



HR PRACTICES OF ULTRATECH CEMENT LIMITED: A CASE STUDY

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ABSTRACT

Objective: The primary goal of this study was to comprehend the notion of human resource practises and to compile a list of the numerous HR practises employed by UltraTech cement ltd. In addition, the research aimed to analyse the advantages, benefits, constraints, and disadvantages of their human resource practises.

Methodology: Secondary sources were investigated in order to generate a thorough evidence-based study of HR practises. The semi-systematic review employs a large number of published reports and articles from Springer, Taylor & Francis, Emerald, Srinivas Publications, Research Gate, SSRN, and other search engines like Google Scholar. As a result, in order to evaluate existing knowledge, the data analysed originates from secondary sources.

Findings: According to the findings, UltraTech cement ltd. emphasises employee value proposition and has a robust organisational structure that supports them in discovering and employing individuals. They also have effective HR practises in place, such as recruitment and selection, performance appraisal, a 360-degree feedback programme, and talent management, to increase staff productivity. They also provide various innovative HR practises such as Ideathon, Suggestion Mela, Learning and Development, and PraGaTi (Potential-Guidance-Talent) and Margdarshan, which have promoted active engagement of all workers for the company's success. Furthermore, they place a high value on human rights issues such as raising human rights awareness, ensuring good legal compliance, engaging stakeholders in human rights concerns, emphasising diversity, and promoting the freedom of all employees, among others.

Originality/value: HR practices adopted by UltraTech cement are very vital hence needs to be retained and encouraged by the other concerns to boost employee productivity and organisational long term growth. This study provides a quick glance over the various HR practices thereby encourages innovative HR practices.

Paper type: Case study

KEYWORDS: UltraTech Cement limited, HR Practices, Employee productivity, ABCD Listing.

1. INTRODUCTION

Human resource practises may assist identify and explain vital approaches to help people find happiness from their job, producing intrinsic drive and eventually allowing them to operate more effectively and possibly even creatively for the organisation, generating large profits [1]. According to the literature, human resources are one of the most important aspects of any business, and as such, they must be carefully managed. Appropriate HR practises must be created and implemented in order to achieve successful human resource management, which will eventually lead to improved organisational performance [2]. Companies in India are experiencing increased instability, volatility, and complexity, necessitating the adaptation of their strategy and HR activities as new realities develops. In this unstable climate, human resource (HR) activities in Indian enterprises have responded [3]. In tough liberalising business contexts such as India, the nature of HR requires that businesses build new skills, and HR's

duty is to assess current competences and establish new ones to aid in the broader strategic redesign of enterprises. A rising body of research has attempted to comprehend the developing function of HRM in the Indian setting [4-6]. Moreover, HR practises help to create a shared understanding and order inside the system. It is also a crucial aspect of a company's business strategy since people work for an organisation and the success of the enterprise is strongly dependent on how well and fairly they are treated. Furthermore, organisations must have a plan in place for developing, disseminating, and enforcing a set of rules and regulations that are legal and represent good employee behaviour. Good HR practises also enhance an organization's vision, purpose, and business strategy. It assists HR Professionals in delivering objectively at the operational level of the HR function [7]. With this regard, UltraTech claims that the Group's ongoing emphasis and investment in its people processes has enabled them to establish and retain a robust and agile workforce that is flexible and responsive at all times. As



corporations around the world are dealing with unprecedented phenomena known as The Great Resignation, their employee survey score for 'intent to stay' remained high. It is greater than for Global High-Performance Organizations and nearly comparable to pre-COVID levels. Their close bond demonstrates their unwavering dedication to provide a world of opportunity while caring for our personnel [8]. As a result this study is an attempt to understand the various HR practices implemented by UltraTech companies to critically analyse its advantages, benefits, constraints and disadvantages.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The human element ultimately determines an organization's success or failure. Moreover, both scholars and practitioners agree that as competition dynamics intensify, people may be the only really sustainable source of competitive advantage [9]. Human capital management, more than physical capital management, may be the ultimate driver of organisational performance and survival [10]. Human resources are undoubtedly an organization's most significant asset nowadays. With few exceptions, human resources represent an organization's single greatest potential asset as well as its single largest liability as it conducts its operations [11]. Concerning which research on HR practices in the continuous process industries have been listed and reviewed as follows;

Table 1: Related works on HR practices in continuous processing industry.

