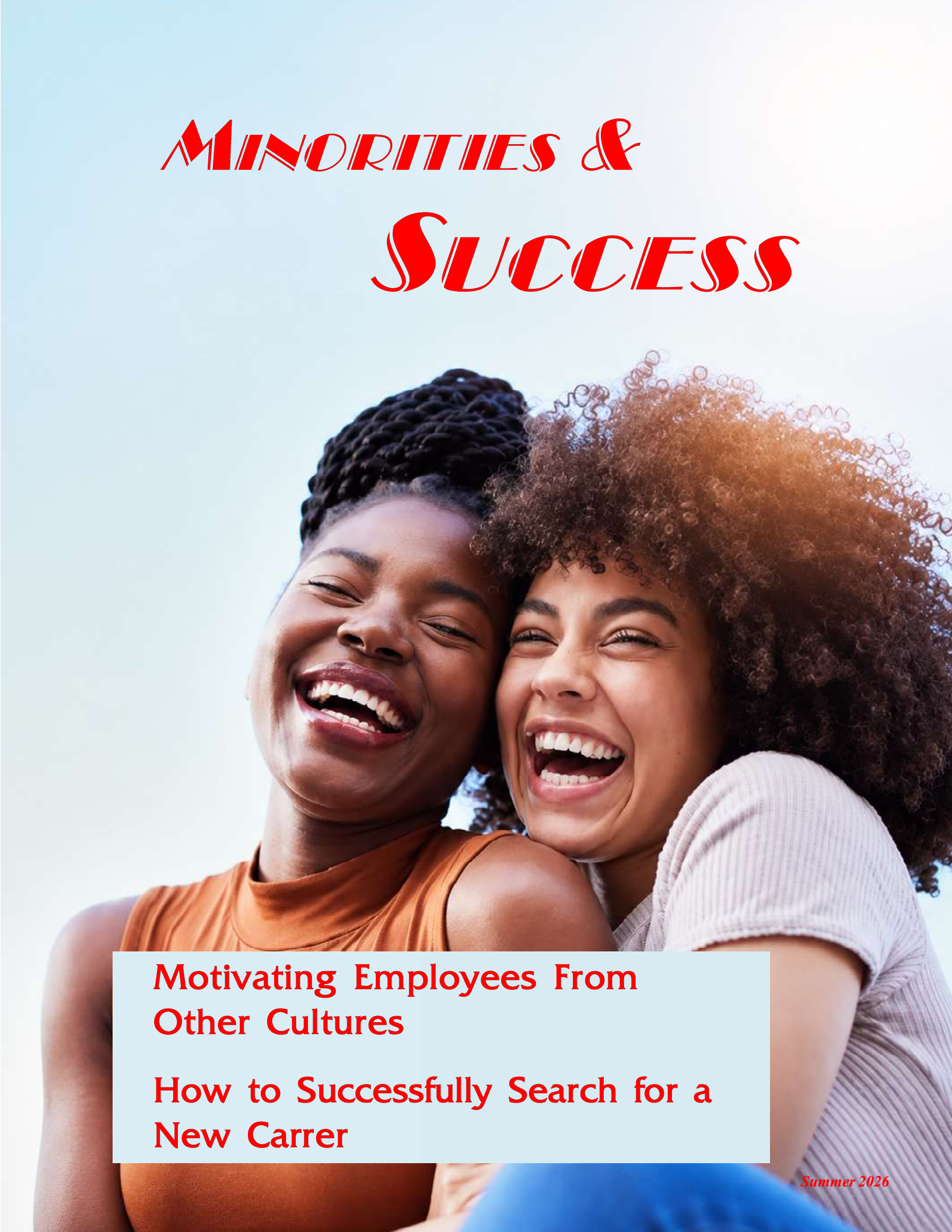


MINORITIES & SUCCESS

A photograph of two young women of African descent laughing heartily. The woman on the left has her hair in braids and is wearing an orange tank top. The woman on the right has a large, curly afro and is wearing a light-colored striped shirt. They are both smiling broadly, showing their teeth. The background is a bright, clear sky with a soft lens flare effect on the right side.

**Motivating Employees From
Other Cultures**

**How to Successfully Search for a
New Career**

Summer 2026

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A Few Thoughts:

Summer is more than a season for vacations—it's an opportunity to pause, reflect and prepare for what's next. Whether you're considering a career change, planning to start a consulting business, returning to school or helping a student prepare for life after graduation, success rarely happens by accident. The most successful people take time to evaluate their goals, strengthen their skills and create a plan before making their next move. As the workplace continues to evolve with advances in technology and artificial intelligence, lifelong learning and adaptability have become more important than ever.

One theme connects all of the articles in this issue: preparation creates opportunity. Degrees alone no longer guarantee success, and experience alone isn't enough to stay competitive. Building relationships, developing new skills, embracing technology and being willing to step outside your comfort zone are what open new doors. My two cents? Don't wait for the "perfect" time to begin. Use this summer to learn something new, expand your network or take the first step toward a career or business you've always wanted. Small actions taken today can create opportunities that shape your future tomorrow.

