Analysis of Psychological Capital on Employee Adaptability in Organizations Undergoing Change

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the influence of psychological capital on employee adaptability in organizations undergoing change by integrating psychological, organizational, and technological perspectives. Using a mixed-method approach that combines conceptual analysis with secondary data from global workforce surveys and national organizational reports, the study highlights how hope, efficacy, resilience, and optimism shape adaptive behavior in transformation contexts. The findings demonstrate that employees with high psychological capital display stronger motivation, emotional stability, and proactive engagement, enabling them to respond effectively to challenges posed by digital transformation, restructuring, cultural shifts, and leadership transitions. Psychological capital promotes cognitive flexibility and constructive interpretation of uncertainty, thereby supporting sustained adaptation. The study identifies contextual moderators such as leadership quality, organizational climate, and the nature of change, which influence how psychological capital translates into adaptive behavior. Strategic recommendations emphasize the importance of psychological capital development through structured training, transformational leadership, supportive systems, continuous learning cultures, and well-being programs. Overall, the study provides a comprehensive understanding of how psychological capital can enhance workforce adaptability and strengthen organizational capacity during periods of change

Kata kunci: *Adaptability, Employee Behavior, Organizational Change, Psychological Capital, Transformation..*

INTRODUCTION

Organizational change has become a defining feature of modern workplaces as firms worldwide confront rapid technological disruptions, global competition, economic uncertainty, and shifting workforce expectations. The pace of organizational transformation accelerated significantly following the COVID-19 pandemic, which fundamentally reshaped work structures, organizational strategies, and employee

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behavior. A global survey by McKinsey reported that more than 80 percent of organizations underwent substantial structural or operational changes between 2020 and 2023, with many adopting hybrid working systems, digital process automation, and new performance frameworks. At the same time, the World Economic Forum estimated that over 50 percent of employees globally needed reskilling or upskilling due to automation and digital transformation demands (World Economic Forum, 2022). These changes place considerable psychological and behavioral pressure on employees who must adapt to new technologies, job roles, workflows, and cultural expectations while maintaining productivity and well-being. Employee adaptability therefore emerges as a critical determinant of organizational resilience and transformation success.

In Indonesia, organizational change has also intensified across both public and private sectors. Digital transformation initiatives within major industries, including finance, telecommunication, education, and manufacturing, require employees to adjust to new digital tools, agile working methods, and data-driven performance cultures. According to Indonesia's Ministry of Communication and Informatics, more than 60 percent of medium and large enterprises implemented digital transformation programs between 2021 and 2024, reflecting a nationwide trend toward modernization. However, national labor surveys show that many Indonesian workers experience challenges in coping with rapid change, including job insecurity, technological anxiety, and reduced psychological well-being. These adjustment difficulties directly affect performance indicators such as learning agility, work engagement, and change readiness. As organizational demands increase, employee adaptability becomes a strategic human capital asset essential for sustaining competitiveness and operational continuity (Sitorus & Shrestha, 2025).

Within the context of organizational change, psychological capital, or PsyCap, has gained significant scholarly and practical attention. Psychological capital refers to a positive psychological state characterized by hope, efficacy, resilience, and optimism. These four components shape how employees interpret challenges, exert effort, recover from setbacks, and persist toward long-term goals. Empirical evidence demonstrates that employees with higher levels of PsyCap exhibit better emotional regulation, stronger motivation, and enhanced problem-solving capabilities during periods of change (Luthans & Youssef., 2017). PsyCap plays a vital role in enabling individuals to cope with uncertainty, overcome resistance, and sustain performance under pressure. As organizations increasingly confront complex transformations, understanding the relationship between PsyCap and employee adaptability is essential for designing effective human resource strategies that support change implementation.

Global research highlights the role of PsyCap in shaping employee readiness for change. For example, a study by Kong and colleagues reported that psychological capital positively influences adaptability and reduces resistance during organizational transitions by enhancing employees' cognitive flexibility and proactive attitudes (Kong et al., 2018). Similarly, modern organizational psychology research suggests that hope and optimism help employees maintain motivation during stressful periods, while self-efficacy increases their confidence in mastering new tasks and work conditions (Yuzi et al., 2025). These findings align with broader theories of positive organizational behavior that emphasize the importance of psychological resources for navigating complex and dynamic work environments. As organizations increasingly face turbulence, PsyCap becomes a crucial foundation for employee adaptability and long-term organizational effectiveness.

