

Fall 2003

Municipal Research News

Municipal Research and Services Center of Washington

What's Inside

Pipeline Franchise
Authority 4

Heads Up 5

Election Season 5

Ask MRSC 6

New Acquisitions 7

Leadership

Leaders and followers – a symbiotic relationship

"The ultimate test of practical leadership is the realization of intended, real change that meets people's enduring needs."¹

Too often we hear the plaintive cry – “where have all the leaders gone?” Has the quality of civic leadership really diminished in recent years, as many critics claim? Certainly, an increasingly diverse, complex, and fast-paced society has intensified the demands and challenges of leadership, and, no doubt, lessened the attractiveness of leadership positions for many. As citizens we expect a lot from our leaders. And when they fail to meet our high expectations, our disappointment is equally high. Too often the press and the public latch onto a leader's flaws or mistakes, and take great pleasure in bringing him or her down. Who wants to be a public leader in this environment? Yet, we continue to hold a collective belief that quality leadership is both critical and necessary.

Of course, there can be no leaders without followers. But the same societal trends that have reduced the ranks of potential leaders may also be responsible for a decline in the number of followers. Robert Putnam, in his book, *Bowling Alone*, documents significant erosion in our collective civic life over the past four decades.² We participate less in activities that build social ties and make our lives more productive. The idea that social networks have value and affect the productivity of individuals and groups has been termed the theory of “social capital.” Less participation in service clubs, church communities, political events, and community action programs has reduced the number of opportunities for building “social capital,” which, according to

Putnam, is the critical ingredient for a rich civic life.

Lower rates of civic participation have also reduced the pool of people who learn how to run meetings, speak in public, organize projects, and debate public projects with civility. And this is the same pool of citizens from which we have traditionally drawn most of our civic leaders. The result has been fewer citizens who are willing or able to participate in their communities' civic affairs. Thus, one of the primary challenges of leadership in contemporary society may be to re-establish lost community connections, replenish our store of social capital, and thereby begin to reinvigorate our civic life. Social capital makes us smarter, healthier, safer, richer, and better able to govern a just and stable democracy.³

No single article, or even series of articles, can do justice to the complex subject of leadership. Our goal is to explore dimensions of leadership to learn important lessons for improving local government. This article is the first of a series that will explore key questions:

- What is leadership and what are the tasks of leadership?
- How does one become a leader?
- Is leadership fundamentally different in the public sector?
- Is civic leadership important? Does it matter and does it make a difference?
- How do leadership roles vary for different elected officials and in different forms of government? Does staff have leadership roles?

continued on page 3

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Working together for excellence in local government

Publication Corner Now Available. . .



Budget Suggestions for 2004 contains suggestions to assist in the preparation of city and county annual budgets; descriptions and interpretations of 2003 legislation that may affect budgets; CPI forecasts and state-shared revenue forecasts; articles on public development authorities, biennial budgeting, and identity theft; information on using levy lid lifts; and updates on last year's initiatives. Paper copies of this publication have been mailed to all mayors, city managers and administrators, and finance directors and clerk-treasurers. *Budget Suggestions* is also available on our Web site at <http://www.mrsc.org/publications/bs2004.pdf> or by contacting MRSC at (206) 625-1300 and requesting a paper copy.

Special Purpose Districts in Washington State provides an overview of special purpose districts in Washington State. Topics include brief discussions of the pros and cons of special district governance, district formation, elections, funding, accountability, county services, and provisions for district dissolution. This publication is available on our Web site at <http://www.mrsc.org/Publications/spd.pdf> or by contacting MRSC at (206) 625-1300 and requesting a paper copy.

CONTACTING MRSC

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What is Leadership?

Even as we bemoan the dearth of willing and capable leaders, there is much confusion about what “leadership” actually is. First, we should not confuse leadership with formal power and authority. A person with formal power and authority, such as an elected official, is certainly in a role from which leadership can be exercised. Indeed the public expects leadership in such positions. However, such individuals cannot be effective leaders if they do not know how to mobilize available resources, meet legitimate needs of constituents, or understand the limitations of the role. Second, while there may be some “born leaders,” there are too few to depend on. For the most part, leadership can and must be learned.⁴

There is no apparent shortage of leadership theories or theorists. A popular and traditional leadership theory is based on an analysis of the traits shared by great national and international leaders. This leadership theory examines the personality characteristics of great leaders and suggests that the rise to power is rooted in a combination of personal talents, skills, and physical characteristics. Other theorists, however, place more emphasis on situational factors, arguing that “history makes the leader; the leader does not make history.” Prior to his heroic role in rallying the citizens of Great Britain to face the threat of Nazi Germany, Winston Churchill was widely viewed as someone who would never amount to much. The situational view holds that different circumstances and events demand different personalities and, thus, require different leadership styles and skills. Yet another theory focuses on the transactions between leaders and followers as a way to understand how leaders gain power and influence and sustain it over time. According to this view, leaders are allowed to lead so long as they meet the goals and needs of the followers.