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<http://minoritysuccess.us>

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admin@minoritysuccess.us

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Motivating Employees from Other Cultures

Differences in cultural values require extra skill when attempting to motivate changes in behavior. Managers need to accurately interpret the situation and design a strategy that fits an individual's values and needs. This process is fairly straightforward when working with people of similar backgrounds, but is much more difficult when attempting to understand and motivate employees whose values and backgrounds may be different from your own.

The three steps listed below will help you design motivation strategies that

are culturally-aware and, therefore, useful in your efforts to maintain a harmonious and productive multicultural workplace.

Get an Accurate Interpretation

Effective behavior change begins with accurately interpreting why an individual is involved in undesired behavior. Understanding why a person behaves in a particular way makes it easier to modify that behavior. For example, it is common for managers to misinterpret the speaking of a foreign language in the workplace as a sign of laziness, rudeness and disrespect. In

fact, most often, using another language is an effort to communicate a job-related message accurately, a sign of extreme stress or fatigue or an effort to speed up the communication process.

You might be wondering, "How can I possibly know enough about cultural differences to accurately interpret all the different behaviors I may encounter?" The answer is simple: Ask. Ask the employee why he is late for work or why he failed to get the job done on time. If you do so with respect, you gather valuable and accurate information that will help

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you motivate the change you desire.

Set Expectations

Explain your expectations in a way that can be understood by someone who was not raised in US culture. You would be surprised how often employers and managers fail to explain what they want and why they want it. Immigrant workers are rarely formally instructed in the values of US culture and even less often in the desires of US management.

Explaining what we want from others is not easy. Often, the most familiar procedures, policies and expectations are the most difficult to articulate. One example is the need for team members to voice their problems and complaints. A noncomplaining staff could be a hindrance, because you do not have the information you need to solve

problems.

Many immigrants have a great deal of respect for their managers and feel it is inappropriate or a sign of disloyalty to complain. Your employees will never know what is expected of them until you take the time to spell out that you need to know about problems to do your job well and that a good employee brings difficulties to the manager's attention.

Offer Positive Reinforcement

Reinforce desired behavior. Most of the time, this is simple. Notice that workers are doing what you want and praise them for it. When it comes to motivation across cultural boundaries, however, this step becomes a bit tricky.

Behaviors such as expressing problems or admitting lack of understanding can be difficult to

reinforce because there is the temptation to shoot the messenger. It is understandably difficult for managers to praise the worker who arrives bearing news of a missed deadline or a broken piece of equipment. Even though it isn't easy, try to distance yourself from the problem long enough to praise the staff member for keeping you informed and to encourage him to continue to do so.

Another problem with reinforcement is the danger of taking certain behaviors for granted. US managers, for example, may not realize how difficult it is for non-English speakers to consistently speak English in the workplace and will, therefore, fail to compliment them on that effort. Try to be aware of behaviors that are easy for you but may be difficult for others. People are different, but they all respond to kind words and thoughtful praise.

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A Timeline of Women in the U.S. Military: Breaking Barriers and Shaping History

Women have served America since the nation's founding, often overcoming legal barriers and cultural expectations to answer the call to serve. From the Revolutionary War to today's military, women have proven their courage, leadership and commitment in every branch of the Armed Forces. Over the past decade, historic policy changes have opened every military occupation—including combat roles—to qualified women, allowing them to serve at every level of command.

Below are some of the milestones

that have shaped the history of women in the U.S. military.

1775–1783 – Revolutionary War

Women support the Continental Army as nurses, cooks, laundresses and spies. Some disguise themselves as men to fight alongside soldiers. “Agent 355” becomes one of the most famous members of George Washington’s spy network.

1782–1783

Deborah Sampson serves for 17 months in the Continental Army

disguised as “Robert Shurtleff” before her identity is discovered after she is wounded.

1846–1848 – Mexican-American War

Elizabeth Newcom serves in the Missouri Volunteer Infantry under the name “Bill Newcom.”

1861–1865 – Civil War

Thousands of women serve as nurses, administrators, spies and disguised soldiers. Dr. Mary Edwards Walker becomes the first—

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and still the only—woman awarded the Medal of Honor.

1866

Cathay Williams becomes the first documented African American woman to enlist in the U.S. Army, serving as a Buffalo Soldier under the name “William Cathay.”

1898 – Spanish-American War

Approximately 1,500 civilian women serve in Army hospitals while others work as nurses, clerks and support personnel.

1901

Congress establishes the **Army Nurse Corps**.

1908

Congress establishes the **Navy Nurse Corps**.

1917–1918 – World War I

More than 30,000 women serve as nurses, clerks and support personnel. Hundreds receive military honors, and many lose their lives while serving.

1941–1945 – World War II

More than **350,000 women** serve in the armed forces through organizations such as the Women’s Army Corps (WAC), WAVES, Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASP), Marine Corps Women’s Reserve and Coast Guard SPARS. Women work as pilots, mechanics, code breakers, intelligence specialists, nurses and administrators.

