. Also this is only possible when the job advertisement is publically available to the concerned people. There are multiple ways of achieving the recruitment process and organizations design and manage the process as it actually fits in their working model. Keeping in mind that time and cost is surely involved as one has to get it advertised, which can be via newspaper, online, posters, banners, employee referral, TV, radio etc.

Organizations are shifting towards the e-recruitment channel for advertising their jobs online and using different online portals and specifically social networking websites. The reason for this shift is less expense and saving a lot of time with getting the right target of applicants (Bratton & Gold, 2003). Recruitment is a two-way process in which both, the employer and the employee goes through; the employer hunts (job offers, placement advertisement etc) for the right individual for the job defined and the employee (new candidate) seeks the best job opportunity according to his/her interests and needs (Torrington et al., 1996). It is important to mention here that the top management of the organization always is stringent on the point that the human resource department should make sure that the recruitment process and selection is cost-effective, time efficient and successful overall (Foot & Hook, 2008).

The selection process undergoes the recruitment process in a way that once the candidates are identified for the job, screening and short-listing the candidates is started to select the best suitable for the identified job. Normally, the selection process includes seven phases in which each phase is a form of test / interview for the candidates on which they are judged for their required ability for the job. The candidates failing to come up to the set standard prescribed by the organization and human resource for the job eligibility are deselected and of course are also no longer in the final selection stage. Selection process thoroughly scrutinizes every individual's skills, qualities, qualification, sincerity and other various factors important for organization's job requirements. Recruitment and selection is very crucial to the organization as time, cost and investment is involved, in terms of training and defining that particular individual for the job is a tasking process in itself. Hiring the wrong individual falls extremely bad on the organization part. Failure in good selection of individual leads awful opinion by the professional and other related communities, elevated recruiting cost, superfluous legal fee charges, court payments, risk of losing talent and KSA (knowledge, skills and attitude).

Technology

Technology is playing a significant part in the e-recruitment and hence, which technology is being used for the purpose should also be identified here. The platform Web 2 is nowadays being used where users have certain control over their own data. They have a friendly interface with which they can just do more than just reading. If a user can write, save and retrieve his information and contribute online then it's definitely Web 2 technologies (Latham, 2008). Social networking websites, blogging websites and other publishing websites are using this technology. The all portals have the structural design of participation, which persuades users to feed data and add value to the application they utilize it. Cloud computing is also an instance of Web 2.0 as it also involves computing over the internet (Graham, 2005; O'Reilly, 2007; Ryan 2005).

Table 1: Web 2.0 Technologies

Type	Definition	Sample Reference	Examples
MashUps	The mashing together of two or more web services or applications.	(Sutter,2009)	www.padmapper.com, Flicker Maps
Information Sharing Sites	Sites whose primary purpose is the sharing of information or media, from videos, photos to articles to bookmarks/links.	(Sutter,2009)	www.youtube.com, www.flicker.com, www.del.icio.us www.jawoco.com
Social Networking Sites	Online social network help users keep in contact and receive updates from their friends, family and colleagues.	(Sutter,2009)	www.Facebook.com, www.LinkedIn.com, www.Twitter.com, www.MySpace.com www.peerlyst.com
Syndication	A web feed format, which recurrently updates information from blogs, news, audio and videos.	(Sun; He; Leu, 2007)	RSS, Atom
Weblogs (Blogs)	An informational web site on the internet based on different posts varying from a single user to groups.	(Ip & Wagner, 2008)	www.huffingtonpost.com, www.engadget.com
Wikis	It's a web application which any individual can use to add, edit or delete content.	(Kane & Fichman, 2009)	www.wikipedia.org, www.wikihow.com

Social Networking Sites

Briefly the Web 2.0 technologies are discussed above to understand the functions and features of social networking sites, which is a one of the form of Web 2.0 technology. Also, it has been discussed previously how social networks have gain popularity and growing in the digital space from making friends to running a business. Internet has provided multiple opportunities and social networking websites are one of the majors. There are pros and cons about these networks but still globally it is being used and accepted. Certain countries have placed restrictions and introduced their own social networks in order to maintain their country's privacy but still the some social network platform exists (Thackeray, Neiger, Hanson, & McKenzie, 2008).