Sl. No	Area	Contribution	Authors
1	HR Practices at Aditya Birla Group	The paper contends that in tough liberalising business contexts such as India, the nature of HR itself necessitates the development of new skills, and that HR's responsibility is to assess current competences and establish new ones to aid in the broader strategic redesign of businesses. This article expands on some of the peculiarities and distinguishing features of HR practices unique to India, as well as some of the major external and internal factors that have shaped the attitudes, work systems, strategic and HR skills of Indian organisations in the context of the liberalised Indian environment.	Som, A. (2010). [12]
2	Green HRM	Using the theoretical foundation of RBV, this study investigates the impact of green HRM practices on sustainability (i.e., green analysis and job description, green recruiting, green selection, green raining, green performance assessment, and green incentives). According to the conclusions of the preceding debate, only green recruiting and green training will contribute to sustainability in the Malaysian manufacturing business.	Yong, J. Y., Yusliza, M. Y., Ramayah, T., Chiappetta Jabbour, C. J., Sehnem, S., & Mani, V. (2020) [13]
3	Innovative HRM practices	This article aimed to provide an understanding of some of the innovative HRM strategies and practices that have emerged as a result of functionally logical strategic initiatives in response to a hypercompetitive, complex, but opportunity-rich environment that has emerged as a result of India's economic liberalisation. These creative HRM methods and practices are not a random selection, but rather techniques that have generated excellence in performance and may be regarded "best" practices.	Som, A. (2006) [14]
4	Indian Cement Industry	The Indian cement business is becoming increasingly competitive in order to maintain profitability by lowering costs and decreasing waste, as well as to increase market share by enhancing the quality of the products and services given to customers. Here, the researcher(s) hope to present a soft TQM framework that will assist them in improving their 'return on investment' (ROI), which has been a source of contention.	Singh, T., & Dubey, R. (2013) [15]
5	HR policies in Indian Cement industries	As per this study majority of the employees were satisfied with various HR policies such as Human resource planning, recruitment and selection, training and development, performance appraisal, career advancement avenues, wages and salary structure, promotion and transfer, motivational measures, safety measures etc.	Kumar, K. K. (2009) [16]
6	HR Practices and employees satisfaction	The purpose of the study was to examine the influence of human resource management techniques (human resource planning, selection and appointment, incentives and motivation, training programs, and performance assessment) on employee work satisfaction at Jordan's Al-Rajhi cement mill. The study discovered a statistically significant influence on employee satisfaction at the Al-Rajhi cement factory for each of the following: human resource planning, selection and appointment, and training programs.	Al-Hawary, S. I. S., & Shdefat, F. A. (2016) [17]
7	Recruitment & Selection Process	Recruitment and selection are critical in every firm. The study found that the recruiting and selection processes in three businesses were effective. The HR managers of the selected sectors must concentrate on finding the suitable people through alternative channels such as campus placements, job.com, data banks, and so on. The candidate's skills, knowledge, and abilities that are highly demanded for the vacancies in specified sectors are evaluated.	Naveen, S., & Raju, D. N. M. (2014) [18]



3. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To understand the concept of Human Resource practices.
- To study the various HR practices implemented by UltraTech Company.
- To analyse the advantages, benefits, constraints and disadvantages of their HR practices.

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Secondary sources were explored in order to create a comprehensive evidence-based analysis on the HR practises of HR practices. The semi-systematic review is conducted using numerous published reports and publications from the Springer, Taylor & Francis, Emerald, Srinivas Publications, Research Gate, SSRN, and other search engines such as Google Scholar. As a result, the data reviewed comes from secondary sources in order to investigate existing knowledge. The reports which were extensively referred include;

- Annual report of UltraTech Company,
- Reports from Ministry Of Labour And Employment,
- Reports Of The Expert Committee On The HR Policy,
- Reports from Directorate General of Employment (DGE)