1948

Congress passes the **Women’s Armed Services Integration Act**, allowing women to become permanent members of the regular military during both peace and wartime.

1950–1953 – Korean War

Approximately 120,000 women serve, many providing lifesaving medical care close to combat zones.

1962–1973 – Vietnam War

More than 11,000 military women serve in Vietnam, the vast majority as nurses. Commander Elizabeth Barrett becomes one of the first women to command in a combat zone.

1976

Women are admitted to four U.S. service academies: West Point, the Naval Academy, the Air Force Academy and the Coast Guard Academy.

1978

Women begin serving aboard non-combat Navy ships.

1991 – Operation Desert Storm

More than 40,000 women deploy to the Persian Gulf, demonstrating that women can successfully serve in large-scale military operations.

1993

Congress authorizes women to fly combat aircraft and serve aboard combat ships.

1994

The Department of Defense maintains restrictions on women serving in direct ground combat units.

1998

Captain Kathleen McGrath becomes the first woman to command a U.S. Navy warship. Female fighter pilots also fly combat missions over Iraq.

2003–2011

Women serve extensively in Iraq and Afghanistan, often operating in combat conditions despite official restrictions. Female Engagement Teams and Cultural Support Teams are established to work with local populations during military operations.

2005

Sergeant Leigh Ann Hester becomes the first woman since World War II to receive the **Silver Star** for direct combat actions.

2008

General Ann Dunwoody becomes the first woman in U.S. military history to achieve the rank of **four-star general**.

2010

The Navy opens submarine service to women.

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2013

The Department of Defense announces the end of the military's combat exclusion policy, beginning the process of opening all military occupations to qualified women.

2015

Captain Kristen Griest, Major Lisa Jaster and First Lieutenant Shaye Haver become the first women to graduate from the Army's prestigious Ranger School.

2016

All military occupations, including combat positions, officially open to qualified women. Air Force General Lori Robinson becomes the first woman to lead a Unified Combatant Command.

2017

The first female Marines graduate

from the Marine Corps Infantry Officer Course and infantry training, marking another historic milestone in combat integration.

2019

The first women graduate from the U.S. Army's Special Forces Assessment and Selection process, expanding opportunities within elite military career fields.

2020

The Space Force is established as the nation's newest military branch, with women serving from its inception in leadership, operations and technical roles.

2021

The Army establishes updated physical fitness standards designed to better reflect combat readiness while maintaining equal occupational

standards for all qualified service members.

2022

Women continue expanding into leadership roles across every military branch. Thousands now serve in combat arms, aviation, special operations support and senior command positions.

2023

The Department of Defense reports that women make up approximately **18% of the active-duty force**, with increasing representation among senior officers, pilots, engineers, cyber specialists and enlisted leaders.

2024–2026

Women continue breaking barriers across every branch of the Armed Forces. They command major military installations, lead operational units

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around the world, serve aboard submarines and aircraft carriers, fly combat missions and hold senior leadership positions in cyber, intelligence, logistics, aviation and space operations. As recruitment, retention and leadership development remain priorities, women play an increasingly vital role in maintaining the readiness and strength of America's all-volunteer military.

Looking Ahead

The story of women in the U.S. military is still being written. As technology transforms modern warfare through artificial intelligence, cyber defense, autonomous systems, and space operations, new opportunities continue to emerge for talented service members regardless of gender. Women are increasingly leading critical missions in these rapidly evolving fields while mentoring the next generation of military leaders.

Although significant progress has been made, challenges such as recruitment, retention, leadership representation, and ensuring equal opportunities remain important priorities. The achievements of America's servicewomen demonstrate that expanding opportunities strengthens the military as a whole. Their service, sacrifice, and leadership continue to shape a more capable, innovative, and inclusive armed force prepared to meet the challenges of the future.

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Starting a Successful Consulting Business in Today's Marketplace

Starting your own consulting business remains one of the most rewarding career paths for experienced professionals. Whether you're leaving corporate America, transitioning after retirement, or turning years of expertise into a new venture, consulting offers the opportunity to build a business around your knowledge rather than a product. However, success rarely happens overnight. Today's consultants face a competitive marketplace where clients expect specialized expertise, measurable

results and a strong professional presence.

Many people enter consulting after a layoff or career change, believing that years of experience alone will bring clients to their door.

Unfortunately, that is rarely the case. While technical knowledge is essential, building a successful consulting practice requires planning, marketing, financial discipline and a commitment to continuous learning. The good news is that with the right strategy,

consulting can provide both professional satisfaction and financial independence.

Be Prepared to Build a Business

One of the biggest surprises for new consultants is realizing that consulting is only part of the job. Running your own business means wearing many hats—business development, marketing, accounting, customer service and project management. Unlike a traditional job, no one hands you assignments. You

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are responsible for finding clients, delivering outstanding work and maintaining relationships that generate repeat business and referrals.