It has been 16 years since the birth of the social networking sites. The first ever network was known as sixdegree.com, which introduced the profile creation of users joining the network and making friends. The network was upgraded later in 1998 in which the users could also review their friends' list. Similarly, ICQ buddy and AIM were quite popular chatting networks. Classmates.com was yet another online network in which high school and college buddies couldn't interact with each other but weren't allowed to make their own profiles in the beginning. SixDegree.com was one of the sites, which included all the features (Boyd & Ellision, 2008; Abel, 2011). As the competition got intense, this site couldn't survive any longer and in year 2000 major social networking development took place and tech-oriented firms introduced new features to this domain.

As the society has transformed a lot and technology has become habitual to one's life. The use of social networking websites and applications has become a primary use in life whether it's personal or official. Jobvite (2010) revealed that organizations are relying on social networking sites.

To highlight a business technology transformation, one of the old practices was to mail a resume to the organization and wait for the interview call but now with the help of social networking websites, the candidates are selected online and all the related tasks are handle more easily. Online job search websites are quite helpful for professionals and recruiters. The organizations are incorporating innovative tools to create a distinction in their outcomes.

The prominent social networking websites such as Facebook, Linkedin, Twitter, Pinterest, Google Plus, MySpace etc are top networking websites. Packdog, Peerlyst etc are competing social networking websites with a totally new perspective, experience and domain. It's exciting to see how social networking is influencing various industries and lives of every individual.

Facebook has reached 1,280,000,000 users and still growing and similarly other popular social networks are also growing and expanding. These websites are easily accessible and anyone can register and start using these websites.

As our research is restricted to Linkedin study, it is important to state that social networking sites are helping in bridging the gap between candidates and recruiters. In particular, it helps both sides in the following ways:

- LinkedIn is used to explore and search for probable qualified personnel and publicize it on blogs.
- Facebook is used to post job openings.
- Twitter is also used to post the availability of jobs or vacancy (Giles,2010; Abel, 2011).

Advantages of Social Networking Sites in relevance to recruitment

- Employers consider social networking site is better for online background checks to get a quicker character sketch of an applicant for hiring decision (Clark & Roberts, 2010; Abel, 2011).
- General information about individual's education and professional experience can be retrieved
- Recruiters have the possible chances to contact and interact with the potential candidates and make a non-committal communication with them.
- The use of social networking websites develops and further enhances the relationship among the company and applicants.
- The recruiters as they can filter the pool of candidates from the business oriented sites, it leads to reduction in time and also end step result in identifying the right candidate.
- Both applicants and the companies can get access over the social networking sites as a source to gain information about each other.
- Social networking sites, along with possessing the qualities of being cost- effective for recruitment process and quick in hiring n selecting it also helps in promoting employer branding effectively to prospective and current employees.

Disadvantages of Social Networking Sites in relevance to recruitment

- The exploitation of information could be one disadvantage where the applicants and employers both try to do and few are unaware of this corruption (Clark & Roberts, 2010; Abel, 2011).

- The amendments and challenges to extend new strategies in order to take up the new recruitment techniques will be faced by the company.
- The seclusion of data and ethics plays a great role but most of the organizations do not take this into contemplation.
- There is a lacking of knowledge, time and cost invested in the active recruitment process via social networking.
- Many organizations work in a biased way while taking information from the online profiles of the applicants as they do not prefer people from diverse regions thus this outcome lacks diversity in the organizational culture.
- Transparency of information is another issue where there is always a doubt of how much of the information gained is a fact or a fake.
- Discrimination is another negative point where personal information like race, religion and age will make a personal impact on the decision of the employers to hire applicants.
- The profiles of social networking sites the information is limited as restricted by the candidate how much he/she wants to share.

