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#### Section 2

**Creating A Personal Vision For Yourself**

**(A Self-Discovery Activity)**

*Part Of A Continuing Program Of Individual Commitment*

*To Grow Leadership Skills*

*And Create a Leadership Culture*

##### Created by

##### TJG 2006 logo

##### Hopkinton, NH

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| Name: Click or tap here to enter text. | MVS: Click or tap here to enter text. |

## Creating A Personal Vision For Yourself

**(A Self-Discovery Activity)**

***“The purpose of life is a life of purpose.”***

***-*** Ralph Waldo Emerson,

American essayist (1803 – 1882)

***“The man without purpose is like a ship without a rudder,  
 a waif, a nothing, a no man.”***

- Thomas Carlyle, [Scottish](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scotland) [satirical](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Satire) [writer](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Writer), [essayist](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Essayist),

[historian](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Historian) (1795 – 1881)

This section is a self-discovery activity designed to help you develop a personal vision for all aspects of your life. This process includes digging deeper into your individual strengths, passions, and priorities. The outcome of this effort will be a better understanding of yourself and greater confidence in where you are going. The objective is to create a succinct, written personal vision that includes all elements of your life and establishes relative priorities.

Creating a personal vision will be done in three parts:

* Part 1—Creating a basic personal vision (pages 2 through 17)
* Part 2—Extending your personal vision to include your organization (pages 18-19)
* Part 3—Extending your personal vision to include your vision for leadership (pages 20-22)

People who invest in this process find that they truly know where they are going. As a result, they have greater confidence in themselves and can make decisions and sort priorities more easily.

Part One

Basic Personal Vision

**(A Self-Discovery Activity)**

***“The unexamined life is not worth living.”***

– Plato, Classical Greek philosopher

(423 – 347 BC)

***“Let us endeavor to live so that when we come to die***

***even the undertaker will be sorry.”***

– Mark Twain, American author and

humorist (1835 – 1910)

***“The tragedy of life is not that it ends so soon, but***

***that we wait so long to begin it.”***

*–* W. M. Lewis, author

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## Understanding Yourself Better

Understanding yourself is one of the five basic foundations of leadership. Knowing who you are gives you more confidence and is part of your Emotional Intelligence. It helps you to be more effective in your communication to others and motivation of others. It also helps you deflect things that demotivate you. Developing and refining your personal vision is easier for people who know themselves. This understanding requires getting out of your head and getting into your heart level thinking.

Think about what you learned about yourself during the first formal training session—your strengths and limitations or weaknesses, your Motivational Value System from your Strength Deployment Inventory, what motivates and demotivates you, and other things. Then answer the questions in the following worksheets to summarize who you are and what you learned about yourself. Please do not think of answering these questions as an assignment, but rather as your personal investment in better understanding yourself.

**Looking More Deeply Into Yourself**

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| **Giftedness** | |
| 1. | What in life gives you the greatest satisfaction, where do you have a true passion, or what things or activities truly energize you? The intent of this question is to identify areas of personal giftedness. |
| Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Influence of MVS on who you are | |
| 2. | How are you influenced by the Red, Blue, and Green components of your Motivational Value System (MVS) in terms of what you do and how you act? Think about this more than “the Green relates to being analytical”. The intent of this question is to help you understand the *balance* of the three motivational drives that makes you truly unique. |
| Click or tap here to enter text. |

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| Influence of MVS on who you are(continued) | |
| 3. | How does your MVS help you to better understand your strengths and weaknesses? And not only your strengths and weaknesses, but how you are perceived by people with different MVSs. |
| Click or tap here to enter text. |
| 4. | How does your MVS help you to better understand what motivates and demotivates you—why you may be demotivated by something that truly motivates someone else? |
| Click or tap here to enter text. |
| 5. | How does this help you better understand yourself as a person, leader, and a motivator of others? |
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| Strengths and weaknesses This is more than writing down information about your MVS. We recommend that you really think about it. Your strengths and weaknesses will be influenced by your MVS, learned behavior, life experiences, and other factors. | |
| 6. | What are your strengths? |
| Principal Strengths  Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Secondary Strengths  Click or tap here to enter text. |
| 7. | What are your limitations or weaknesses? |
| Principal Limitations or Weaknesses  Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Secondary Limitations or Weaknesses  Click or tap here to enter text. |

|  |  |
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| **Barriers** | |
| 8. | What are the barriers that limit your ability to use your strengths better? |
| Click or tap here to enter text. |
| 9. | What can you do to overcome these barriers? Defining these actions will help define how you can grow as a leader. |
| Click or tap here to enter text. |

## Creating Your Personal Vision

Your personal vision for your life is one of the five basic foundations to become a more effective leader. Your vision shapes who you are and the decisions that you make. It establishes a foundation, direction, and destination for your life. It provides a unique definition of what constitutes success for your life.

