

CHAPTER 7



TIME MAGIC

DOUBLE YOUR POWER AND
PERSONAL EFFECTIVENESS

TIME MAGIC: Double Your Power and Personal Effectiveness

In his book *Never Fight With a Pig* Peter Thomas quips, “I was out of town so much that when Donna and the kids came to meet me at the airport she would have to point across the terminal toward me and announce for all to hear, ‘Kids, that’s your father.’”*

Why did I include this quote in a book about creating wealth? Because in the pursuit of riches many a person has missed out on what’s really important in life. What good is it to have the whole world but not have your health or your family?

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My son wears my socks.

The other day I was looking for my black socks and discovered that my eleven year-old-son, Corey, had them on his feet. That’s right, my first-born son can already fit into my socks. It seems like just yesterday he was an infant. I used to hold him up with one hand. Now he eats almost as much I do. When Corey was young I used to feed him Pabulum and formula in a bottle. We would tussle on the floor. Now when we wrestle he often gets the best of me. There is no pushing Corey around! He even answers the phone like an adult. My “little” Corey is growing up fast.

How time flies!

How soon will he be asking me for the car keys? How long before I have to hand over \$100 for a pair of jeans? How much longer before I lose him to all the pretty girls? How fast will university come? Will his wedding come at the same speed?

One of the things I am often criticized for is pandering to people’s darker nature by making them focus only on money. Nothing could be further from the truth. Yes, money is important, but the reason I want them to earn more is not to buy more but so they can have the luxury of focusing on what is really important in life. It’s more about love, friendship, health, faith, and family than about bank accounts, net worth or cash.

Understand the inherent dangers in the ‘I GOTTA HAVE MORE’ trap. They are insidious. The trap can cause people to lose their vision about what really matters in life. It can make people compromise their values. The pursuit of wealth has caused many people to lose the people they were looking to assist.

* Thomas, Peter, *Never Fight with A Pig*, (Macmillan Canada, 1991), 68.

I met a man recently who proudly told me he rarely gets home before 10:00 P.M. (The Message: *"I work hard. I'm a success."*)

He told me his kids were important to him and they often wait up for him to return home so he could spend *"quality"* time with them. (The Message: *"I'm a family man. I'm a success."*)

He told me how his wife loved him and that he phoned home often when he was on one of his numerous business trips. (The Message: *"I travel a lot. I'm a success."*) Then I began to dig a little deeper for the true picture of this 'successful' man. Sure, he did work late every day, but when he got home he had little left to give to those precious children who adored him. He was exhausted and impatient. He wanted (and needed) sleep, not more *"giving"* to a wife and kids. Deep inside he knew the *I give my kids 'quality' vs. 'quantity'* argument was a poor excuse. He knew children spell the word LOVE this way: t.i.m.e.

He knew work was where his heart was. He gave lip service to his family and said he was doing all this for *them*, but inside, he knew (by his actions) his true interest lay elsewhere. (The True Message: *"You (family) are not as important as my job. I'm a failure."*)

All I know is far too many 'successful' people have told me they regret compromising the *important* for the *urgent*. So, as you acquire *The Millionaire Mindset*, be sure to remember to include time in your life for...

children
family
spouse
relaxation
health
fun
faith

No one ever said on their death bed...

"I wish I had spent more time at the office."

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LITTLE EYES UPON YOU

There are little eyes upon you
and they're watching night and day.

There are little ears that quickly
take in every word you say.

There are little hands all eager
to do anything you do;
and a little boy who's dreaming of the day he'll be like you.

You're the little fellow's idol,
you're the wisest of the wise.

In his little mind about you
no suspicions ever rise.

He believes in you devoutly,
holds all that you say and do;
He will say and do, in your way,
when he's grown up like you.

There's a wide-eyed little fellow
who believes you're always right;
And his eyes are always opened,
and he watches day and night.

You are setting an example
every day in all you do,
For the little boy who's waiting
to grow up to be like you.

Author Unknown

STRATEGY 7-1: Ask the 10 Time-Magic questions.