Online Recruitment

The possibility and upcoming use of online recruitment was predicted since the mid 1980's but the use of the internet in the field of recruitment got positioned in mid 1990's. A decade earlier and since then the use of online recruitment has expanded by almost every business whether by recruiter or job seeker around the world. Some organizations are now transforming the total internal and external recruitment process with new technologies. One of the advantages of online recruitment is that the process cost is less than any other technique being followed and implemented. Online recruitment makes the recruiting process shorter and quicker. Instead of any newspaper ads, internet is easily accessible to each and every person around the world and can attain the requirements of the recruiting through collecting a large number of pools of candidates at a worldwide level (CIPD, 1999; Workforce, 2000; Galanaki, 2002; Williams & Klau, 1997). The merge of interest with recruitment has been used rapidly by every individual and organization. A better quality of response has been achieved showing an immense people with keen interest in the use of online recruitment. Online recruitment possesses a quality which gives company a renowned and innovative image of creativity and flexibility (Fister, 1999; Galanaki, 2002). In spite of the advantages there are many disadvantages also. Many firms lack with resources and expertise to obtain the innovation (CIPD,1999; Galanaki, 2002) and so to avoid this weakness the company have got to be ready to deal with IT tools (Workforce,2000 (a); Galanaki, 2002). The implementation online recruitment entails extra time consumption and efforts in the organization.

Trends and Usage of Online Recruitment in Pakistan

In Pakistan, most of the organizations have realized the importance of e-recruitment and has started taken it into practice. The access of internet in Pakistan has existed since the early 1990's. The job seekers in Karachi are focusing on online sources extensively to obtain good job opportunities. The easy access of internet in universities and offices has enabled the individual to apply online and submit their credentials. The uses of internet experienced by the western organizations have completely changed the mind-sets of the Pakistani employers. Online recruitment is used mostly with the objective to maintain high level of efficiency and productivity. Few organizations are not in favor of using the online recruitment technology due to old school of thoughts, cultural idiosyncrasies and other constraints.

LinkedIn

LinkedIn has registered more than 100 million users, covering more than 200 countries and territories worldwide. LinkedIn has 47.6 million users globally (LinkedIn, 2011). A profile on LinkedIn emphasizes the member's educational and employment history and has features business news feed and some modified modules. Here networks are called connections. Contrasting with other social networking sites like Facebook and Twitter, LinkedIn allows developing networks with the pre-existing relationships. LinkedIn's current CEO is Jeff Weiner, who was earlier an executive in Yahoo! Inc. The founder of the company was Reid Hoffman and the founding members of the team were from PayPal and Socialnet.com. The founder Reid Hoffman is Chairman of the Board, Linkedin. The Vice President of products and services is Dipchand Nishar. LinkedIn has its headquarters in Mountain View, California with its branch offices in London, New York, Chicago and Omaha. Funds to LinkedIn are provided by Sequoia Capital, Bain Capital Ventures, Greylock and Bessemer Venture Partners. Within 3 years, LinkedIn has reached its success and profitability. Till Jan 2011, a total of $103 million of investment was received by the company. One aim of the site is that it allows the users to register with any connection they are familiar to. Users can send them invitation to get connected. The connection will be established as long as the other person knows you and accepts your invitation. The site can be used to search for the jobs, people and business opportunities recommended in one's network. Some of the LinkedIn specialized aspects are stated below:

- Benefiting the employers to list jobs or vacancies and find potential candidates.
- Job seekers can search for better job opportunities and take a review of the profile of hiring managers.
- Users can get a chance to follow the various companies and get updates about the jobs available.
- LinkedIn allows the users to make a research of the companies in which they show their interest to work.
- LinkedIn has also developed a site of answering the questions alike Yahoo! Answers but the difference here is that this question answering is done on the basis of business-oriented.
- It supports a large number of diversity y allowing different people from all the corners of the world to join and establish their connections.

LinkedIn in the organizations of Karachi

The scope of this research is limited to the region Karachi. It was known that most of the organizations are not aware of LinkedIn. Some organizations are aware of the social network but they do not incorporate it in their recruitment and selection process. There is a percentage of organizations who are using LinkedIn for placement of job ads, possible job openings etc. In short, there is a mixture of both conventional and modern users of technology in the business of Karachi today.

Research Methods

Method of Data Collection

The method of data collection was two types of structured questionnaires were circulated among the respondents of about 285 employers and employees together in order to avail primary information for checking the proposition of the study. Banks, universities and different industries were visited to get the questionnaires filled by the employers and employees, both. Some short interviews were also taken with the respondents.

Sampling Technique & Sample Size

Un-restricted non-probability sampling was used as respondents were chosen on the basis of ease and proximity. Respondents are targeted from every Bank, Universities and Industries located in Karachi. A number of 285 respondents were targeted to fill out the questionnaires.

