

**"This book shows you proven techniques and strategies to get a better job, and to be paid more and promoted faster."
- Brian Tracy - Author - Focal Point**

campus to corporate

**A CONCISE STREET SMART
GUIDE TO WORLD CLASS
CAREER SUCCESS!**

Naveen Chandra R

SAMPLE

CAMPUS to CORPORATE

A concise street smart guide to
world class career success!

NAVEEN CHANDRA

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www.naveenchandra.in

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PREFACE

Career growth in IT industry can be nonlinear. People with hard work and talent can make to top very fast. There are efforts to define the path for career growth by organizations. True journey is transforming from an employee mindset to an entrepreneur mindset and then to that of a leader mindset. This is what it's really about. I chalked out my path as most of us do; by trial and error and then choose what works. I went a little ahead to choose what inspires. It made enormous differences in all spheres of my life.

While I was leading cross culture IT teams, I have noted down the best practices I came across with multiple customers including some of fortune 500 companies. Through my corporate training I had people from all career levels sharing their concerns and looking for right direction. It wasn't very different. I found same issues were raised over and again from different corners. People who joined from colleges of repute, those who studied abroad, interns from different countries, multinational colleagues and sometimes from senior positions who had been successful in earning lots of money.

I found people were so busy in running and even overwhelmed by it. Driven by management towards business results, I observed men and women slowly lose the charm of inspired living, resulting in dragging themselves to the office. A few retained the clarity of what they wanted in life amidst the pressure of work and family by achieving magical work life balance. I found 90:10 rule applies here.

People had begun with lofty intentions yet get carried away taking easier options while life offers choices. Over a period of time they reach to a point in thinking that this is what life is all about; totally forgetting that their choices had led to where they are now.

Killing dreams living mediocre.

If we know a path beforehand, our choices would vastly differ and so would be the results. Saves of our precious time which can then be employed for a better cause.

So an attempt is made thinking of a person who is stepping on to a corporate ladder. Here, I collated items I learnt through my experience. I had repeatedly tested these ideas with different teams and religiously taught to the teams I led. I found they produce similar results whosoever practices them. I organized these in a relevant manner to comprehend and put them into practice easily.

I acknowledge every support and guidance received in doing so. The books and websites I referred are listed at the end of each of the four parts. Readers may go through them for enhancing knowledge further.

INTRODUCTION

You have passed out of campus...*SO WHAT?*

Or say... *what next* ...to be on a milder tone. Milder because you are yet to get used to the tone of employer who writes your monthly pay cheque !

Most of us as students for years did not take up time and effort to figure out what our passion is about; which is supposed to wake us up with zeal every morning to make difference in our life.

Longer we wait for the things to happen, more we try beat around the bush. Our mind comes up with excuses and success in real world moves apart. We have been with the flow of life, we did what we have been taught to do and we did not to use our creative mind to become street smart.

Result is first hand now; confusion, lack of self-confidence and frustration. Easier to call it quarter life crisis. Sometime this state may take few more years to show up with more or less similar feelings, we then call it mid-life crisis. Worst of it may come as frustration at death bed, with a feeling of not put our best with the talents and time we had, at our disposal.

We can ignore our inner calling and continue with the flow. Calling may come back a few more times in life. And haunt us severely, till such time we sit with ourselves and do a deeper introspection. A nature's way of reminding that you are not ordinary.

We can also avoid all together such efforts and remain mediocre for rest of our life, blaming everyone around us for the situation we are in. Calling will stop.

It's time now to try different things. Good point is before such situation becomes evident in our life, pages that follow, have some solutions to make course correction.

In subsequent pages we learn to take a sincere stock of things, from where we are now, then understand, define and arrive at the clarity required for us in pursuit of our dreams.

I am yet to find a successful person who is not passionate about what he or she is doing.

The step we are able to see now, we will take that with faith and it will lead to other invisible steps of the ladder. Once the *Big Picture* thinking becomes natural, we will know whether our ladder is leaned on right wall or not.

We will find out our passion and purpose. Practice right usage of our time and knowledge toward the primary aim of achieving souls content. Honest approach begins with questioning every answer our mind gives and figuring out is it an excuse or a reason. First lesson; here after we will ask five times *why* for every answer our mind gives.