KEY QUESTIONS

1. Is it worth doing at all?
2. Should someone else do it?
3. Should it be done now?
4. To what extent should it be done?
5. Should something else be done?
6. Has someone else already done it?
7. Is it consistent with my objectives?
8. What is urgent and what is important in this task?
9. What part of it can be omitted?
10. Will it make a big difference in the long run?

We all have the same amount of time every day. Nothing more, nothing less. Peter F. Drucker points out that effective time managers spend their time not merely doing things right, but doing the *right things*.

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STRATEGY 7-2: Identify your time pressures.

"PRESSURE? WHAT PRESSURE?"

We all face a certain degree of pressure. It is a healthy thing in the right dose. This next list will help you identify pressure points in your life. Score yourself by order of present pressure.

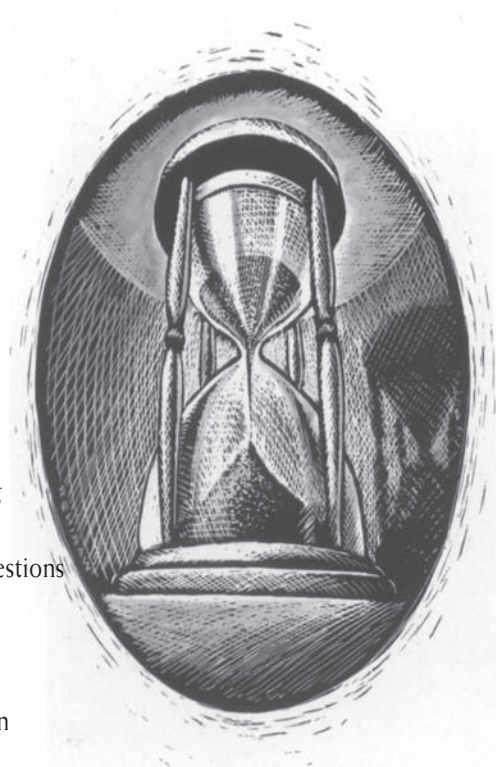
- X = The top pressure point for me
(check only one X)
- A = Causes pressure daily
B = Causes pressure sometimes
C = Causes pressure rarely
- Unrealistic expectations
— Failure to make tough decisions
— Procrastination

"Life is like an ice-cream cone, you have to lick it one day at a time."

Charles J. Givens

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- Over-commitment
- Cold-calling
- Change
- Work is unpleasant
- No guidance or support
- Pressure of competition
- Maintain current level of success
- Laziness
- Forgetfulness
- No drive
- Educational limitation
- Boredom
- Lack of knowledge
- Peer pressure
- Watch too much TV
- Interruptions
- People nagging
- Economy
- Negativity
- Back-log of things to be done
- Health problems
- Traffic jams
- Traveling
- Waiting on others
- Perfectionism
- Getting started in the morning
- Workaholic tendencies
- Authors who ask too many questions
- Unresolved conflict
- Financial pressures
- Unexpected problems
- Recurring interpersonal friction
- Uncertain future
- In-laws
- Friends
- Worry
- Fear
- Religious involvement
- Other _____



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Have you identified only one X? That is the number one thing on which you need to work. Is it negative pressure? Is it within your ability to eliminate?

STRATEGY 7-3:

Relieve some of the pressure today.

It pays to keep your feet on the ground, but keep them moving.

Come up with ten possible ways to relieve some of the pressure in the area you marked X. Think of ten possible solutions without evaluating them. This will get you thinking of solutions rather than problems. Now, make a plan to control the pressure. Once this is done, start working on the A's.

10 SOLUTIONS WORKSHEET

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____
- 4. _____
- 5. _____
- 6. _____
- 7. _____
- 8. _____
- 9. _____
- 10. _____

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STRATEGY 7-4:

Identify the Minute-Taker wasters.

"ME WASTE TIME?"