Successful consultants develop routines that keep their businesses moving forward every day. Time spent networking, writing proposals, improving skills and following up with prospects is just as important as time spent serving clients.

Establish Your Expertise

Clients hire consultants because they are looking for specialized knowledge and practical solutions. Rather than trying to be everything to everyone, focus on becoming known for solving a specific type of problem within a particular industry.

Today's consultants have more opportunities than ever to demonstrate expertise. Publishing articles, speaking at conferences, participating in webinars, appearing on podcasts and sharing valuable content on professional platforms such as LinkedIn all help build credibility. Artificial intelligence can also help consultants create presentations, analyze data, develop reports and streamline research, allowing them to spend more time serving clients and developing business relationships.

Build Relationships, Not Just Contacts

Networking remains one of the most effective ways to grow a consulting business, but successful networking is about building genuine relationships rather than simply collecting business cards. Attend industry events, join professional associations and stay connected with former colleagues and clients. Many consulting engagements come through referrals from people who already know and trust your work.

Equally important is maintaining those relationships over time. Regular communication, sharing useful information and checking in with past clients can often lead to repeat engagements long after a project has ended.

Understand the Business Side

Even experienced professionals sometimes underestimate the financial responsibilities of running a consulting business. Beyond delivering quality work, consultants must understand taxes, insurance, contracts, pricing strategies, cash flow and business expenses. Working with a qualified accountant and attorney can help establish the proper business structure and avoid costly mistakes.

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Consultants should also maintain an emergency reserve because revenue can fluctuate from month to month. A strong financial plan allows you to invest confidently in marketing, technology and professional development while managing slower periods.

Develop a Business Plan

Every successful consulting business starts with a clear plan. Define your services, identify your target market, establish realistic income goals and develop a strategy for attracting clients. A business plan provides direction and helps you measure your progress as your company grows.

Build a Strong Professional Brand

Your reputation begins long before you meet a prospective client. A professional website, an active LinkedIn profile and consistent branding help establish credibility. Client testimonials, certifications and examples of your work can further demonstrate your expertise and build trust.

Focus on Client Satisfaction

Winning a client is only the first step. Long-term success comes from delivering quality work, communicating effectively and consistently exceeding expectations. Satisfied clients often become repeat customers and provide referrals, making your reputation one of your greatest business assets.

Keep Learning and Adapting

The consulting industry continues to evolve as technology, regulations and client expectations change. Consultants who invest in continuing education, earn certifications and stay informed about industry trends remain more competitive than those who rely solely on past experience. Clients value advisors who bring fresh ideas and practical solutions to today's challenges.

Starting a consulting business requires discipline, persistence and patience. There will be setbacks along the way, but there will also be opportunities to build a career based on your knowledge, experience and passion. Success comes from consistently delivering value, building trust and treating your consulting practice like the business it is. Those who combine expertise with professionalism and a commitment to continuous improvement are well positioned to thrive in today's consulting marketplace.

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The 10 Keys to Success For Any Small Business

By Helaine Iris

As a life and business coach I have the privilege of working with groups of entrepreneurs as well as individuals to help them reach their business goals and potential. I'm about to launch an exciting business development program and it's my auspicious task to select up and coming, promising entrepreneurs to participate in this business growth and life changing program.

I realized that I had to come up with some sort of universal criteria, a filter if you will, to look at each business through. Then I could rate each business on its merits and make my

decisions. Sounds smart, but what should the criteria be?

After much pondering, consulting my favorite business books and yakking with one of my business mentors, the light bulb went off - any criteria I would use to select participants for this program would also be valuable to entrepreneurs for the purpose of evaluating their start-up or ongoing business' success potential.

So, here's my top 10 list of how best to assess your own business:

1. Why are you passionate about this

business? Connect with your passion for your business, your product, or both. It takes tons of energy to start or build a business. Articulating why you want to do it, and reminding yourself frequently will help you weather the natural ups and downs. Is connecting with people what your passionate about? Creating beauty? Empowering children? Passion's the fuel that keeps the entrepreneurial engine burning. Ignite it.

2. If your business didn't exist, how would the world be worse off? I love this question; it's from Guy

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Kawasaki, author of *The Art Of The Start*. Although the question is related to passion, it really points to meaning. In my experience, a sense of meaning is the most powerful motivator out there - certainly above money, power and fame. Do you want to make the world a better place? Create sustainability for the next generation? Assure the continuance of culture? Once you declare the meaning or purpose of your business, you become unstoppable, magnetic and highly motivated to succeed.

3. What's the need in the marketplace your product or service fills? Who is your customer and what problem is your product designed to solve? If you can't answer this question, you probably don't have a viable business. Obviously, commerce is based on the demand of the consumer. It's all very well and good to have the best

quality widget this side of the Mississippi, but if it doesn't fill a need, or, better yet, create one, you're dead in the water. Find a niche and own it. Assess this honestly. Who absolutely needs your product and why?