Technological change further underscores the importance of PsyCap. As artificial intelligence, automation, and digital workflows reshape job duties, employees must continuously learn new competencies and unlearn outdated skills. A global IBM Workforce Study found that technological change remains the leading cause of work-related stress and turnover intent among employees (IBM, 2022). Psychological capital helps mitigate these effects by strengthening employees' confidence and reducing anxiety associated with technological unfamiliarity. In Indonesia's digital transformation context, PsyCap contributes to employees' willingness to adopt digital tools, explore new solutions, and maintain productivity during technological implementation phases (Winasis et al., 2020). Without adequate psychological resources, employees may experience burnout, avoidance behavior, or stagnation, ultimately undermining organizational change initiatives.

Despite growing research interest, existing literature reveals several gaps concerning the PsyCap–adaptability relationship in changing work environments. First, studies such as Witmer & Mellinger, 2016) examined the effect of PsyCap on employee well-being but did not specifically investigate adaptability during organizational transformation. Second, research by Rahi et al., (2022) analyzed change readiness but overlooked the psychological resource-based mechanisms that facilitate adaptive behavior. Third, a study by Kuntz et al., (2017) focused on employee resilience but did not explore the integrated PsyCap construct or its multidimensional influence on adaptability. These gaps indicate the need for research that explicitly connects psychological capital with adaptability within the broader context of organizational change.

Another gap involves the limited integration of contextual factors such as organizational culture, leadership style, and technological transformation intensity. Studies often analyze PsyCap at the individual level without examining how organizational characteristics shape or moderate its effect. For instance, transformational leadership has been shown to enhance PsyCap by creating supportive environments, yet few studies explore how this relationship influences adaptability during periods of transition (Yuzi et al., 2025). Similarly, limited attention has been given to how digital transformation, hybrid working systems, or restructuring efforts interact with PsyCap to influence employee behavior. These gaps illustrate the need for a more holistic understanding of PsyCap within dynamic organizational environments.

This article contributes novelty by integrating psychological, behavioral, and organizational perspectives to examine how psychological capital influences employee adaptability during organizational change. Unlike previous research that isolates PsyCap or focuses narrowly on individual psychological characteristics, this study offers an integrated analysis that incorporates organizational transformation contexts, digital transition factors, and employee adjustment mechanisms. Using a mixed-method approach that combines literature synthesis with secondary data from organizational surveys and global workforce studies, the article provides a comprehensive understanding of how PsyCap shapes adaptive behavior. The purpose of this study is to analyze the influence of psychological capital on employee adaptability within changing organizational environments, identify contextual challenges, and propose strategic approaches that strengthen adaptive capacity during transformation.

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METHODOLOGY

This study employs a mixed-method design that integrates conceptual analysis with secondary data synthesis to examine the influence of psychological capital on employee adaptability during organizational change. The conceptual component is grounded in theories of positive organizational behavior, organizational change, and employee adaptability. The literature review focuses on peer-reviewed publications from 2018 to 2024, sourced from Scopus, ScienceDirect, and Google Scholar, using keywords such as psychological capital, adaptability, organizational change, employee resilience, and digital transformation. Articles were selected based on methodological strength, theoretical relevance, and empirical significance (Yuzi et al., 2025).

The second methodological component involves the utilization of secondary organizational datasets that report global and Indonesian workforce trends related to change readiness, technological disruption, and employee adaptation. These datasets include reports from the World Economic Forum, IBM Workforce Studies, Indonesia's Ministry of Manpower surveys, and organizational change analytics produced by international consulting firms. The secondary data provide numerical indicators of workforce adaptability, psychological stressors, and behavioral responses to transformation, serving as empirical grounding for the conceptual analysis (World Economic Forum, 2022).