You have 86,400 seconds at your disposal every day. You decide how you will use those seconds. What really impedes time effectiveness is the Minute-Taker wasters. The small things that creep into our day which eat up seconds, which turn into minutes, which turn into hours, which turn into days, ad infinitum. How do people waste time? If we can identify the Minute-Taker wasters then we can develop an effective plan for removing the operational success blockers.

MINUTE-TAKER WASTERS

- Shuffling paper
- Self-interruptions
- Coffee breaks
- Looking for things
- Sloppy desk
- Terrible note-taking
- Forgetfulness
- Piles of "stuff" on desk
- Not having stock of regularly used items
- Stock-piling junk
- Messy drawers
- Borrowing things we should have on our desks
- Telephone tag
- Interruptions
- Procrastinating
- Getting going after interruptions
- Meetings running on and on
- Day-dreaming
- Rescheduling appointments missed
- Having to do something over
- Looking for things in the middle of a task
- Too many 'to do' lists
- Transferring tasks from 'to do' list to 'to do' list
- Television
- Poor planning
- Not scheduling enough time

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STRATEGY 7-5:

Learn how to prioritize.

You have one hour to work on prioritizing 15 tasks. You need a tool to help you prioritize which one you will work on first. You need a tool that will help you decide quickly the order of priorities for goals to set, items to work on, people to invite to a meeting, etc. The scale described below will help you, identify in an instant, an order of priorities.

This tool was developed by Colorado management consultant Myron Rush and has been used extensively to help thousands of managers to set priorities. It is, without question, one of the most valuable priority-setting tools available today. It is an effective instrument to assist in identifying which tasks are urgent and which ones are important.

PRIORITY SCALE

Step 1.

In the upper left-hand corner, under "*Tasks to be Prioritized*," record and number the tasks you wish to prioritize. For example, let's say you had many things to do today but didn't have a lot of time to do them. To determine which task is the most important, you would list all of them on the Priority Scale without being concerned about the order of importance. If it needs to be accomplished then write it down.

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Step 2.

Compare task 1 with task 2 and circle the one that is more important. Next, compare 1 with 3, circling the more important. As you trade off between tasks, ask yourself, "*If I could only do 1 or 2 tasks which is more important?*" You then circle the number you chose as the more important of the two. Continue the process by moving one row to the right and comparing task 2 with 3. Next compare 1 with 4 and 2 with 4, and so on.

Step 3.

Once you have completed the comparison, add up the total number of 1's, 2's, and 3's, etc. and record the total.

Step 4.

Now, you are ready to rearrange the items in order of priority.

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PRIORITY SCALE⁴⁰

(Example)

Tasks to be prioritized

PRIORITIES

1. Call suppliers
2. Order business cards
3. Pick up check
4. Call Mr. Black
5. Clean desk
6. Do sales report
7. Send thank you letters
8. Buy gift for Mr. Black
9. Mail brochures

1								
2								
1	2							
3	3							
1	2	3						
4	4	4						
1	2	3	4					
5	5	5	5					
1	2	3	4	5				
6	6	6	6	6				
1	2	3	4	5	6			
7	7	7	7	7	7			
1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
8	8	8	8	8	8	8		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	

If you could only do #1 or #2 which would you do?

Next compare #1 and #3, then #2 and #3

- | | | |
|-----|---|-----|
| (4) | — | 1's |
| (2) | — | 2's |
| (8) | — | 3's |
| (7) | — | 4's |
| (2) | — | 5's |
| (3) | — | 6's |
| (1) | — | 7's |
| (6) | — | 8's |
| (2) | — | 9's |

Count up all the times you selected each number and transfer here

PRIORITY SCALE (The list in priority order.)

1. Pick up check (*The most important to you. You checked this one more than any others*)
2. Call Mr. Black (*The next most important.*)
3. Buy gift for Mr. Black
4. Call suppliers
5. Do sales report
6. Order business cards
7. Clean desk
8. Mail brochures
9. Send thank you letters

Take the # you chose the most and make it your #1 item and repeat this step until you have a new list, now in priority order.