Book focuses predominantly on Indian IT service provider industry. Nevertheless I think these ideas should be applicable to other industry segments also.

Book is organized as following four convenient parts.

- Part 1 – The Beginning – Focuses on a campus pass out with or without job.
- Part 2 - Junior Management - First 5 years - What should be done in early years at work.
- Part 3 - Middle Management - Next 10 years - Transforming oneself and preparation required for next level.
- Part 4 - Senior Management - Last 10 years or more – Sharing the knowledge and living a legacy.

Reader can begin with most relevant part, chapter or topic applicable to their situation and then go to the next topic or simply follow chronological. Every part has focus area, personal life stage and action exercises.

All learning need not fall in the same order as given in the contents. Readers can focus learning the related points as and when it makes sense along with topic of interest, allowing street smart way of getting ahead.

Let's simplify as we go further with CAMPUS to CORPORATE.

You now have a gold mine of proven strategies for making it right first time.

All the best!

Live by heart!

Naveen Chandra R
October, 2017
Bangalore, India.

PART I
THE BEGINNING

FOCUS AREA

This section is designed considering the state of mind of students, who may need a sense of direction towards their career.

Focus is on the situation of having you passed out of the Campus with a technical or management education. We will take commonsense approach to look at the power of choice based on the options at hand. Then learn to become committed in turning our dreams into a reality. While staying inspired throughout the journey in order to achieve it.

We can refer to 80/20 rule here. 20 percent of students have the necessary clarity and have enrolled to next level of action with confidence. While 80 percent needs a direction to be part of those 20 percent in future.

When people are not equipped with proper guidance, they get biased with the opinions of majority. Repeated delay or failure in endeavors can put most into a lower confidence level. This may lead to trying out different paths simultaneously having below average or no results. While one is not focused energy dissipates in multiple directions.

To stay afloat with positivity, keeping target always on top of mind is a minimum requirement.

Action exercises are listed at the end of this part. Following those would help to keep up the spirit consistently. Once students have necessary ideas and understanding on what to experience in the career, their progress can skyrocket.

Let's go through these ideas.

| 1 |

THE DILEMMA

Beginning of all things are small – Cicero.

Power of Choice

Life is made up of series of choices.

Making no choice in a given situation also proves it to be a choice!. Right choice comes with awareness. Better the awareness better would be our choices. I observed there is no justification needed when we do a right thing. A right choice which is based on our values can give us long term results.

People come with different background and experiences. Expecting always a right circumstance, can be a trap. What is important is get to the right perspective, irrespective of the wrongs which are within us and around us. We might have no control on the consequences. However it is important to understand, the choices we make today do have some degree of control on them.

When we choose comfort over conflict, rest over struggle, ease versus glory we are defining our future. We have two primary choices here. First one, be willing to confront and learn the lessons. Second, change our attitude towards the problem; otherwise it will continue to haunt us for life time. Life is short to risk it.

Same thinking, same activities over years would not give us very different results. The future we can see now, is the future we are going to get. One may look back at his or her past to confirm this. All our choices has resulted in the situation we are in now. Being conscious of what is being sowed now, is the first choice every one of us can make.

Yes, chances would favor; luck strikes but not always.

Being aware of what we seek to experience in life, what skills are needed for such experience and what kind of attitude we need to develop, matters most. It applies to work, life and ourselves. It is necessary to have a constant watch on ourselves, where we are heading towards and what are we becoming in that process.

Energy and passion stem automatically when we start with the conviction that we are the designers of our life and nothing happens to us by itself except deteriorate. Once our route to the glory becomes clearer, we realize we have the biggest asset with us. That is our self.

Let's tap that power of choice to make us better each day. It can spare us from bitter feeling of having not lived the life fully when it all gets over.

SAMPLE

A PERSONAL LIFE STAGE

This section touches your personal life while you are working on your career life. At this juncture, you would be having ample time for yourself to identify your interests. Lesser responsibilities as a single person aids enough time to pursue your interest whole heartedly.

Utilize this time to read the biographies of people you respect and want learn from their example. Whoever may be your role model or hero; try understand why they are your role model and then try to develop those qualities in yourself.

Role model can give us direction for our thinking and to get inspired how they achieved their distinction. It can be a person next door, family member or a relative or even a public figure.