Triangulation is applied to connect conceptual insights with empirical patterns, ensuring that theoretical claims align with observed workforce trends. Through triangulation, this study identifies consistencies and discrepancies between the psychological capital literature and organizational change realities. This integrative method strengthens explanatory depth and enhances the validity of conclusions by situating psychological constructs within broader organizational and technological contexts (Winasis et al., 2020).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
Psychological Capital as a Foundation for Adaptive Behavior During Organizational Change

Psychological capital has emerged as a central construct in understanding how employees respond to organizational change, particularly in environments characterized by digital disruption, structural realignment, and shifting psychological expectations. PsyCap, defined by hope, efficacy, resilience, and optimism, forms a psychological resource system that enhances individuals' ability to interpret challenges constructively, maintain effort despite uncertainty, and cope with stressors that arise during transformation. As organizations adopt new strategies, technologies, and work arrangements, employees experience increased demands on cognitive flexibility, emotional stability, and behavioral adaptability. Studies consistently demonstrate that high PsyCap strengthens adaptive capacity by shaping motivational pathways and influencing how individuals interpret workplace change (Luthans & Youssef., 2017). Employees with strong PsyCap tend to perceive change as an opportunity rather than a threat, which enhances their willingness to learn, experiment, and adjust their behaviors accordingly.

One of the primary mechanisms through which PsyCap influences adaptability is the role of self-efficacy. Self-efficacy represents an individual's belief in their ability to perform tasks and manage work challenges. During organizational change, employees frequently encounter new technologies, unfamiliar procedures, or ambiguous

performance expectations. These conditions can generate anxiety and reduce confidence, particularly among individuals with lower exposure to digital tools. High self-efficacy mitigates these responses by reinforcing the belief that challenges can be mastered through effort and persistence. Research shows that employees with higher levels of efficacy are more proactive, more likely to adopt new work systems, and more capable of maintaining performance during transitional periods (Kong et al., 2018). In digital transformation contexts, efficacy becomes critical because technology-driven changes often require continuous learning, experimentation, and rapid adaptation.

Another important component of PsyCap relevant to adaptability is hope. Hope involves goal-oriented energy and the ability to generate alternative pathways when obstacles arise. Organizational change often disrupts established roles, routines, and expectations, requiring employees to redefine goals or develop new strategies for achieving them. Hopeful employees possess cognitive flexibility that allows them to envision multiple pathways toward success and adjust their strategies when confronted with setbacks. This process enhances their capacity to adapt and maintain motivation in the face of uncertainty. Empirical studies indicate that hope positively influences persistence during organizational restructuring, job redesign, and performance evaluation shifts (Yuzi et al., 2025). Within Indonesian organizations undergoing digital transition, hopeful employees demonstrate greater initiative in acquiring digital competencies and exploring new work methods.

Resilience, another dimension of PsyCap, plays a critical role in determining how employees recover from setbacks during organizational change. Change processes are rarely linear and often involve failures, experimentation, and unexpected challenges. Resilient employees are better able to manage emotional responses, rebound from difficulties, and continue to engage productively in change processes. Research in organizational psychology consistently highlights resilience as a buffer against stress, burnout, and emotional exhaustion during large-scale transformation (Rahi et al., 2022). Resilience helps employees maintain stability in environments characterized by uncertainty, enabling them to remain functional even when confronted with rapid change or high workloads. In the Indonesian context, resilience has become increasingly relevant as organizations shift toward hybrid work structures and demand greater individual autonomy.

Optimism, the fourth dimension of PsyCap, further enhances adaptability by shaping expectations of positive outcomes and reducing the cognitive burden of uncertainty. Optimistic employees tend to interpret changes as beneficial and temporary disruptions as manageable. This perspective reduces psychological resistance and fosters a mindset conducive to learning and exploration. Optimism influences how employees evaluate risk, assign meaning to challenges, and sustain long-term engagement. Studies have shown that optimistic individuals display stronger change readiness and reduced resistance during structural transformations (Witmer & Mellinger, 2016). Such employees are more open to acquiring new skills and collaborating with colleagues to navigate new work environments.

While each PsyCap component contributes uniquely to employee adaptability, their combined effect produces a synergistic influence. When employees possess high levels of hope, efficacy, resilience, and optimism simultaneously, they exhibit greater emotional regulation, stronger self-control, and heightened capacity for long-term adjustment. This integrated psychological resource base enables employees to cope effectively with the multidimensional pressures associated with organizational restructuring. As

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organizational environments grow increasingly volatile due to digitalization, market uncertainty, and evolving institutional demands, PsyCap becomes a strategic resource that underpins employee adaptability and performance sustainability.