The following thoughts will help you go through the personal vision process and make it a more productive self-discovery process for you.

Purpose

The purpose of this self-discovery exercise is *not to answer the questions as an assignment.* The principal objective is to help you structure your thinking to come to an end result. The end result is a concisely written personal vision statement *that is meaningful to you.* You will know when you have a true personal vision because it will be so personal that you will not want to share it with more than a few other people.

Benefits

A well-thought-out vision statement will give you better purpose and focus for the personal decisions that you make, and will help you live a more balanced, effective, and “fully alive” life. You will have a better sense of priorities, be able to set more focused goals, and make quicker decisions about whether to do this thing or that. It will help you direct your activities to those things that give you greater satisfaction and drop the things that do not contribute to where you want to go.

The focus or purpose that comes from a well-defined vision for your personal life will translate into an aura of greater confidence (since you know where you are going), and people will be attracted to you as a person and as a leader because of that sense of purpose and how it is demonstrated in the way you make decisions and live your life.

Definitions

Please use the following definitions to help develop your personal vision:

**Personal vision.** A guiding light, direction, or core values for your life. It is a description of *how* you want to live your life and the fundamental core values, passion, or reason that you want to live your life this way. A personal vision is a direction that helps define the types of goals that will take you in that direction. A personal vision goes beyond present constraints. It does not include specific goals or tasks, will still stand when all of the goals or tasks you define have been completed, and *always* will be a framework for setting new goals.

You should have a personal vision for every aspect of your life—spouse, children, career (work), extended family, moral/ethical, professional involvement (how you give back to your profession), social (interaction with friends), physical/health, hobbies/recreation, community (local impact) or societal (more global impact), political involvement, spiritual, and any other element of your life. Some personal visions may be for no direct involvement (such as in political involvement), but these should be stated clearly as well. The value of a vision statement is in its specificity. Defining where you don’t want to go has value too. Vision statements should be organized in some order of priority.

**Personal goal.** A specific intermediate or longer-term end point that will support achieving the *direction* that is described in the specific personal vision. Personal goals are defined *after* the personal vision is defined or are placed under a specific personal vision. Some goals may serve more than one vision. A personal goal that is not connected with a specific personal vision means that you may not have thought about a vision for that part of your life, or that you a diverting precious time away from things that take you in the direction you truly want to go.

**Personal task.** A specific short-term objective or activity that will support achieving a personal goal. Tasks are defined *after* the personal goal is established. Some tasks may serve more than one goal.

## Example

Every person will have a different vision, and different people will use different words to describe the same vision. The following are examples only and have specific value only to the author of these statements. Do not try to shortcut the process by seeing how someone else worded his or her vision and deciding that it is a good idea. You *lead* from your own vision—one that is uniquely created by you using words that are meaningful to you. You can only *manage* from someone else’s vision.

**Personal vision statement:**

Children: To be a role model as a parent, and to help my children become responsible, self-reliant, spiritually alive, and contributing members of society.

**Personal goals supporting the vision:**

Find ways to spend more one-on-one time with each child to talk about life values and how to think about what is important to them in their lives.

Invest time in family activities and encourage positive interaction as a healthy family unit.

**Personal tasks supporting the personal goals:**

Take one of them with me when I walk the dog, go on a shopping trip, work on a project around the house; set aside a day each week to spend an hour of one-on-one time with each child—make it a routine so they know it is a priority. As they get older, once a year take each one on a weekend outing that (1) they enjoy (e.g., hike, canoe trip, camping, etc.) and (2) provides time for the barriers to drop and have heart-level conversations, leaving the portable electronics at home.

Make having dinner together each night at a table (with no TV, radio, or other distractions) a priority.

**Making This Real**

*Do not include setting goals and tasks as part of this activity.* The objective of this self-discovery activity is to develop a well thought out personal vision. We leave the more detailed thinking and whether you want a written list of goals and tasks for you to consider separate from this activity of creating your vision statement.

Many of the goals and shorter-term tasks that you already have set for yourself will logically fall under different vision statements. However, if you examine your personal goals and tasks arrayed under each vision, you may see several important things:

* Some of the goals or tasks could be better defined or focused (more effective or better goals and tasks).
* Some of your time and goals or tasks do not really support your vision(s) (ineffective use of time, energy, and personal resources).
* Some visions do not have goals or tasks supporting them (visions that will not be fulfilled, leaving a gap in your ability to go in this direction).