Arrive at what are the areas which you wish to focus and then spend time in learning at those areas. It can pay you a huge dividend. Don't do anything because you don't know what else to do. If somebody is doing something just don't copy, it may work for them and may not be for others. All your interests are going to make sense to you over a period of time, it can make a dot in the circle of your life.

Ensure you have limited number of interest so that something concrete can be achieved in that area. At a higher level one may need to choose between 1 or 2, giving up the good for best.

Spending time for entertainment should be a way of learning in that area. Change of work is rest as told by Arthur Canon. Soon one realize this aspect, one can get maximum out of his or her life.

ACTION EXERCISE

A Typical Day

- Get up before sunrise. Do 30 minutes exercise and 30 minutes meditation. It helps more than any other things.
- Close a day by 22:00. Dinner preferably before 19.30.
- Segment your day for work, food and rest.
- Staying physically fit and being mentally alert is first step to achieve more in 24 hours that everybody has.

Learning Areas

- Networks with people. Stay in the group of positive people.
- Check out employment bureaus, HR consultants & Training with placement opportunities.
- Start small, with where you are and what you have.
- Consider to learn an additional language which can help to connect with more people on business.
- Identify your interest areas. Taking action in the direction of your goals. It relieves the worry and stress of not getting things done.

PART II

JUNIOR MANAGEMENT

FOCUS AREA

You are now recruited for a job in a corporate. You are part of junior management with age group between 20 – 30 years.

This stage of life is interesting, since you are now leading an independent life, with lots of hope, enthusiasm and vigor. New things, new places, new foods and new people will be of interest. Any entertainment which is adding value on learnings or on hobbies can be pursued immensely.

If you are one of those who don't know 'what else to do', entertainment or passing of time with what others usually do, then exercise caution immediately to avoid falling into that bracket.

While on job, you tend to pick up your own way of comparing with peers. Their designation, income and percentage of increment received, vehicle they own etc. While comparing can breed a healthy competition, it seldom happens if we are not cautious enough. If you really want to compare, then do it on the net worth of the individual. Also on the potential he or she is displaying now which can accelerate their growth in future.

This helps immensely to turn your focus inwards. All outside successes are result of inside successes. If you don't learn to take things objectively you resent others progress and bitterness which comes out of it spoils your positivity more than anything else.

Best way to understand the compensation package is that, it will be equaling to the value you add to your organization. Practicality may differ. However on an average this formulae works well and help to reassert on what worth of value we are adding each day to our organization.

Let's focus now on how to get best out of your junior management period.

| 2 |

ALIGNMENT

Well begun is half done – Aristotle

Fresher Days

She waved her hand to a few colleagues who have recently joined from same college through campus recruitment.

All of them were attired in new clothes were rejoicing and had success looks and some even tried business wares of white and black combination. Whole world was a good place to be at, as their struggles had paid off. Almost each celebrated their success in their own ways for couple of days stretching to couple of months.

Nothing wrong, you deserve.

Roughly, after 6 - 8 months, their faces were dull, they looked weathered and exhausted. They still had a dream job and a great career ahead.

They were exhausted with travel to office which takes almost 2- 3 hours a day, like in most of the metros of India.

They were being trained with multiple skills required to work and waiting for a project.

In technical words they were on *bench*, waiting for work while developing themselves fit for different work areas and multiple programming languages.

They started comparing themselves with people who were on project assignments. Believing that those with projects have better chance to learn with the accelerated speed and thus their progress in career can be faster.

Anticipating an infinite amount of time on *bench*, most are turning negative themselves in a seemingly positive environment of garden, fountains and food courts. Comparison has begun even before the career taking its right shape. You will know how this factor alone contributes much of the job dissatisfaction in the coming years if you are not alert.

People who are dissatisfied will start discussing those things. Negativity broods company. Repeatedly hearing those discussions can bring down the spirit of positivity about future.

It may also be noted, few aspirants continue to stay on *bench*, expecting a better project assignment and giving up the projects which may be at their discretion to join. While waiting has both pros and cons, depends on how well you utilized that period.

Usually real learning begins on the job. However well we were trained on a subject practicality always matters. Hence starting early hands on job works good in long run.