However, the influence of PsyCap on adaptability is not isolated from contextual factors. Work environments characterized by supportive leadership, clear communication, and psychological safety amplify the positive effects of PsyCap. Transformational leadership, for example, has been shown to enhance PsyCap by fostering autonomy, conveying meaningful purpose, and recognizing employee contributions (Yuzi et al., 2025). In contrast, environments marked by role ambiguity, excessive workloads, or punitive cultures may suppress PsyCap and hinder adaptability even among psychologically strong employees. Organizational support systems, resources, and work climate thus play essential roles in shaping how PsyCap translates into adaptive behavior.

Taken together, psychological capital provides a strong foundation for employee adaptability during organizational change by enhancing self-belief, emotional stability, motivation, and positive future orientation. Understanding these psychological processes is essential for designing targeted interventions that strengthen employee readiness and reduce adjustment barriers. The next section examines how PsyCap functions within organizational transformation contexts, including structural, technological, and cultural dynamics.

Organizational Change Contexts and the Role of Psychological Capital in Facilitating Adaptation

Organizational change environments are characterized by uncertainty, complexity, and heightened performance pressures, making adaptability an essential psychological and behavioral competency for employees. The interplay between psychological capital and organizational change processes determines the extent to which employees can effectively navigate transition periods. Contemporary organizations often introduce multiple forms of change simultaneously, such as technological innovation, structural redesign, role reconfiguration, cultural transformation, and new performance evaluation systems. These shifts require employees not only to learn new skills but also to reinterpret their professional identities and expectations. Psychological capital acts as a stabilizing resource that supports effective adaptation by enhancing employees' perceptions of control, competence, and future orientation. Research indicates that employees with high levels of PsyCap are more capable of interpreting ambiguous change conditions constructively and are more likely to exhibit proactive adaptation behaviors (Luthans & Youssef., 2017). This demonstrates the importance of strengthening psychological resources in environments undergoing rapid or continuous transformation.

One primary domain of organizational change is digital transformation. As firms integrate artificial intelligence, automation, and data-driven processes into operations, employees must adjust to new tools, new workflows, and new skill requirements. The psychological strain associated with digital transformation is substantial. According to the IBM Workforce Study (2022), nearly 60 percent of global employees reported difficulty keeping up with technological change, and almost half expressed worry regarding job displacement. Employees with strong self-efficacy, resilience, and optimism displayed significantly higher digital adoption rates and were more willing to engage with new technological systems. This suggests that psychological capital moderates the negative emotional reactions associated with digital uncertainty, enabling

employees to maintain engagement despite discomfort. In Indonesia, where digital transformation initiatives are accelerating across industries, PsyCap supports employees in navigating digital stressors and encourages them to participate actively in reskilling programs (Winasis et al., 2020).

Organizational restructuring processes, which may involve layoffs, mergers, role consolidation, or departmental reorganization, also present significant psychological challenges. Restructuring environments tend to increase job insecurity, role ambiguity, and perceived instability. Psychological capital plays a critical role in helping employees manage emotional responses to such transitions. Resilient individuals are better prepared to cope with uncertainty, while hopeful employees can create alternative pathways for achieving goals despite structural disruptions. Optimistic employees tend to interpret restructuring as an opportunity for growth rather than a threat, reducing the likelihood of withdrawal behaviors or resistance (Witmer & Mellinger, 2016). In Indonesia's evolving economic landscape, restructuring has become common across sectors such as manufacturing, retail, telecommunications, and fintech. Strengthening PsyCap can therefore support employee transitions and mitigate the negative psychological effects associated with restructuring.

Cultural and leadership transformations represent another major context in which adaptability is tested. Organizations shifting toward more collaborative, innovative, or inclusive cultures require employees to modify interpersonal behaviors, mindset patterns, and professional expectations. Psychological capital contributes to cultural adaptability by enhancing openness, motivation, and willingness to align with new organizational values. Transformational leadership can amplify these effects by fostering trust, empowering employees, and providing meaning during transformation periods. Evidence shows that transformational leaders significantly improve employees' PsyCap through supportive communication and recognition of individual potential, leading to higher adaptability and reduced resistance to cultural change (Yuzi et al., 2025). This suggests that leadership quality interacts strongly with PsyCap in influencing employee adaptability.