Instrument of Data Collection

Primary data was collected for this research and for the purpose questionnaire has been deployed to collect the relevant data from the employers and employees of various organizations in Karachi using LinkedIn. One questionnaire was pertaining to employer's perspective of the use of LinkedIn for recruitment purposes and the other was related to employees' perspective of the use of LinkedIn for job openings etc. The questionnaires were built in such a way that the respondents can answer the queries about LinkedIn and its use in relevance to recruitment and selection.

Statistical Technique

For evaluating all possible hypotheses one sample t-test deployed to understand the possible connections between LinkedIn and HR Recruitment and Selection.

Research Hypotheses

Social Networking Sites are a part of online recruitment and is being adopted by every HR department in almost every organization of the world. We need to find out that does this relationship of Social Networking (LinkedIn) in the business segment of Karachi exists or not?

On the basis of this objective, the following hypotheses were established:

Employer's Perspective Hypotheses

H1: LinkedIn site is used in terms of Recruiting.
H2: LinkedIn site is used in terms of Networking.
H3: LinkedIn has its contribution on Recruitment and Selection.
H4: LinkedIn identifies highly talented and competent people.
H5: LinkedIn provides complete profile of the candidate for the required post.
H6: LinkedIn is a source to communicate on behalf of the company to the applicants.
H7: Organization uses the testimonials of LinkedIn to recruit the candidates.
H8: Recruitment through LinkedIn benefits the organization in terms of less time consuming.
H9: Recruitment through LinkedIn benefits the organization in terms of less Cost of recruitment.
H10: Recruitment through LinkedIn benefits the organization in terms of less cost of communication.
H11: Recruitment through LinkedIn benefits the organization in terms of availability of new talents.
H12: Recruitment through LinkedIn benefits the organization in terms of adoption of new technology.
H13: Qualification is most preferred when searching for candidates on LinkedIn.
H14: Personality is most preferred for when searching for candidates on LinkedIn.
H15: Work Experience is most preferred for when searching for candidates on LinkedIn.
H16: Reference is most preferred for when searching for candidates on LinkedIn.

Employee's Perspective Hypotheses

H1: LinkedIn site is used in terms of seeking jobs/opportunities.
H2: LinkedIn site is used in terms of professional networking.
H3: LinkedIn has its contribution on Recruitment and Selection.
H4: Information availed through professional communities is reliable on LinkedIn.
H5: LinkedIn site is suitable to make an approach to almost every company.
H6: LinkedIn identifies highly talented and competent people.
H7: LinkedIn is a direct communication source with Company's BODs or the Manager.
H8: LinkedIn can provide with better vacancies and job opportunities.
H9: LinkedIn is less costly in terms of applying for a job.
H10:LinkedIn is time saving in applying for a job.
H11:LinkedIn provides more job opportunities.

Findings and Interpretation of the Results

Table 2: Hypotheses Assessment Summary With Respect To Employer's Perspective via One-Sample T-Test

Hypothesis	Test Value = 4 4 imply that respondents are perceptually agreed with the asked queries.			
	Mean	Mean Difference	P-Value	Empirical Conclusion
H1: LinkedIn site is used in terms of Recruiting.	3.7593	-.24074	.002	Rejected
H2: LinkedIn site is used in terms of Networking.	3.8426	-.15741	.059	Accepted*
H3: LinkedIn has its contribution on Recruitment and Selection.	3.7944	-.20561	.007	Rejected
H4: LinkedIn identifies highly talented and competent people.	3.6204	-.37963	.000	Rejected
H5: LinkedIn provides complete profile of the candidate for the required post.	3.6019	-.43519	.000	Rejected
H6: LinkedIn is a source to communicate on behalf of the company to the applicants.	3.6389	-.36111	.000	Rejected
H7: Organization uses the testimonials of LinkedIn to recruit the candidates	3.2407	-.36111	.000	Rejected
H8: Recruitment through LinkedIn benefits the organization in terms of less time consuming.	3.7315	-.26852	.001	Rejected
H9: Recruitment through LinkedIn benefits the organization in terms of less Cost of recruitment.	3.7870	-.21296	.007	Rejected
H10: Recruitment through LinkedIn benefits the organization in terms of less cost of communication.	3.7778	-.22222	.006	Rejected
H11: Recruitment through LinkedIn benefits the organization in terms of availability of new talents.	3.8796	-.12037	.134	Accepted*
H12: Recruitment through LinkedIn benefits the organization in terms of adoption of new technology.	3.7037	-.29630	.001	Rejected
H13: Qualification is most preferred when searching for candidates on LinkedIn.	3.8241	-.17593	.039	Rejected
H14: Personality is most preferred for when searching for candidates on LinkedIn	3.6111	-.38889	.000	Rejected
H15: Work Experience is most preferred for when searching for candidates on LinkedIn	4.0185	.01852	.828	Accepted*
H16: Reference is most preferred for when searching for candidates on LinkedIn.	3.3056	-.69444	.000	Rejected