4. What's remarkable about your product or service? Assuming you've articulated a consumer need in the marketplace, next you have to assess if your product or service is unique and marketable. What's special about your all-natural-animal-friendly soap compared to the thousand other all-natural-animal-friendly soaps out there? You need to determine how you will capture the segment of the market you'll target and if your product has a wide enough appeal to be profitable in a competitive and changing marketplace.

5. What's your business model? A business model is simply, the sales mechanism you have in place to assure

that money continues to flow to you (greater than your expenses, of course). For example, will your dynamic, fitness blog generate revenue, or do you have to set up an online membership service to build a base of qualified buyers? Will you sell your candles exclusively retail, or are you wholesaling through distributors as well? Make sure you can project a solid return on your investment. Bottom line, can you sell enough what-cha-ma-call-its to be profitable?

6. Have you been able to demonstrate revenue traction with your product? In other words, can your product sell to more than just your mother? Make sure to project sales revenue for at least the first three years of operation. If you've got an existing business, know your annual growth and how that measures to your industry standards.

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7. Do you have the resources needed: time, skills, support, and funding to make it happen? This is critical. I've seen more small business owners throw in the towel due to stress, personal frustration and overwhelm. It's your primary job as your business's caretaker to make sure your personal habits and foundations are strong. Cash flow challenges are inherent in most business operations; don't make it a business killer by failing to devise an adequate funding plan before you start. It takes money to make money. Get real about this and raise capital.

8. Where can you go when the need for additional capital arises? What if you can't get it? Building on the previous point, sometimes, even your best efforts don't materialize or you need to access additional funding to keep up with growth. Know what your options are before you hit crunch time. Make sure to have a network in place to access information, contacts, or that someone with deep enough pockets that believes in your dream. Be prepared as well to have a fall back plan in place. Have your business plan ready to present if you need to. It's not fun to be burning the midnight oil cranking out a business plan so you can apply for a bail out line of credit to make it through payroll.

9. What are the top three obstacles to reaching your goals and how will you overcome them? Thinking about what can go wrong is just as important as projecting a profitable future. This is where knowing your self as well as understanding the business climate is important. What will get in your way personally? Are you willing to ask for help? Is it your procrastination pattern, or fear of making sales calls? If so, you better take steps to handle that. Is it the eroding tourism market due to high fuel costs? If so, what will you do accommodate that reality? It's always wiser to face obstacles head on. Be on top of them before they're on top of you.

10. What's your personal commitment to your business? Saying you're committed to starting or building a business, or saying you're willing to do what ever it takes is different than actually doing it. Having a successful business takes action - clear and consistent action. If I had a dime for every time I heard a business owner say, "I know I should manage my time better, I know I should make ten calls a day, I know I should have a marketing plan..." I'd be a wealthier woman. Being committed means willingness to be outside your comfort zone for the good of a higher cause. Your business! Of course we all have strengths and weaknesses, you don't have to be good at everything. Know your self, step up to the plate, or delegate.

It's YOUR life...imagine the possibilities!

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Bridging Language Barriers in Today's Diverse Workplace

The United States is one of the most linguistically diverse countries in the world. According to recent U.S. Census Bureau data, about 22% of Americans age five and older speak a language other than English at home, representing tens of millions of people and hundreds of languages. In today's increasingly diverse workplaces, it is likely that many employees will work with colleagues who speak English as an additional language or whose accents may initially be unfamiliar. These differences do not have to become barriers to effective

communication.

Be Optimistic

When we hear an unfamiliar accent, we sometimes assume that the speaker does not understand English well. That assumption can be misleading. A person may have excellent vocabulary, grammar and reading skills while still speaking with a strong accent. Accent and language proficiency are not the same thing.

Instead of assuming there is a communication problem, approach the

conversation with patience and an open mind. Give the other person time to express an idea, and remember that communication is a shared responsibility.

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remember that communication is a shared responsibility.

Slow Down and Listen

If you have difficulty understanding a colleague, try speaking a little more slowly and clearly. Avoid interrupting or immediately assuming that you will not understand. Concentrate on the meaning of what the person is saying rather than focusing only on pronunciation.

If you do not understand, politely ask the person to repeat or explain the point. You can also confirm important information by saying, "Let me make sure I understood correctly." This simple step can prevent misunderstandings and demonstrates respect.

Avoid Slang and Unclear Expressions

Many people who learn English in a

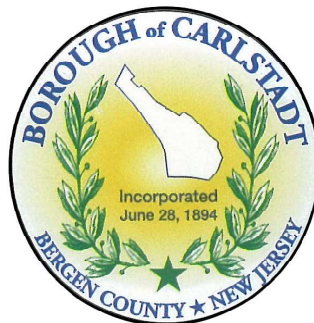
formal setting may understand professional English better than informal expressions, idioms or slang. Phrases such as "touch base," "on the same page" or "get the ball rolling" may not be immediately clear to someone unfamiliar with American expressions.