To illustrate the complex interaction between change contexts and PsyCap, the following table summarizes major organizational change environments and the psychological capital dimensions most relevant to adaptation in each context.

Table 1. Organizational Change Contexts and Relevant Psychological Capital Dimensions for Adaptation

Organizational Change Context	Key Challenges	Most Relevant PsyCap Dimensions	Expected Adaptive Outcomes
Digital transformation	Technological anxiety, rapid skill changes	Self-efficacy, resilience	Increased digital adoption, learning agility
Organizational restructuring	Job insecurity, role ambiguity	Hope, resilience, optimism	Reduced resistance, greater adjustment stability
Cultural transformation	New norms and expectations	Optimism, hope	Alignment with new values, positive engagement
Leadership transition	Uncertainty about direction	Hope, self-efficacy	Trust formation, proactive behavior
Hybrid work implementation	Work-life balance shifts, autonomy pressure	Resilience, self-efficacy	Consistent performance, flexible work behavior

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The table highlights that psychological capital influences adaptability differently depending on the nature of the change. Digital transformation demands high levels of self-efficacy and resilience, whereas restructuring requires hope and optimism to manage uncertainty. Cultural transitions necessitate cognitive and emotional openness, which are supported by optimism and hope. Hybrid work implementation depends on self-regulation and self-efficacy. This contextualized understanding enables organizations to design targeted interventions that strengthen specific PsyCap dimensions aligned with the type of transformation underway.

Organizational support systems also significantly influence how PsyCap translates into adaptability. Supportive environments that provide clear communication, training opportunities, and psychological safety enhance the impact of PsyCap by reducing external stressors that may hinder adaptive behavior. Conversely, environments marked by insufficient communication, punitive cultures, or poor change management can diminish the effectiveness of psychological capital even among employees with strong personal resources. This suggests that psychological capital must be complemented by institutional mechanisms to optimize adaptability outcomes (Rahi et al., 2022).

Overall, psychological capital serves as a crucial psychological mechanism that enhances adaptability during various types of organizational change. However, its influence is moderated by contextual factors, including leadership, organizational climate, and the nature of the change itself. Recognizing these dynamics is essential for designing adaptive capacity frameworks that integrate psychological, organizational, and structural dimensions.

Strategies for Developing Psychological Capital to Strengthen Employee Adaptability in Transforming Organizations

Strengthening employee adaptability requires deliberate strategies to develop psychological capital within organizational environments undergoing change. Because PsyCap is a state-like psychological resource rather than a fixed trait, it can be cultivated through targeted interventions, supportive leadership practices, and organizational systems that promote psychological growth. One of the most effective strategies for developing PsyCap is structured training programs designed to enhance hope, efficacy, resilience, and optimism. Studies show that PsyCap intervention programs, which often incorporate goal-setting exercises, cognitive reframing, behavioral modelling, and reflective practices, lead to measurable increases in employee PsyCap levels within short periods (Kong et al., 2018). These interventions help employees reinterpret challenges constructively, create realistic pathways for accomplishing goals, and adopt more adaptive perspectives toward organizational change.

Leadership development is another essential strategy for enhancing psychological capital. Leaders influence employee emotions, motivation, and perceptions during transformation. Transformational leaders, in particular, play a crucial role in shaping PsyCap through inspirational communication, individualized support, and modeling optimistic behavior. They provide meaning, recognize individual strengths, and help employees reinterpret difficulties as opportunities for growth. Research shows that transformational leadership enhances both PsyCap and adaptability by creating environments that support experimentation, psychological safety, and autonomy (Yuzi et al., 2025). Organizations undergoing digital or structural change should therefore invest

in leadership development programs that strengthen leaders' capacity to foster PsyCap among their teams.