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PRIORITY SCALE

Tasks to be prioritized

PRIORITIES

_____	1	_____ 1's
_____	2	_____ 2's
_____	1 2	_____ 3's
_____	3 3	_____ 4's
_____	1 2 3	_____ 5's
_____	4 4 4	_____ 6's
_____	1 2 3 4	_____ 7's
_____	5 5 5 5	_____ 8's
_____	1 2 3 4 5	_____ 9's
_____	6 6 6 6 6	
_____	1 2 3 4 5 6	
_____	7 7 7 7 7 7	
_____	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	
_____	8 8 8 8 8 8 8	
_____	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8	
_____	9 9 9 9 9 9 9 9	

PRIORITY SCALE (The list in priority order.)

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____
- 4. _____
- 5. _____
- 6. _____
- 7. _____
- 8. _____
- 9. _____

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STRATEGY 7-6:

Procrastinate on procrastination.

*"PROCASTINATION IS THE ONLY THING
WE HAVE TIME FOR."*

A doctor turned to his patient and said, *"Bill, I have some bad news and some worse news."*

"Hold on now, doctor," said the concerned patient, *"I can handle bad news and good news, but bad news and worse news?"*

The doctor asked which one he should share first. Bill wanted the bad news first.

"Well," the doctor said sadly, *"the results of all the tests are in and you only have 24 hours to live."*

"What? If that's the bad news what could possibly be worse than that?"

The doctor replied apologetically, *"We found out yesterday and forgot to tell you."*

It is relatively easy to come up with many excuses for putting things off. We don't have the time right now. We'll get around to it later. We want to sleep on it first. There is plenty of time to do that this weekend. Why do we procrastinate?

The reason is quite simple! It is easy to put off the unpleasant, difficult and time-consuming tasks. In essence, procrastination is nothing more than a time-waster. It causes many more headaches than it effect cures. Think right now of all the small, tedious things you have procrastinated about in the past week, month, year, decade. They are all cramping your brain.

So, we only do those tasks that scream the loudest, as it were. We rush to finish them. The minute we lick the envelope we notice we forgot to insert the letter. We start cooking hamburgers only to remember the propane tank is empty. There is a cure for procrastination! Look in a mirror and you will see the cure. The only person who can stop you from procrastinating is You!

How to handle procrastination

STRATEGY 7-7:

Get going.

*No more effort is required to aim high and achieve prosperity
then to aim low and receive its opposite.*

Napoleon Hill

Step 1. Start the task.

Get going, even if you have failed in the past. If you want to win, you must begin. This seems obvious, but if you have been procrastinating on something then make a start at it and you will have begun the process of success.

STRATEGY 7-8:

Get out your calendar.

Step 2. Block off the necessary time to do the job.

We will discuss this point in more detail in a later section in this chapter. Chances are remote that you will ever get anything done without it getting scheduled into your calendar. We procrastinate forever because we don't block off the necessary time to finish the job.

STRATEGY 7-9:

Look at tasks a different way.

Step 3. See the job in bite-sized pieces.

You will never start losing weight if you see the whole project in one lump sum. An alcoholic would have difficulty picturing himself not drinking for the rest of his/her life. Anyone can handle not drinking for a 24-hour period. "*One day at a time*" is more than a popular slogan among self-help groups, it is the recognition of a fundamental reality of our experience: We live our entire lives in the present. What shall we do with it?

STRATEGY 7-10:

Change your thinking.

Step 4. Adopt a 'Do it now' mentality.

People who conquer procrastination problems learn to become 'Do It Now'ers.' They never wait until tomorrow to do what they know should be done today. They put things back after each use. They refuse to delay.

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STRATEGY 7-11:
Think outcomes.

"Housework can kill you if done right."

Erma Bombeck

Step 5. Set objectives.

We have already discussed the need for objectives in life, but it bears repeating here because it affects the procrastination dilemma: Set a goal to accomplish something you have procrastinated about doing.

STRATEGY 7-12:
Examine your progress.

Step 6. Review your accomplishments.