5. INTRODUCING ULTRATECH COMPANY

UltraTech Cement Ltd, a part of the Aditya Birla Group, is a leading cement conglomerate in India. It holds the largest market share in the production of grey cement, white cement, and ready-mix concrete. Operating in five countries, including India, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka, UltraTech has expanded its business to include building materials and one-stop retail locations, offering comprehensive solutions for construction needs. As India's largest cement manufacturer and one of the major global players, UltraTech is committed to finding responsible and effective environmental solutions. In 2006, UltraTech voluntarily joined the Cement Sustainability Initiative (CSI) of the International Business Council for Sustainable Development, highlighting its dedication to sustainable practices. The company has also partnered with DuPont Sustainable Solutions to enhance safety practices within the organization, placing a strong emphasis on employee well-being. The UltraTech brand is renowned as the go-to resource for all construction requirements. The iconic image of the engineer in the yellow helmet reinforces their expertise and specialization, creating an emotional connection with customers and instilling confidence. UltraTech not only builds cities and houses but also nurtures trust and improves lives. Moreover, UltraTech prioritizes its employees and offers them a compelling value proposition. It provides numerous opportunities for personal growth, goal achievement, professional development, and a balanced lifestyle [19].

UltraTech Cement Ltd, the flagship company of the Aditya Birla Group, is a dominant player in the construction industry with a market value of USD 7.1 billion. It holds the top position in India as the largest producer of grey cement and ready-mix

concrete (RMC), and it also has a significant presence in the white cement market. In terms of global cement production, it ranks third, trailing only China. A remarkable distinction of UltraTech is its unparalleled cement manufacturing capacity of over 100 million tonnes per annum (MTPA) in a single country, excluding China. The company operates across multiple countries, including the UAE, Bahrain, Sri Lanka, and India. Its extensive portfolio comprises 23 integrated production units, 29 grinding units, one clinkerisation unit, and eight bulk packaging terminals. In India, UltraTech's grey cement capacity totals 132.35 MTPA. Birla White, the brand name under which UltraTech sells white cement in the Indian market, adds to its diverse product offerings. It currently operates one white cement plant and three Wall Care putty units, with a cumulative capacity of 1.98 MTPA. UltraTech is also a major player in the concrete market, with over 185 Ready Mix Concrete (RMC) factories located in more than 85 locations across India. It caters to the demands of discerning customers by offering a wide range of specialized concretes tailored to specific requirements. Recognizing the significance of innovation in the Building Products industry, UltraTech actively engages in developing scientifically formulated products to cater to the evolving needs of modern structures [20].

UltraTech introduced UltraTech Building Solutions (UBS), a unique concept aimed at providing a comprehensive solution for individual home builders (IHBs) in India. UBS serves as the country's first multi-category retail chain specifically designed to cater to the diverse needs of home construction. The primary objective of this initiative is to engage with builders throughout the entire construction process, offering superior construction materials, services, and support to help them realize their dream homes. UltraTech, as a founding member, has played a pivotal role in establishing the Global Cement & Concrete Association (GCCA). The company has made significant commitments by endorsing the GCCA Climate Ambition 2050 and actively participating in the GCCA Net Zero Concrete Roadmap. By prioritizing the decarbonisation of its processes, UltraTech is dedicated to expediting the reduction of carbon emissions. It has implemented advanced technologies like the Science Based Targets Initiative (SBTi) and Internal Carbon Pricing, while also setting ambitious environmental goals through initiatives such as EP100 and RE100. Additionally, UltraTech has made notable strides in sustainable financing by becoming the first company in India and the second in Asia to issue dollar-denominated sustainability-linked bonds. These bonds are intricately tied to the company's sustainability performance, demonstrating its commitment to environmentally responsible practices [20].

UltraTech strives to make a positive impact on the social and economic development of the areas in which it operates. The social activities of the Corporation are focused on education, healthcare, sustainable livelihoods, community infrastructure, and social concerns. UltraTech serves over 1.6 million people in over 500 villages across 16 states in India [20].

**Table2: Financial growth as per 2021-2022**

Financial	Progress
Net Revenue	52,599 crores (17%↑)
EBITDA	12,022 crores (2.3%↑)
Earnings per share (Normalised)	196 (2.2%↑)
Return on Capital employed	14.9% (40 bps)
Reduction in Net Debt	2,816 crores
Dividend	38 per share (2.7%↑)

Source: UltraTech, 2022 [8]

Table 2 indicates the financial growth of the company where the Net Revenue found to be increased by 17% (52,599 crores), EBITDA by 2.3% (12,022 crores), Earnings per share (Normalised) by 2.2% (Rs. 196). And the Return on Capital

employed by the company is 14.9% (40 bps) and there is Reduction in the Net Debt of 2,816 crores; further, Dividend found to be 38 per share with the hike of 2.7%.