Using Your Personal Vision as a Tool

A personal vision statement is not an academic exercise. If you have invested real thought and tunneled down to the heart level in creating your vision, you have a powerful tool. For example:

* Setting goals and defining tasks become much easier since you know where you want to go.
* It is easy to see where you want to place emphasis (time and quality of effort), or which tasks do not contribute to where you want to go. They should be handled efficiently with minimum effort or should be passed off to others.
* In some areas, you may find serious conflict because there is not enough time for all your visions (e.g., between your vision for your family and your vision for your work). Use this conflict as an opportunity to (1) sort your priorities to get a better balance, (2) refine your vision for different aspects of your life to bring them into better alignment, or (3) improve how you do things—find more efficient ways to do things, delegate lower priority tasks, etc.
* Integrating your employer’s priorities, mission, or vision becomes much easier because you can see where it fits and supports your own vision. You also can see more easily where you can be most effective, make the maximum contribution to your employer’s priority or vision, and/or gain the greatest sense of well-being.

Instructions

Think about your life, your goals, your ambitions, what excites you, what turns you on, what turns you off, and what you have a passion for. We suggest reading the instructions completely and reviewing the worksheets before beginning. Using the worksheets on pages 12through 15 will help you separate goals from vision. You will find that defining your personal vision will be easier if you have completed the *Understanding Yourself* personal evaluation on pages 3 through 6 first.

* Developing a personal vision requires self-examination—going beyond head knowledge and tunneling down to a heart level. This means going downward and inward before you can grow upward and onward. Sometimes it is hard to burrow down at the heart level for fear that there may be nothing there but work and objectives, that you have no real central core or no central life direction. This process will remove that fear because the end result will be the creating / refinement of a central core and life direction.
* Stimulate the process of conceptualizing or refining your personal vision by asking yourself as many life-penetrating questions as you can imagine, such as:
  + What are my core values, and why?
  + What are my passions or what do I have a passion for, and why?
  + What gives me real delight, and why?
  + What do I truly value, and why?
  + What are the five most important things in my life, and why?
  + What lights up my life, and why?
  + Can I live without the need for public recognition (yes or no), and why?
  + What kind of recognition is essential to my well-being, and why?
  + What is my definition of success or a well-lived life, and why?
  + What do I want to give to others, and why?
  + Any other life penetrating questions, and why?
* Write down your vision of what can be or should be for yourself and any broader visions in each of the following areas. To stimulate this process, ask yourself in each of the following areas, what do I have a passion for? What visions excite me or what would I like to achieve in each segment of my life? What would I like to see others believe and/or achieve? And any other question that helps you define your life’s passion and direction. You can use the worksheet on page 12.
  + Spouse
  + Children
  + Work or career
  + Moral / ethical
  + Extended family
  + Professional involvement
  + Spiritual
* Physical / health
* Community / societal involvement
* Political involvement
* Financial
* Recreational
* Social / friends
* Other areas
* Then think about your priorities and how they affect your overall vision for your life. Summarize your personal vision for each of these areas of your life in relative order of priority in a usable form on one piece of paper. An example of the suggested format is shown on page 16.
* Some people like to have a short paragraph that brings all of their vision into one or two sentences. We do not recommend this approach because it tends to blur priorities and often sounds more like a marketing piece. Do this if you wish, but first create separate vision statements for each part of your life and put them in some relative order of importance. The value of this exercise and your sense of greater self-confidence comes *from the specificity*, not the generalization.

## Living Document

* Continue to think about your personal vision and revise it over time. Personal vision evolves over time with life experiences and major life changes. For example, having your first child will give you cause for reconsidering your vision for children. The birth of the first grandchild opens new vistas and thought processes.
* Parts 2 and 3 of this personal vision self-discovery activity are designed to extend your personal vision in (1) the organizations in which you are active and (2) as a leader.

#### Basic Personal Vision Worksheet

**Instructions:** This worksheet is designed to help you differentiate between vision, goals, and tasks. As you think about the things that are important to you, write them in the appropriate columns. The objective is to define your vision in each of the areas of life listed. We encourage you to consider how your goals and tasks support your vision, but you do not need to list goals and tasks for each area of life listed unless you want to.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Area of Life | Vision (Guiding direction for your life) | Goals (Intermediate/longer-term objectives) | Tasks (Short-term objectives) |
| Spouse | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Children | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Work or career | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap here to enter text. |

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Area of Life | Vision (Guiding direction for your life) | Goals (Intermediate/longer-term objectives) | Tasks (Short-term objectives) |
| Moral / ethical | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Extended family | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Professional Involvement  (How you give back professionally) | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap here to enter text. |