Winners in life dwell on their successes. Losers constantly focus on their failures. It is of value to remind yourself of areas where you have succeeded in winning the procrastination game.

STRATEGY 7-13:
Use pleasure and pain.

Step 7. Reward or punish yourself.

I am not espousing deviant behavior by suggesting you conquer procrastination problems by punishing yourself. What I am suggesting is you find some way of punishing yourself for your negative behaviors, such as not doing things you said you would do.

One manager I know buys his staff lunch out of his own pocket if he does not have his reports in on time. If he promises to deliver something and procrastinates then he has to fork out cash, and for him this is negative reinforcement for negative behavior.

Similarly, if you have succeeded in doing a task you have long procrastinated about doing, reward yourself. We tend to repeat those behaviors for which we receive positive reinforcement and shun those behaviors which result in negative reinforcement.

PROCRASTINATION WORKSHEET

Things I put off doing:

This makes me feel like:

Is it important?

Yes (Why?)

No (Why not?)

Procrastination Action Plan

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

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HANDLING INTERRUPTIONS

If interruptions are a problem for you, use the five steps listed below. To determine what is a problem with interruptions, ask yourself, “*Am I receiving low-priority interruptions during high-priority projects?*” If so, practice these steps to curb the time-wasting interruptions.

STRATEGY 7-14:

Schedule closed-door periods.

Many people think the only time you are really ‘*busy*’ is when you have someone with you. A secretary looks into an executive’s office, sees no one and falsely assumes he/she is available. There is nothing wrong with scheduling time in your daily planner that will allow you to avoid the time-wasting activity called interruptions.

STRATEGY 7-15:

Let others know you cannot be interrupted.

If you want to eliminate interruptions, schedule closed-door ‘*no interruption*’ periods. Let others know you can’t be bothered for any reason other than the building is on fire. And only if the fire is approaching the floor below, at that.

STRATEGY 7-16:

If interrupted, stand up.

Do you want a technique guaranteed to cut interruption time in half? Stand up as soon as an interrupter enters the room and remain standing while they speak. They will soon get the message, ‘*Be quick, I’m busy.*’

If someone enters a room to interrupt you and you invite them in and you sit comfortably, put your feet up on the desk, and offer them coffee, what message are you conveying to them? “*Sure, come on in. Let’s talk. What I was doing isn’t really important. Use my time in any way you see fit.*”

STRATEGY 7-17:

Avoid eye contact.

Ergonomics experts are now realizing the importance of eye contact in office design. It plays a role in employee's productivity. Offices are now being designed to ensure less eye contact.

I was on the telephone. Someone walked by my office and, because we made eye contact, he felt free to start speaking to me at the same time. It blew my mind. It didn't take me long to move the furniture around so I faced the window.

One way to reduce interruptions is to make less eye contact with people. This is particularly true with telephones. Be sure to face a wall or window while on the telephone.

STRATEGY 7-18:

Make fewer trips through the office.

This may seem a bit trivial, but are you aware how much time is wasted in a day by running for a coffee, water and the washroom? Become aware that when you leave your work area, you are a prime target to get sidetracked.

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STRATEGY 7-19:

Implement 10 items from the list below.

60 PRACTICAL TIME MANAGEMENT TIPS

1. When cleaning out closets, storerooms, etc., label three cartons:
 1. *scrap*,
 2. *give away*,
 3. *keep*.
2. If you haven't used something in over a year, don't let it take up prime space.
3. Schedule a '*quiet hour*' each day and consider it non-negotiable.
4. Don't let others infringe on your valuable "*prime-time*."