Table 3: Operational progress as per 2021-2022

Operational activities	Progress
Grey cement production	90.36 MMT (9.2%↑)
Grey cement average capacity utilisation	77% (700 bps↑)
White cement and wall care putty production	1.46 MMT (13.3%↑)
White cement and wall care putty average capacity utilisation	96% (1,122 bps↑)

Source: UltraTech, 2022 [8]

Table 3 describes the operational progress of UltraTech cement ltd. Where Grey cement production has been increased by 9.2% with 90.36 MMT, Grey cement average capacity utilisation is at 77% with the increase of 700 bps. Furthermore White cement and wall care putty production of the company increased by 13.3% with 1.46 MMT and White cement and wall care putty average capacity utilisation is at 96% with the increase of 1,122 bps.

6. HR PRACTICES

One of the key components of UltraTech cement ltd.'s new HR strategy was the creation of an aspirational environment for a

diverse team. Increasing the diversity of their Group is a journey that is being reinforced over time via focused actions. Internal staff moves of over 5,000 were up 18% over the previous two fiscals' average. They also focused on attracting young talent, with 73% of new recruits being under the age of 35. Almost 9,000 new workers joined the Group last year, expanding their skill set. The hiring of seven women to top leadership positions demonstrates our commitment to gender diversity. Women made up 21% of all new employees, with 102 female engineering graduates joining us at plant sites [8].

Table 3: Human capital in UltraTech cement ltd. as per 2021-2022

Human Capital	Progress
Employee salary, wages and expense	2,535 crores
Total training hours	2,73,035
Total number of permanent employees	21,921
Safety training hours	4,50,641

Source: UltraTech, 2022 [8]

UltraTech cement ltd. has a strong organisational framework that assists them in identifying and hiring people, quickly orienting them to settle in and provide high performance, setting stretch objectives and managing performance to constantly deliver on promise to all of our stakeholders. They achieved this while offering frequent intervention for learning and growth, as well as enabling and promoting a positive working culture, which leads to exceptional results [8].

6.1 Recruitment and Selection

Recruitment sources for the organization encompass newspaper advertisements and databases, which are utilized to identify potential candidates matching the specified job criteria determined by department heads. Depending on the number of applications received, adjustments may be made to the qualification requirements. Subsequently, only individuals possessing the requisite qualifications undergo the interview

process. The interview panel consists of department authorities responsible for personnel matters. In cases where there is a large influx of applications, a shortlisting process is employed in accordance with the organization's predefined standards. During this evaluation, employees are assessed based on factors such as technical proficiency, English language skills, and critical reasoning abilities [21].

6.2 Performance Appraisal

With the establishment of the "performance appraisal feedback and Counselling system" in 1975, UltraTech Cement Ltd was most likely the first firm in India to use an integrated system. PA consists of subsystems such as potential appraisal, Development and training, employee guidance and Career development and planning [21].



360 degree feedback program: it was introduced in 1999, it allowed managers to ask concerns about leadership styles, management abilities, and personal attributes. After the feedback, each senior manager was required to write a six-page statement outlining areas for development and their expectations. To enable employees to continually learn and grow a combination of developmental tasks, classroom training, mentoring, and participation in special project teams is given [21].

6.3 Talent Management

Development Assessment Centers were created to assist managers in assessing and developing their skills. Since 2003, around 1200 managers from various levels of management have participated in the DACs. In order to stimulate talent management, Aditya Birla Institute of Management Learning strongly started Continuous Learning Jnyana - knowledge and Udaya - dawn, which was designed to improve the management capabilities of their managers has effectively managed to achieve more [21].

6.4 Ideathon

During a 50-hour ideation challenge, employees were encouraged to create and discuss out-of-the-box ideas, and 46,000+ ideas were submitted [8].