PART III

MIDDLE MANAGEMENT

Focus Area

This section discusses about what one has to focus to learn as part of middle management career. Typical age groups 30 – 40 years.

As one progresses towards middle management focus has to become two-fold. Earlier it was to take care of his career shaping. Now along with it one has to have the ability to give directions to others. To retain talents and align them towards goal of the project and organization.

Not all prefer managing people as part of their career growth. Some may prefer to stick to core technology area and move towards path of technical solution design, architecture and specializing with certain technological areas or products. Their main focus would be to give technical direction while designing a multilevel solution for business needs.

Whoever wishes to handle a team of people be technical or functional experts; skill to handle a team is essential. It is a learnable skill. First level of leading others will always start with the ability to leading one self.

Middle management career puts you a strong hold on business and people. It prepares you rightly for next level of management, provided you are interested in that. Most of the folks may not wish to take up the challenges of senior management. They feel their focus is needed at personal life. Sometime being contended with the progress they have achieved in terms of career responsibilities.

Clear understanding of self as an individual, building on the strengths gained so far and being open enough to learn. These qualities helps to identify the avenue for a unique contribution, which only you can make. It is a royal road for a fulfilling career and job satisfaction.

Let's go through those ideas.

| 6 |

LEADING TEAMS

*I have learned silence from the talkative,
tolerance from the intolerant and kindness
from the unkind; yet, strange, I am ungrateful
to those teachers - Khalil Gibran*

Team Spirit

While one has been leading him or herself successfully for quite some time then he or she is fit to lead others.

Lot of people are eager to go to next level of their profession without being prepared enough for it. They think they are fit because of a few past successes, it does not make one complete. One has to go through enough failures too; then the generosity required at higher level comes naturally. Such person can avoid inter team conflicts easily and can become role model to their juniors. I suggest one take to a deeper thinking on this aspect.

To be successful in a career, regardless of title or position, focus on developing leadership skills. It is not the position which makes one leader, it's not even the good intension of leading. It's about actions what you are doing and not doing defines you as a leader. Leading means ability to give direction to teams work. Ability to forecast the time and efforts required to complete a task, a basic skill. It requires *big picture* thinking of where all it affects and on how to scale up team in coming quarters. We will learn more of it as go we further.

Team Work

Together everyone achieves more. Team can be a set of people working towards a common goal. When different people come into a project, they are there for different reasons. Their primary focus would be nature of work, alignment with their personal aspirations etc.

As a leader, one should be able to build a team which is based on trust and mutual respect. Trust on team spirit, individual capabilities and respect for all members. If you have developed yourself enough then you would able to give directions to people who are working with you. Their perception about you and your way of working contributes to their job satisfaction.

Most of the managers look at their own senior managers and how to satisfy them so that their career growth is ensured. This approach is not leadership but narrow individualistic focus.

You start putting different skilled people together in a project. This would be as per the requirements of what solution going to be built. Skills are easy to acquire, whereas developing right attitude takes time and effort. And as a leader it is your responsibility to give direction to your team.

Here are a few pointers towards building a team based on trust and mutual respect.

FINANCIAL FREEDOM

A man in debt is like an empty bag; neither of them can sit upright - unknown

Why Freedom

Why discussion on financial freedom in a book on career, we will soon understand by going through this chapter.

As one develops towards leadership, I have observed lot of people don't show up because of the feeling they carry towards job security. With false thinking of job security they forgo the financial security. Which one can earn themselves if they employ their time and efforts in the right direction. A job is a temporary solution for a longer range problem.

Any limiting belief should be overcome as we move towards authentic leadership. Having sufficient financial resources at our disposal and self-restrained life style can give tremendous scope towards individual's growth.

Being financially free makes us fit to be undisturbed from money

and career pressure. It makes us start working towards our real passion and start thinking about contribution to society with the skills acquired. Once the financial goals are met we will have ample time to focus on our non-financial goals in life.

Hence this chapter proves important.

Without being free from if's and but's of life, we are not able to express ourselves freely. A sense of freedom from money thinking has to be developed consciously. As long as we see money as a mode of fulfilling our needs, then we master it. Needs vary according to lifestyle of individuals. As we grow in career, we need to know how to employ money in right ways, so that it works for us. While we work towards our passion.