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Area of Life | Vision (Guiding direction for your life) | Goals (Intermediate/longer-term objectives) | Tasks (Short-term objectives) |
| Spiritual | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Physical / health | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Community (local impact) / societal (larger impact) Involvement | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap here to enter text. |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Area of Life | Vision (Guiding direction for your life) | Goals (Intermediate/longer-term objectives) | Tasks (Short-term objectives) |
| Political Involvement | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Financial  (It is difficult to state financial as a true vision statement, but try to make this more of a vision statement than a financial goal statement.) | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Other areas  Recreational  Social / friends | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap here to enter text. |

##### MY PERSONAL VISION

(Note: This page is to illustrate format only and contains few actual words)

**Spouse** Aalaeirnaglo alkdf alkdfla lkjdslfa a lkajdlfijoe lkjaldflaj ;aoiejornaf aldkfjoi  
ldkpotrpom adlkfpoerm lkdf apoe[rpk alkdflk a;lkmdf aoem asdklfpeo alkdf df Aalaeirnaglo alkdf alkdfla lkjdslfa a;lkdjf alk alkjdf lkajdlfijoe lkjaldflaj ;aoiejornaf aldkfjoi  
ldkpotrpom adlkfpoerm lkdf apoe[rpk alkdflk a;lkmdf aoem asdklfpeo alkdf df.

**Children** To be a role model as a parent, and to help my children become responsible, self-reliant, spiritually alive, and contributing members of society

**Career** Aalaeirnaglo alkdf alkdfla lkjdslfa a;lkdjf lkjaldflaj ;aoiejornaf aldkfjoi  
ldkpotrpom adlkfpoerm lkdf apoe[rpk alkdflk a;lkmdf aoem asdklfpeo alkdf df.

**Spiritual** Aalaeirnaglo alkdf alkdfla lkajdlfijoe lkjaldflaj ;aoiejornaf aldkfjoi  
ldkpotrpom adlkfpoerm lkdf apoe[rpk alkdflk a;lkmdf aoem asdklfpeo alkdf df.

**Moral/** Aalaeirnaglo alkdf alkdfla lkjdslfa lkajdlfijoe lkjaldflaj ;aoiejornaf aldkfjo

**ethical**  ldkpotrpom adlkfpoerm lkdf apoe[rpk alkdflk a;lkmdf aoem asdklfpeo alkdf df

businessmanshould live his life.

**Extended** Aalaeirnaglo alkdf a;lkdjf alk alkjdf lkajdlfijoe lkjaldflaj ;aoiejornaf aldkfjoi

**Family** ldkpotrpom adlkfpoerm lkdf apoe[rpk alkdflk a;lkmdf aoem asdklfpeo alkdf df

to let them know that they have a special place in my heart

**Professional** Aalaeirnaglo alkdf alkdfla lkajdlfijoe lkjaldflaj ;aoiejornaf aldkfjoi  
ldkpotrpom adlkfpoerm lkdf apoe[rpk alkdflk a;lkmdf aoem asdklfpeo alkdf df.

**Social** Aalaeirnaglo alkdf alkdfla alk alkjdf lkajdlfijoe lkjaldflaj ;aoiejornaf aldkfjoi  
ldkpotrpom adlkfpoerm lkdf apoe[rpk alkdflk a;lkmdf aoem asdklfpeo alkdf df lp.

**Physical/** Aalaeirnaglo alkdf alkdfla lkjdslfa amkou alkjdf lkajdlfijoe lkjaldflaj ;aoiejornaf

**health**

**Hobbies/** Aalaeirnaglo alkdf alkdfla lkjdslfa a;lkdjf alk lkjaldflaj ;aoiejornaf aldkfj

**recreation** Aalaeirnaglo alkdf alkdfla lkjdslfa a;lkdjf alk alkjdf lkajdlfijoe lkjaldflaj ;aoiejornaf aldkfj

**Community/** Aalaeirnaglo alkdf alkdfla lkjdslfa a;lkdjf lkajdlfijoe lkjaldflaj ;aoiejornaf aldkfj

**societal**

**Political** Aalaeirnaglo alkdf alkdfla lkjdslfa alk alkjdf lkajdlfijoe lkjaldflaj ;aoiejornaf aldkfj

**Financial**  Aalaeirnaglo alkdf alkdfla lkjdslfa a;lkdjf alk alkjdf lkajdlfijoe lkjaldflaj ;aoiejornaf aldkfj.

**Other** Aalaeirnaglo alkdf alkdfla lkjdslfa a;lkdjf alk alkjdf lkajdlfijoe lkjaldflaj ;aoiejornaf aldkfj

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| Area of Life | My Personal Vision |
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**Please list in rank order**

Creating A Personal Vision For Yourself

Part Two

## Part Two

## Extending Your Personal Vision To Include Your Organization

**(A Self-Discovery Activity)**

## This section is the second part in creating your personal vision. It is a self-discovery activity designed to help you extend your personal vision to include your employer and your principal volunteer organizations—professional associations, community groups, church leadership positions, etc. This process starts with your basic personal vision, but now includes digging deeper into your passions and priorities and integrating the vision for your employer and the organizations in which you invest your time.