6.5 Suggestion Mela

An effort was started on Engineers' Day to encourage the input of ideas. Every year on 'Engineers' Day,' under the banner of 'I adore my UltraTech,' employees and contract labourers submit suggestions to add value to day-to-day operations utilising their shopfloor talents. This effort, which broke through hierarchical barriers, helped individuals feel appreciated and instilled a sense of company ownership. Moreover, these suggestions are reviewed and applied in order to enhance efficiency. Here they collected 8470 suggestions from workers and contract labourers [8].

6.6 Learning and Development

UltraTech believe that learning is a lifelong process where to improve their workers' knowledge, abilities, and behaviour; they provide a variety of training programmes for all skill levels. In-house talent identified through their institutionalised Talent Management process engage on a planned development path, with learning organised using the 70-20-10 model, and are allocated My Development Plans (MDPs) that place a strong focus on practical and experiential learning. Talent is developed for the next higher job in many functions through Accelerated Learning Programs [8].

6.7 PraGaTi (Potential-Guidance-Talent) and Margdarshan

Learning and development occurs at all levels of the organisation. PraGaTi is a workforce development programme that has been assisting in the continual growth of workers through a systematic strategy of evaluation and targeted development. In 2021, the National HRD Network designated this effort as a Best Practice. Margdarshan, a programme that allows a beginner to work alongside an expert and learn the

skills, has greatly benefited fresh employees as well as those who want to be multiskilled [8].

UltraTech Cement, India's No. 1 cement brand, has won the 'Best corporate HR practises' award at the 10th HR Showcase, the flagship annual national event of the National HRD Network (NHRDN) Bangalore Chapter. UltraTech got this prize for their 'PraGaTi' HR programme. The award recognises UltraTech's outstanding efforts in offering employee-friendly HR policies and ongoing interaction with workers in order to foster a people-centric work culture inside the organisation. Last year, UltraTech launched 'PraGaTi,' a centralised online talent evaluation and development programme. The award-winning effort assists the Company's permanent employees in identifying potential, guiding this workforce, and facilitating career advancement through skill-enhancement opportunities [22].

6.8 Other HR practices

- Ensuring positive legal compliance with applicable constitutional and legislative human rights obligations, as well as adhering to the Aditya Birla Group's Sustainable Business Framework.
- Raising human rights awareness among personnel at all levels of their business through training and communication.
- Increasing goodwill, establishing long-term employment, and encouraging economic prospects in the areas where we operate.
- Engaging stakeholders on human rights concerns connected to their commercial activities in an inclusive, transparent, and culturally relevant manner.
- The importance of diversity, equal opportunity, and the necessity to recognise the rights of disadvantaged groups such as women, indigenous peoples, women, migrant workers, and other minorities.
- Support the freedom of all workers to organise and join a trade union of their choosing without fear of intimidation or punishment, in conformity with national law.
- Prohibiting all types of child labour, forced / trafficked work, discrimination and harassment.
- Any contribution to armed conflict or human rights violations in conflict-affected and high-risk regions is prohibited.
- Interfering in any way with the formation, operation, or administration of workers' organisations or collective bargaining.
- Aligning our existing policies, processes, and activities with our commitment to human rights, including those pertaining to labour practises, such as freedom of association, the right to collective bargaining and equal remuneration, engagement with indigenous peoples, land acquisition, supply chain management, and security management.
- Requiring our contractors, suppliers, and other organisations with which UltraTech has a relationship to follow our Sustainable Business Framework requirements, as well as encouraging and supporting the establishment of analogous management systems.



- Using an iterative due diligence approach built by our Human Rights Management System to identify, analyse, and manage possible risks and consequences.
- establishing clear accountability by allocating enough resources and duties for effective human rights risk management; and
- Continuously improving human rights performance through exchanging best practises and lessons learned, defining and evaluating goals, and monitoring, reporting, and publicising results.
- Creating a solid grievance redressal framework to address any adverse human rights effect or violation of human rights across any of their businesses.