Table 3: Hypotheses Assessment Summary With Respect To Employee's Perspective via One-Sample T-Test

Hypothesis	Test Value = 4 4 imply that respondents are perceptually agreed with the asked queries.			
	Mean	Mean Difference	P-Value	Empirical Conclusion
H1: LinkedIn site is used in terms of seeking jobs/opportunities.	3.8023	-.19774	.005	Rejected
H2: LinkedIn site is used in terms of professional networking.	3.6949	-.30508	.000	Rejected
H3: LinkedIn has its contribution on Recruitment and Selection.	3.5085	-.49153	.000	Rejected
H4: Information availed through professional communities is reliable on LinkedIn.	3.4576	-.54237	.000	Rejected
H5: LinkedIn site is suitable to make an approach to almost every company.	3.3842	-.61582	.000	Rejected
H6: LinkedIn identifies highly talented and competent people.	3.6311	-.46893	.000	Rejected
H7: LinkedIn is a direct communication source with Company's BODs or the Manager.	3.2938	-.70621	.000	Rejected
H8: LinkedIn can provide with better vacancies and job opportunities.	3.6215	-.37853	.000	Rejected
H9: LinkedIn is less costly in terms of applying for a job.	3.6102	-.38983	.000	Rejected
H10:LinkedIn is time saving in applying for a job.	3.5311	-.46893	.000	Rejected
H11: LinkedIn provides more job opportunities.	3.6271	-.37288	.000	Rejected

The findings of this paper as shown and highlighted in table 1 and 2 confirm that LinkedIn has some role for recruitment and selection as perceived by the employers of the organization in general in terms of establishing professional net work from employer to employer, employer to employee and employer to third party as we fail to accept the H2 i.e. LinkedIn site is used in terms of professional networking (since Mean value, 3.6949 is approximately equals to the test value i.e. 4). Findings also confirm that LinkedIn benefits the organization in terms of availability of searching new talents as well as perceived by the employers, thus we also fail to reject the H11 i.e. Recruitment through LinkedIn benefits the organization in terms of availability of new talents as the means value (3.8796) for gauging employer perception for this statement is more or less equals to the test value (4). It was also noticed that for employers work experience is the most preferable proxy when they search suitability of candidates for the various the candidatures, hence we also fail to reject the H15 i.e. Work Experience is most preferred for when searching for candidates on LinkedIn as the means value (4.0185) for gauging employer perception for this statement is more to the test value (4). In contrast to the employers perception the employees in general has the opposite perceptions about the usability of LinkedIn in recruitment and selections and they believe that LinkedIn is neither useable nor useful in their recruitments hence we fail to accept the all hypotheses formulated to the check the employee's perceptions on LinkedIn usability.

Discussions and Conclusion

LinkedIn is a business-oriented website, which is adopted all over the world in the process of Recruitment and Selection. As this study was to find about the contribution or role of professional Networking LinkedIn Sites in recruitment and selection from the organization

locating in Pakistani space, it was found out with the help of the analysis there is no major role of this Networking Site (LinkedIn) in Recruitment except of few exceptions i.e. professional net working from employer to employer, employer to employee and employer to third party and searching new talents in Pakistani space. While in contrast to the findings of this paper Clark & Roberts (2010) confirmed that employers consider social networking site is better and some time the best means for online background checks to get a quicker character sketch of an applicant for hiring decision as also endorsed by (Abel, 2011).

Implications

By recognizing the importance of LinkedIn in the view of Recruitment via this research investigation, the employers can learn to adopt this new trend of searching candidates and other related tasks with less cost and less time consumption making HR Recruitment and Selection more effective and prompt.

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