Use straightforward language, especially when discussing deadlines, safety procedures or important responsibilities. Instead of saying a task should be completed "soon," specify whether you mean today, tomorrow or next week. Clear communication benefits everyone—not only people who speak English as an additional language.

Use Technology Wisely

Translation apps, speech-to-text tools and artificial intelligence can now help people communicate across

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language barriers more quickly than ever. These tools can be useful for routine conversations, written communication and basic translation. However, they are not always accurate, particularly with technical terms, cultural expressions or sensitive information.

For important workplace matters—such as safety instructions, legal information, disciplinary issues or complex technical procedures—technology should support communication, not replace careful human review. When necessary, use qualified interpreters or reliable translation services.

Above all, create a culture of teamwork. If a colleague is making the effort to communicate in a second language, meeting that person halfway is a sign of professionalism and respect. Language differences should not

prevent talented people from contributing their knowledge and skills. With patience, clear communication and a willingness to listen, workplaces can turn linguistic diversity from a challenge into a strength.

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If you have difficulty understanding a colleague, try speaking a little more slowly and clearly. Avoid interrupting or immediately assuming that you will not understand. Concentrate on the meaning of what the person is saying rather than focusing only on pronunciation.

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Student Innovation and Creativity

By Bob Roth

Some college students can see things from a different angle or another point of view. They have the ability to see through the problems and find solutions, develop new ways of doing things and deal with the many challenges that stop others from moving forward or reaching the goal. People call them creative, original, insightful, inventive or innovative. Whatever you call them, they have a gift that should not be ignored.

Innovation and creativity are talents that will always be in demand.

Progressive and forward thinking

employers need employees who will take them into the future. However these talents can also be a double edged sword. Creativity and innovation result in change.

Unfortunately, not every employee and not every employer will embrace change. In fact, they may fear it and resist it. Change can be painful. It takes people out of their comfort zones and makes them learn new things and behave in new and different ways. Some people (all of us at one time or another) do not adjust very well.

Funny thing! When a change is

imposed on us, we often resist that change. However, when we are the ones recommending the change, we see it as good, necessary and helpful. Our own ideas usually seem better than the way things are currently being done. However, new employees must be careful not to badmouth the way things are being done. They may be insulting the person or people who designed that system or method.

Perceptions are important. You do not want to be perceived by your coworkers as an insensitive clod, smart aleck or know it all who tries to

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put other people down or make them look bad. Having your ideas accepted is far less difficult when the people around you like you and trust you. When you take the time to build good relationships first, any changes that you suggest will have a greater chance for acceptance.

To build trust with new employers, you should:

- Accept responsibility
- Admit and correct mistakes
- Prove that you are friendly and reliable
- Treat everyone with respect
- Look out for the best interests of others
- Help others when they need it
- Listen to the most respected people around you
- Recognize, appreciate and utilize the ideas and suggestions of others

It is important for you to understand that your idea may be creating a problem for someone else. When your good results come at the expense of others, you will hurt that relationship. Destroy enough relationships and you will find yourself out of a job.

Few jobs will allow someone to function in a vacuum. Employees are expected to cooperate and work together. Teamwork is valued. That means that individual ideas are blended together to achieve a team solution. However, other team members will recognize the value of your contributions.

“Few of us can be successful

unless the people around us make it possible.”

All of that should make it clear that innovation and creativity are important to your success both in college and after you graduate. While you are in college, you should look for opportunities to demonstrate your abilities. Employers will want to learn about the results that you achieved during the college years. When you can provide examples of the successes that were achieved because of your ability to create and innovate, they will believe that you can do the same for them.

Learn How to Successfully Search for a New Career

Are you tired of doing the same job every day? Do you wonder whether you could be happier and more fulfilled in a different career?

Changing careers can feel overwhelming, especially after years in one profession. But a career change does not mean starting over. Your existing knowledge, skills and experience can become valuable assets in a new direction.

Start With What You Enjoy

The first step is understanding what motivates you. Think about activities that energize you rather than drain you. Do you enjoy solving problems,

working with people, organizing information, creating things or leading others? Consider the projects and responsibilities that have given you the greatest sense of accomplishment. These clues can help identify the type of work that may be a good fit.

Assess Your Skills and Interests

Career assessments can help identify your strengths, interests, personality traits and potential career matches. They are useful starting points, especially if you are unsure which direction to take. However, don't let a test make the decision for you.

Combine the results with your own

experience and research to determine whether a career truly fits your abilities and goals.

Consider Your Lifestyle

A satisfying career must also fit the life you want. Consider income, job security, benefits, work-life balance and opportunities for advancement. Do you prefer working in an office, remotely or a combination of both? Would you rather have a predictable schedule or greater flexibility? Today's workplace offers options such as remote work, consulting and flexible schedules that can make career changes more achievable.