Supportive organizational systems also contribute significantly to PsyCap development. When organizations provide access to resources such as training, mentoring, technical support, and clear communication channels, employees feel more secure and confident during transitions. Psychological safety, in particular, strengthens resilience and optimism by reducing fear of failure and enabling constructive risk-taking. Transparent communication helps employees understand the rationale behind changes, reducing uncertainty and allowing them to align expectations. Evidence indicates that employees are more adaptable when organizational environments actively support skill development and encourage innovation (Winasis et al., 2020). This suggests that PsyCap cultivation is not solely an individual-level process but depends on institutional design.

Another effective strategy involves fostering a culture of continuous learning. Learning-oriented cultures encourage curiosity, experimentation, and self-development, all of which contribute to higher PsyCap. When employees view change as an opportunity to learn rather than a threat to their competence, hope and optimism increase naturally. Organizations can build such cultures by implementing continuous training programs, cross-functional learning initiatives, and platforms that encourage knowledge sharing. Digital transformation environments, in particular, require constant learning and adjustment, making learning culture a critical foundation for adaptability.

Interventions that promote well-being also strengthen psychological capital. Stress-management programs, mindfulness training, and employee assistance efforts help reduce the emotional strain associated with organizational change. By supporting psychological well-being, organizations indirectly increase resilience and optimism. Research demonstrates that employees with higher well-being exhibit better adaptability and maintain performance during periods of transformation (Witmer & Mellinger, 2016). This highlights the interconnectedness between psychological health and adaptive capacity.

Moreover, organizations should integrate performance frameworks that reward adaptive behavior. Traditional performance metrics often focus on output rather than learning, experimentation, or adaptability. By recognizing and rewarding employees who demonstrate learning agility, initiative, and constructive engagement with change, organizations reinforce PsyCap development and encourage sustained adaptive behavior. This aligns with the view that adaptability must be institutionalized rather than left to individual effort alone.

To ensure long-term effectiveness, organizations must adopt a multi-level approach that combines individual interventions, leadership development, and systemic support. Psychological capital cannot be strengthened in isolation. Its development requires alignment between organizational culture, leadership practices, and individual psychological resources. Training programs can strengthen individual PsyCap, but without supportive leadership and institutional reinforcement, gains may not be sustained. Conversely, strong leadership and supportive organizations cannot fully compensate for low individual PsyCap without targeted development initiatives. A multi-level strategy therefore provides the most comprehensive approach for strengthening employee adaptability.

In Indonesia's rapidly transforming organizational landscape, these strategies are particularly relevant. Digital shift initiatives, the rise of hybrid work structures, post-pandemic transitions, and intensified global competition place substantial psychological demands on employees. Organizations that invest in PsyCap development will be better

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equipped to maintain productivity, retain talent, and navigate continuous transformation. Furthermore, strengthening PsyCap aligns with broader human resource strategies aimed at building resilient, innovative, and future-ready workforces capable of meeting the challenges of global change.

CONCLUSIONS

This study demonstrates that psychological capital constitutes a critical foundation for employee adaptability during organizational change, particularly in environments shaped by digital transformation, restructuring, leadership shifts, and evolving cultural expectations. Employees with higher levels of hope, efficacy, resilience, and optimism show stronger motivation, greater emotional stability, and more proactive engagement with new tasks and procedures. The analysis illustrates that psychological capital influences adaptive behavior through cognitive flexibility, constructive interpretation of challenges, and sustained effort in the face of uncertainty. Moreover, its effects are shaped by contextual factors such as leadership support, organizational climate, and the specific type of change underway. These findings indicate that psychological capital is not only a personal resource but also a strategic organizational asset that enables effective navigation of complex transformation demands.

To enhance adaptability, organizations must adopt structural interventions that cultivate psychological capital across multiple levels. Targeted PsyCap training programs, transformational leadership development, and supportive organizational systems contribute to strengthening psychological resources among employees. Integrating continuous learning cultures, psychological safety practices, and well-being initiatives further reinforces adaptive behavior and reduces resistance to change. Sustainable adaptability requires aligning individual development efforts with institutional frameworks that reward flexibility, innovation, and proactive engagement. As Indonesian and global organizations continue to face rapid technological and structural changes, investing in psychological capital offers a comprehensive approach to building resilient, future-ready workforces capable of thriving in dynamic environments.

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