5. Each evening, set out everything you will need in the morning.
6. Use your planning calendar to schedule your "to do" lists.
7. Schedule "appointments" with yourself.
8. Have an office in your home for writing and filing.
9. Take advantage of self-inking stamps to save time.
10. Delegate whenever possible.
11. Get things done during commuting time.
12. Make up casseroles in double quantity and freeze them.
13. Throw out as much correspondence and other paperwork as possible.
14. Store jewelry in egg cartons inside a drawer.
15. Maintain a stock of frequently used items such as paper goods, light-bulbs, garbage bags, paper clips, Post-it Notes.
16. Make minor decisions quickly.
17. Don't waste time agonizing after decisions.
18. Store items close to where they will be used. Duplicate where necessary.
19. Clean the bathtub during a shower. It is easier working from the inside.
20. Keep desk supplies in your briefcase or car for those unpredictable delays and waiting periods.
21. Say 'no' more often. Stop volunteering for everything.
22. Don't keep shuffling paper. Handle each piece as it appears.
23. Start earlier in the morning.
24. Don't read passively. Search for ideas. Use highlighters. Make marginal notes.

25. Don't store magazines. Tear out or photocopy relevant articles.
26. Set a deadline for each task and stick to it.
27. Always carry a small scratch pad with you for note-taking.
28. Plan in advance your TV viewing time. It can be a real time-robber.
29. Use colored labels to flag important dates in your planning calendar and to highlight urgent requests that come up.
30. Carry a supply of *Post-it* Notes in your planning calendar.
31. Review "junk mail" during low energy times (i.e. the last fifteen minutes of the day).
32. Take only carry-on bags while traveling by air. Delays occur when waiting for checked bags.
33. Use only transparent containers for leftovers so you can see what you have in the refrigerator.
34. When leaving a message for someone to call you back, indicate the best time to reach you.
35. If the person you call is not available, try to get the information you need from someone else rather than leave a message.
36. Keep paper and pen handy in every room.
37. Carry a portable "*Trident*" 3-hole punch in your briefcase or meeting binder.
38. Record in your planning calendar the time by which you must leave your house (or hotel) if you must attend meetings some distance away.

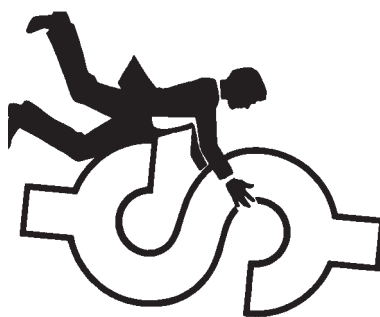
***If at first you don't
succeed, destroy all
evidence that you
tried.***

Source Unknown

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39. Have more keys made than you think you'll need.
40. Don't be a slave to your telephone. Use your answering machine or voice mail to take messages during the dinner hour or ignore the telephone completely.
41. When scheduling doctor and dentist appointments take the first appointment of the morning so you're ahead of the crowd.
42. Keep a supply of greeting cards, stamps and gifts on hand.
43. Put away materials immediately after use. Clean up the mess as it's generated.
44. Use a highlighter when reading letters and reports so you can mark those parts requiring action.
45. Always confirm appointments; don't assume the other person will remember.
46. Use stacking trays to sort mail as to bills, correspondence, junk mail.
47. Place color dots on all your credit cards for easy identification.
48. Photocopy both sides of your credit cards (about nine per page) and leave a copy in your home safe and safe deposit box.
49. Use driving time to listen to cassette tapes or CD's.
50. Record ideas from cassette tapes or CD's by dictating into a pocket recorder.
51. Keep a pocket recorder in your car for recording ideas, information, things to do, etc., as they occur to you.
52. Subscribe to newsletters related to your profession to cut down on reading time.
53. Color code your various keys with small plastic rings, available in many stores, to avoid fumbling.

- 54. Photocopy birth certificates, marriage certificates, etc., and keep them in your files.
- 55. Form the habit of taking your planning calendar with you wherever you go – even on vacation. You can record those ports-of-call, favorite restaurants, hotels, and people you meet.
- 56. Store empty clothes hangers on one side of the closet and use as required. Don't let them mix with the ones being used.
- 57. Keep a personal effects tote bag equipped with all personal items, from toothbrush to travel hair dryer, and use it only for traveling.
- 58. Find ways to delegate more.
- 59. Shorten telephone calls.
- 60. Phone instead of writing.



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