I have observed that while our career gives a lot opportunities to learn and grow, it is actually at the expense of our time. Moreover, it does not guarantee that one can become rich. Answer lies in financial education. Financial education has to be pursued by individual, since it is not taught in our academic syllabus.

When we become financially independent our progress in the outer world skyrockets. We will not hesitate sharing what is right. Nor we depend on somebody's opinion about us. We carry higher self-respect and self-worth in our eyes and that reflects in our voice, tone, walk and even in the way we look at things.

This can happen when we make money in right way. Otherwise same money can make us behave timid, double minded or double faced. How we earn our money matters most. A financially free person will be able to understand how this world functions holistically and to lead a unperturbed life. Which is worth striving for.

PART IV
SENIOR MANAGEMENT

FOCUS AREA

This section discusses about the skills and mindset required at senior management level. Typical age will be 40 years and above.

You have travelled far in your career and life. You have learnt by experience what works with you, because you have observed the pattern repeatedly.

You may wish to take career further in the corporate ladder and move into strategic planning team, CXO level positions if that thrills you still. Nothing wrong.

As progress in corporate happens you find it is pyramid shaped. Only few positions are there in the top floor, while shop floor can accommodate more because mostly it is a skill based repetitive works.

At senior management one is expected to be best of the breed. He should be able to sense where the industry is heading towards and know how to align to get the first mover advantage. Decisions here, can make or break the resources accumulated.

If you can define where industry moves or even give direction, then you are an exceptional business leader that makes you high in demand among the peer circles. You would be treated as an industry expert.

Lot of people deviate here because they understand what they really want in life and what can provide lasting satisfaction for having lead life fully.

This section focuses on both the aspects. Giving a gist of the skills needed here, having edge with technical, people and entrepreneur ship mindset and as well as on mindset shift required as great giver to the society.

Let's go through the ideas here.

THE BIG PICTURE

*At the age of fifty I knew where is my destiny
– Confucius.*

Think BIG

Big picture thinking is about having all the aspects taken care including business, region, legal advantages and people or even more. Over period of time one find it becomes natural thinking, but to begin with we may have to consciously cultivate it.

People start thinking to get the best out of the investment and from the business ideas. To suite such thinking one may look out for the opportunities available in his or her interest's direction in terms of supporting government policies, exchange advantage, labor costs and many more things.

This is essential to lead from the strategic point of view. Because you are setting up a big enterprise or new business idea on a platform which is set for success. Taking advantage of inner circle people, reputation you carry within the industry and in public domain helps a lot to get right investors contacts.

Your innovative ideas, creativeness is definitely an USP you carry along with your entrepreneur mind set. Whether its running a role in corporate or being on your own. It matters.

A Shared Vision

While arriving at business model, what matters most is the right team. Who have completely understand each other's interests and strengths.

This initial founder team understanding only can make the flight stronger. Making a business plan with a horizon of 3 – 5 years view is a must. Ability to arrive at and review each aspect of the business is very crucial. Lot of time should be spent on brain storming, getting expert opinions, arriving at a shared vision where everyone feels connected is most important.

If team is not connected, then individuals interest becomes paramount over the vision. We can see when individuals interest is more than the vision of the company, then the entire business case is a failure, however well it is articulated.

It is always vision which keeps people together. It enables new talents who aspires to be a part of such vision possible. Vision of making money is a poor vision. Money should be an outcome of adding value to the customers. So that team strives for customer satisfaction while money part is taken care in itself.

If any of the founder member not aligned to the core value and vision of the company still he or she can be used as consultant because of his or her skills for a certain period of time. Keeping individual interests above the vision of the organization usually ends with short growth.

Good thing I have observed in a shared goal is, when one of the stakeholders takes time away for any personal reasons, venture can still continue without much disturbances. Whereas if there is no shared goal, people are bound to wait for orders and they don't tend to be proactive by nature.

LIVING THE LEGACY

Always be ready to speak your mind and a base man will avoid you. — William Blake

A Legend

If you have come to this chapter and think this is too much to strive for. Yes it is. Living a life of achievement, contribution and fulfilment takes time and ardent efforts. If it is easier then every one of us would have achieved it. Everyone is capable, provided we have taken time to correct, refocus and develop ourselves on the move.