We Are Committed to Career Opportunities for All



730 South Main Street
Wilkes Barre, PA 18711-0376
www.wbasd.k12.pa.us

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SCHOOL DISTRICT
OF CUBA CITY

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Cuba City, WI 53807
www.cubacity.k12.wi.us

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Montross, VA 22520
www.wmlcps.org

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Talk to People in the Field

People already working in a career can provide valuable insight. Ask about their daily responsibilities, challenges, required skills and what they wish they had known before entering the field. Informational interviews are an excellent way to learn about a profession before investing significant time and money in education or training.

Test the Career Before You Commit

Whenever possible, try the work before making a major change. Take a course, volunteer, freelance, shadow a professional or pursue a temporary position. This allows you to experience the work firsthand. You may discover that you love it—or that your existing skills can transfer into the new field without requiring you to start completely over.

Build on the Experience You Already Have

One of the biggest mistakes career changers make is assuming they have to begin at the bottom. Your previous experience may be more valuable than you realize. Management, communication, organization, technology, problem-solving and leadership skills can transfer across industries. Look for careers where your previous experience gives you an advantage while allowing you to develop new skills.

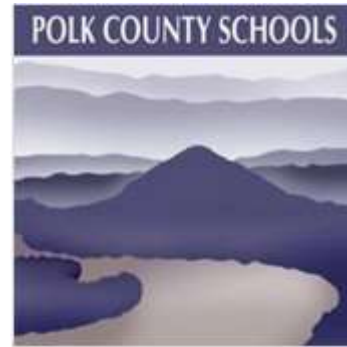
Make a Practical Plan

Once you identify a promising direction, determine what skills you already have and what you need to develop. Research employers, salaries and qualifications. Update your resume and professional profile to emphasize transferable skills and accomplishments. You may need additional education or certification, but don't underestimate the value of your previous experience, maturity and professional judgment.

Your Next Career Can Build on Your Past

Changing careers does not mean abandoning everything you have accomplished. Often, the best new career combines your previous experience with a new interest or skill. **A career change begins with curiosity but succeeds through research, preparation and action.** Explore your interests, talk to professionals, test your ideas and take small steps toward your goal. Your next career may not be a complete reinvention—it may simply be the next chapter of everything you have already learned.

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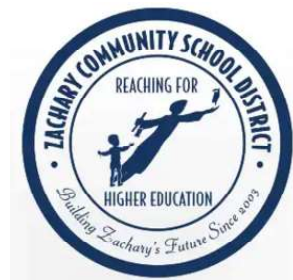


P.O. Box 665
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We Support The Hiring And Advancement Of All Minorities



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Zachary, LA 70791-3854
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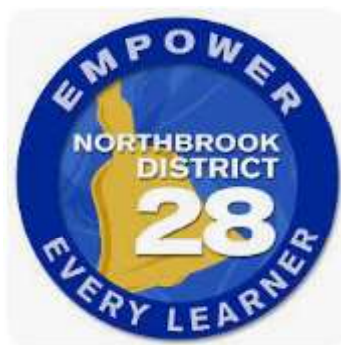
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6300 Shingle Creek Parkway Suite 286
Brooklyn Center, MN 55430
www.bccs286.org

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1475 Maple Avenue
Northbrook, IL 60062-5497
www.northbrook28.net

The School District shall provide equal employment opportunities to all persons regardless of their race, color, religion, creed, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, ancestry, marital status, arrest record, military status, order of protection status, unfavorable military discharge, citizenship status provided the individual is authorized to work in the United States, use of lawful products while not at work, being a victim of domestic or sexual violence, genetic information, physical or mental handicap or disability, if otherwise able to perform the essential functions of the job with reasonable accommodation, pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions, credit history, unless a satisfactory credit history is an established bona fide occupational requirement of a particular position, or other legally protected categories.

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Marana, AZ 85653-9609
www.maranausd.org

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Preparing for Career Success Begins in the Freshman Year

College students and their parents should understand that career success rarely begins during the final semester of senior year. The most successful job searches are built gradually through a series of decisions and experiences that begin early in college. Choosing the right field of study, gaining experience, developing professional skills and building relationships all take time. Waiting until graduation to begin can leave students competing against better-prepared candidates.

Today's job market is also changing rapidly. Employers increasingly look

beyond a degree and consider communication skills, technology, problem-solving ability, internships, work experience and adaptability. Artificial intelligence is changing many occupations, making it even more important for students to understand how technology affects their chosen career and to develop skills that complement—not compete with—new technologies.

1. Choose a Major With a Career in Mind

Students should begin exploring potential careers before or soon after

entering college. Instead of choosing a major simply because it sounds interesting, they should research the occupations it can lead to, the skills employers seek and the future outlook for those careers. Students should consider their interests and abilities while also examining employment opportunities, earning potential and opportunities for advancement.

A well-chosen major and minor can provide a foundation for the student's career goals. Students who change direction repeatedly without a clear plan may spend additional time and

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WHITERIVER UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

959 South Chief Avenue
P.O. Box 190
Whiteriver, AZ 85941-0190
www.wusd.us

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money in college and have less time to gain the experience employers value.

2. Take Grades Seriously

Academic performance still matters. Some employers use GPA as an initial screening tool, particularly for internships and entry-level positions. Strong grades can demonstrate discipline, commitment and the ability to learn.