-Compiled from UltraTech, 2021 [23]

8. ABCD LISTING

The ABCD analysis was designed by Aithal, P. S. et al. (2015) [24] to identify the business framework and analyse its efficacy

in providing value to stakeholders. When used, these assessments produce an ordered list of the company's benefits, advantages, limits, and downsides. It assesses the applicability of a concept or idea in a given circumstance using the ABCD analysis framework. Among other papers, Aithal, P. S., (2017) [25] recently introduced this analytical approach in the company analysis framework. There are also articles that provide a list of the various advantages, benefits, restrictions, and disadvantages of New Research indices [26], International Business and its Environments' study [27], Six Thinking Hats Based Analysis [28], Innovation in B.Tech Curriculum as B.Tech (Hons) [29], Organizing the Unorganized Lifestyle Retailers [30], and Green Education [31]. Similarly the present study has also obtained ABCD analysis framework to analyse the advantages, benefits, constraints and disadvantages of UltraTech HR practices.

Advantages

- ➔ Increase in the employee morale and productivity.
- ➔ It enables retention of efficient employees.
- ➔ Improves corporate image.
- ➔ Encourages diversity in workforce.

Benefits

- ➔ Improved hiring and training process.
- ➔ It protects human rights
- ➔ Enables Innovative practices such ideathon, PraGaTi etc.
- ➔ Enhances employee relations.
- ➔ Holistic working environment.

Constraints

- ➔ Constant innovative HR practices may be time consuming.
- ➔ Chances of conflict of ideas when all the employees put up their suggestions.
- ➔ Tough competitions among employees.

Disadvantages

- ➔ Huge cost involved in learning and development programme.
- ➔ Less time available for actual production due to more training hours.
- ➔ Availability of highly skilled HR practitioners is required with high pay scale which may lead to financial burden.

A study on the HR practices of UltraTech cement ltd. revealed various key aspects which are further explained below;

- ➔ Ultratech emphasises employee value proposition, giving a plethora of chances for its workers to set and fulfil their goals, develop and evolve as professionals, and live a healthy and balanced life.
- ➔ UltraTech cement ltd. has a strong organisational framework that assists them in identifying and hiring people, quickly orienting them to settle in and provide high performance, setting stretch objectives and managing performance to constantly deliver on promise to all of our stakeholders.
- ➔ UltraTech cement ltd. is making a significant progress in terms of company's financial and operational growth; at the same time it is giving due

-Compiled by the author
consideration to socio-economic development of the stakeholders.

- ➔ They have efficient HR policies such as Recruitment and Selection, Performance Appraisal, 360 degree feedback program and Talent Management to boost employee productivity.
- ➔ They have other innovative HR practices such as Ideations, Suggestion mela, Learning and Development and PraGaTi (Potential-Guidance-Talent) and Margdarshan, which has encouraged active participation of all the employees for the better growth of the company.
- ➔ The study found additional HR practices such as Raising human rights awareness, Ensuring positive legal compliance, Engaging stakeholders on human



rights concerns, giving importance of diversity, supporting the freedom of all workers etc.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

Present study has found various significant and innovative HR practices adopted by UltraTech Company for the better prosperity of the workers as well as the company as a whole. These practices have encouraged the employees to the greatest extent. These practices can be further encouraged in other entities also with the more innovative ideas which will further boost employee motivation, satisfaction and morale. Employees' satisfaction and well-being is very vital for all the organisation irrespective of the size of the entity as human capital is the most valuable component of the organisation. Hence, an effective HR practices shall be aggressively implemented by giving due consideration to each employee's capabilities and potentials.

11. CONCLUSION

The main aim of the present study was to understand the concept of human resource practices and to list out the various HR practices implemented by UltraTech cement ltd. Further, the study also attempted to analyse the advantages, benefits, constraints and disadvantages of their HR practices. As per the findings it was observed that UltraTech cement ltd. emphasises employee value proposition and they also have a strong organisational framework that assists them in identifying and hiring people. Furthermore, they have efficient HR policies such as Recruitment and Selection, Performance Appraisal, 360 degree feedback program and Talent Management to boost employee productivity. They also provide other innovative HR practices such as Ideathon, Suggestion mela, Learning and Development and PraGaTi (Potential-Guidance-Talent) and Margdarshan, which has encouraged active participation of all the employees for the better growth of the company. Moreover, they highly ponder on human rights such as Raising human rights awareness, Ensuring positive legal compliance, Engaging stakeholders on human rights concerns, giving importance of diversity, supporting the freedom of all workers etc. These HR practices adopted by UltraTech cement is very vital hence needs to be retained and encouraged by the other concerns to boost employee productivity and organisational long term growth.

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