Leadership development can start with our ability to accept when we are wrong. A journey of leadership never ends, because you see lessons will always come to refine you from different corners. What is important, is that journey already has started?

While you grow from campus to corporate, the journey depicted here may sounds easy and simple. Answer is YES only because you had a right mindset coupled with dedicated, focused efforts and willing to correct yourself. It puts you across an edge over others. Otherwise answer is NO.

A PERSONAL LIFE STAGE

This section describes your personal life while you are busy with your senior management responsibilities.

You now have teenage children who wish to conquer the world because they have seen their parents were able to do it best of the way. Ensuring they get right mentoring and direction from you or your mentor is a responsibility at this stage.

I have observed two points. Parents have built an empire but children want to pursue a normal life. They don't find a management role in the organization as colorful. They enjoy the freshness of joining a vibrant job.

Second point is more important to know, that your children stick with you because of what you are and not because what you have or what they can get out of you.

Development of leadership takes time and one should allow it to naturally grow by providing the necessary inputs in a timely manner.

ACTION EXERCISE

A Typical Day

- You are surrounded by people who respect you for what you are and not because of what you have.
- You are constantly in touch with your mentors and executive life coaches. It gives access to those knowledge which most of the senior leadership across the world practices at present.
- You have allocated specific time in your daily schedule to think deeply where you are heading to and what you are becoming, both in business and as human.

Learning Areas

- Read two books every week. Start with book summary of those books and then get into details. It can save time yet keep yourself updated.
- Strict regime on food and exercise. As a person of knowledge and wisdom, you need to care for your longevity, so that you can give back more.
- Any emotional outbursts causes more harm than the physical exertion and you know that well.
- Spending longer time with self can give lot of insights which can be implemented in business.
- You understand that he who gives more receives more.
- You have learnt to align with the order of nature, than forcing your individual interests.



MEET THE AUTHOR

Naveen Chandra comes with Information Technology background and has closely observed the changes, competitiveness, its effect on people, career and the general mindset towards professional and personal life.

Hailing from Mysore, Karnataka, India, is an alumnus of SJCE, Mysore and TAPMI, Bangalore. He has been actively involved in developing individuals and teams towards leadership through innovative trainings relevant to 21st century.

Mr. Chandra does so in a friendly, energized and hit to the point approach that inspires audience for lasting actions. Over the years, he has developed the ability to cut through the clutter which keeps most away from their heart's pursuit. His strategies are well defined, action oriented and reliable. He has worked successfully with individuals, teams, corporate leaders for better coherence and performance.

He strongly believes in making a difference to lives of others with the approach of *live by heart!*

www.naveenchandra.in

CAMPUS TO CORPORATE

If you are looking for a career in the information technology industry, this book gives an overview of the life ahead. A career guide helps you in whatever stage of it.

- Provides the practical career directions needed.
- Concise enough to suit today's fast life reader. Gives the essence.
- People who are beginning, those who have begun corporate career and who are already making very best at it, each of them has a piece of cake reserved.
- Prepares for the opportunities at hand, addresses the challenges, transforms thinking and subtly gears up the mindset required for next level of achievement.
- If you know the destination and understand how to reach there quickly, journey itself can be enjoyable and much rewarding.

Indian IT industry is focused as an example. Ideas discussed here can also help any industry where people are primary inputs. Book helps for organic career growth and to reap human potential fully.

REVIEWS

- With the approaches discussed in the book, one can make to top right way taking complete responsibilities on himself. Helps to get best out of career and life. - Surendran.J - Founder & CEO - Success Gyan - India's Largest Organizers of Seminars.
- Living by values, knowing our passion, having a vision is what makes ones journey meaningful. A kick-start to a successful and fulfilling career. I highly recommend this book. Go grab a copy today!
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AUTHOR

Naveen Chandra, comes with IT background. He has closely observed the changes, competition, its effect on people, career and the overall mindset towards work life.

Hailing from Mysore, India, is an alumnus of SJCE and TAPMI. He has been actively involved in developing teams and individuals towards leadership via innovative training relevant to 21st century.

In this classical approach to career, he talks about the blockers, pitfalls, escalators and the way forward. Shares his view on how a right career approach can make any graduate to turn into a successful individual.

He believes readers can save ten years of career effort by applying ideas shared in this book.



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