At the same time, students should remember that grades are only one part of their professional profile. Employers increasingly want graduates who can apply what they have learned. Projects, internships, leadership activities and practical experience can help demonstrate those abilities.

3. Learn How the Job Search Works

Finding a job is a process, not an

event. Students should visit their college career services office during their freshman or sophomore year rather than waiting until graduation. They can learn how to write a resume, prepare for interviews, build a LinkedIn profile, network with employers and identify internship opportunities.

Students should also learn how employers recruit. Many opportunities are found through professional connections, career fairs, internships and direct communication with organizations—not simply by submitting online applications.

4. Build Experience Before Graduation

One of the strongest ways to stand out after graduation is to have experience before receiving a degree. Internships, part-time jobs, volunteer work, research projects, campus leadership and freelance assignments

can all provide valuable experience.

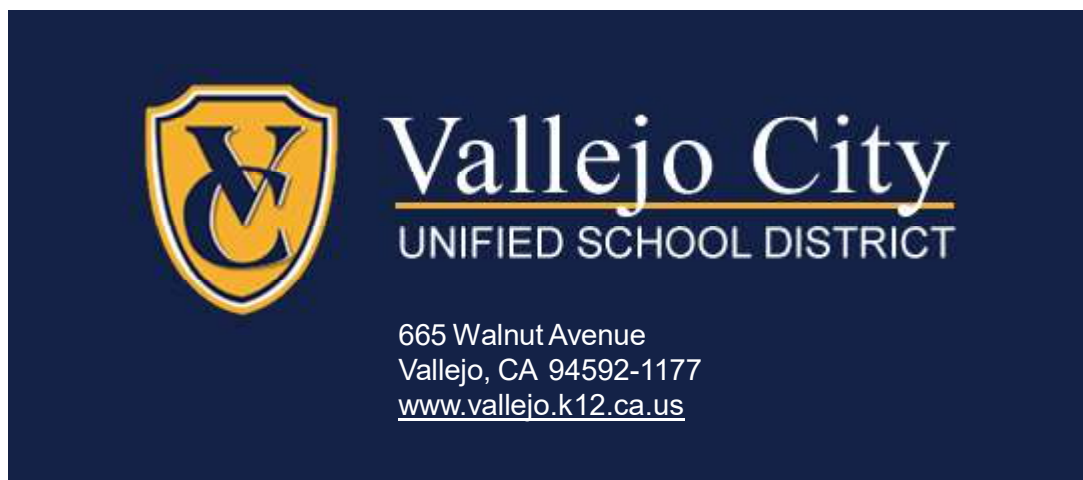
Students should look for opportunities that develop skills related to their career goals. An internship can also help students discover that a particular career is—or is not—the right fit before they commit to it permanently.

5. Develop a Professional Network

Networking should begin long before a student needs a job. Professors, alumni, internship supervisors, employers, professional associations and even classmates can become valuable professional contacts. Students should learn how to introduce themselves, ask thoughtful questions and maintain relationships.

Networking does not mean asking everyone for a job. It means building genuine professional relationships and learning from people who have

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**MONTEBELLO UNIFIED
SCHOOL DISTRICT**

123 South Montebello Boulevard
Montebello, CA 90640-4729
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experience in the field. Over time, those relationships can lead to advice, internships, interviews and opportunities that may never appear on a job board.

6. Learn to Use AI and Technology Wisely

Artificial intelligence is becoming an important part of many workplaces. Students should understand how AI is being used in their chosen profession and develop the ability to work effectively with new technologies. At the same time, they should not rely on AI to replace their own thinking, writing or judgment.

The strongest candidates will be those who combine technology skills with human abilities such as communication, creativity, critical thinking, leadership and problem-solving. Learning how to use AI responsibly can give students an advantage while maintaining the skills employers need.

***7. Choose a College That Supports Career
Development***

Parents and students should look beyond academic rankings when evaluating colleges. Strong career services, internship opportunities, employer relationships, alumni networks, mentoring programs and practical learning experiences can have a significant impact on career preparation.

The best colleges help students think about their careers from the beginning—not just during senior year. They provide guidance, resources and opportunities that help students move from the classroom into the workplace.

Start Early, Build Gradually

Career preparation should be viewed as a four-year process rather than a senior-year emergency. Freshman year is the time to explore; sophomore year is the time to build skills and relationships; junior year should focus on internships and professional experience; and senior year should bring those efforts together into a focused job search.

A college degree remains an important achievement, but a degree by itself does not guarantee employment. Students who combine education with experience, professional relationships, technology skills and early career planning will be better positioned to compete in an evolving job market. The best time to prepare for the first job after college is not senior year—it is the first year of college.

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CEDAR FALLS COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

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Cedar Falls, IA 50613-2299
www.cfschools.org

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ACTION PET

Concord Feed & Fuel, Inc.
228 Hookston Road
Pleasant Hill, CA 94523

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