## Please note that the purpose of this exercise is *not* to simply add the mission and vision of these organizations into your personal vision. Even if you are in complete agreement with the vision/mission, it would be like copying someone else’s vision statement—you can only manage from someone else’s vision. The purpose is to help you define your own vision for yourself within the context of the mission/vision. Only then will you have a true vision for yourself and be able to step out of management and into leadership.

Do not begin this exercise until you have completed and refined your basic personal vision in Part 1 of this self-discovery activity. Use the following steps to extend your basic personal vision into these new areas.

1. Consider the company’s mission and vision statements. If there is no statement or if actual practices and values are different, consider what the mission/vision is in reality.
2. Identify those parts of the mission/vision that best fit with your own personal vision, areas of giftedness, and areas of interest and passion.
3. Ask yourself, *“What is my vision for myself and my part of this organization within the organization’s vision/mission?”* Then write a mission/vision statement for you using words that are meaningful to you and add it to your personal vision statement, adjusting any priorities as appropriate. Remember that you lead from your own vision, but can only manage under someone else’s vision. Use the worksheet on the following page. Also remember that this is a *vision statement*, not a series of goals.
4. Use your personal vision for the organization in leading and communicating your passion and mission to the people you lead and influence.
5. This process may raise issues about the organization’s mission/vision such as differences between actual values and what is written. You may wish to raise these issues in your *position* as a manager in your organization or in your *role* as a leader regardless of your position.
6. Follow these steps for any organization where you have an active role as a volunteer leader or make major time commitment.

**My Vision For Myself In My Organizations**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Name of Organization | My vision for myself in my organization (considering the organization’s mission / vision) |
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Creating A Personal Vision For Yourself

Part Three

## Part 3

## Extending Your Personal Vision To Include Your Vision For Leadership

**(A Self-Discovery Activity)**

## This is the third and final part in creating your personal vision. It is a self-discovery activity designed to help you extend your personal vision to include your approach to leading and influencing others regardless of the organization. This process is rooted in who you are as a person and what you have learned to bolt on to your management and leadership practices during this leadership development program. For most people, their vision for leadership is strongly influenced by what motivates and demotivates them, as well as their passions and priorities for what they want to leave behind—whether it is building people, building organizations, or creating something else of lasting value.

Use the following steps, which are simple tasks but require more profound thought, and write a personal vision for leadership.

1. Read Leading! Challenging! Changing! on the following page and answer the questions in the context of managing a part of an organization and being in the role of a leader.
2. Go back to your understanding of yourself—what motivates and demotivates you; what happens to you in conflict; how you react to change; how you deal with delegation, coaching, and mentoring; your areas of natural giftedness; how you take and control risk; and any other important element of what you prefer to do as a leader.
3. Remember that each person should have his/her own unique vision for leadership and that there is no one preferred leadership style. If you mimic someone else and their leadership, you can only manage. You truly are a leader when you follow your own vision for leadership and step out in your own leadership style.
4. Consider other important elements of your basic vision statement—for example, your vision for yourself in the areas of morals and ethics, professional involvement, etc.
5. Now write a vision statement for leadership and add it to the bottom of your personal vision statement. You can use the worksheet on page 21. Remember this is a *vision statement*. It should not include goals.

**Leading! Challenging! Changing!**

# *Questions to consider as a leader in defining your vision for leadership*

* Deep in my core being, what is important to me?
* What is lasting?
* How can I make a difference?
* What do I want to be or do?
* How do I want to live my life—to what end?
* How can I push out the boundaries in my life?
* How can I exceed my bonds—live my passions and beliefs?
* How can I overcome the impossible?
* How and where can I make my mark—on life, on others, on things around me?
* How can I communicate beyond my own lifetime—through ideas, by impacting people, by changing things, and by creating a living memorial in others?

Source: The Jennings Group

## My Vision For Myself As A Leader

(Considering your personal leadership style and how you will grow leaders)

|  |
| --- |
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