John Gardner, author of the book, *On Leadership*, notes that leaders distinguish themselves from followers in several important ways:⁵

- They think “longer term.” Leaders stay focused beyond the demands of the daily crises. Effective elected leaders have a

time horizon that goes well beyond the next election.

- They grasp the relationship of the unit they are leading to larger realities. Local governments have limited powers. The ability to realize community goals requires an understanding of conditions in the private sector and the larger region, and sometimes an understanding of global trends. This is especially important in the face of dire local government financing problems. Over the next several years, our local leaders will face demands to restructure, if not reinvent, local government services.

“ Leaders are effective and succeed when they advance collective, not personal, purposes.”

- They reach and influence people beyond their jurisdiction. Leaders influence people across boundaries, and they rise above their organization to bind fragmented constituencies that must work together to solve a community problem.
- They put heavy emphasis on the intangibles of vision, values, and motivation. The vision may be a personal vision of their community’s future, but more likely it is a shared community vision developed through a deliberative, collaborative process. Values are the core of this shared vision – the norms, expectations, and purposes. Leaders focus on “why,” keeping the community pointed in the right direction. Leaders are effective and succeed when they advance collective, not personal, purposes.
- They have the political skill to work with multiple constituencies. In a pluralistic society, elected officials live in a world of conflicting values. Legislative bodies are constantly weighing and balancing conflicting values to reach compromise decisions. As our communities have become more diverse, leadership has become more difficult because consensus is harder to achieve.

- They think in terms of renewal. The systems over which leaders preside require continuous renewal. Organizations and communities age, and values decay. Leaders renew and reinterpret values, liberate energies that have been trapped by outmoded procedures, and reenergize forgotten goals.

The tasks of leadership flow from these important principles. Leaders put their energies into:

- *Envisioning Goals* – Leaders engage us in the process of developing, redefining, and reaffirming goals. In this sense, they point in the right direction and get us moving.
- *Affirming Values* – Without continuous reminders, values can erode over time. A task of leadership is to adapt values to present realities, to revitalize shared beliefs and values.
- *Motivating* – Leaders do not create motivation out of thin air; they unlock or channel existing motives. They deal with the circumstances that often cause group members to withhold their best efforts. They call for the kind of drive and discipline that makes great performance. They create a climate of pride in making significant contributions to shared goals.
- *Managing* – Tasks include (1) planning and priority setting, (2) organizing and institution building, (3) keeping the system functioning, and (4) agenda setting and decision making. The precise roles played by elected officials who lead will vary with the form of government.
- *Achieving Workable Unity* – All leaders spend time dealing with polarization and building community.
- *Explaining* – People want to know why they are being asked to do certain things. Leaders teach us.
- *Serving as a Symbol* – The leader symbolizes the group’s collective identity, institutional continuity, and ceremonial and collective voice.
- *Representing the Group* – Leaders speak on behalf of the organizations they lead.
- *Renewing* – Leaders must foster the process of civic renewal.

We ask a lot of our leaders. We expect them to have exceptional qualities. Some qualities are learned or skill-based such as intelligence, sound judgment, competence,

continued on page 4

Leadership continued from page 3

skill in dealing with people, capacity to motivate, ability to manage and set priorities, assertiveness, adaptability, and flexibility of approach. Other qualities are innately personal and harder to learn, such as physical vitality and stamina, a need to achieve, courage, a capacity to win trust, confidence, and a willingness to accept responsibility. No wonder good leaders are hard to find!

Often we scapegoat our leaders. By pinning the blame on authority, we do not have to take personal responsibility for our difficulties and predicaments. Some problems and issues are inherently simpler, lending themselves to a type of leadership where

“
...leaders mobilize economic,
political, and other resources to
realize goals mutually held by
both leaders and followers.”

we defer to authority. Leaders receive power with the expectation of providing service. We insist that people in authority provide direction, protection, and order. But when communities face an adaptive challenge, where known methods and procedures do not suffice, “Instead of looking for saviors, we should be calling for leadership that will challenge us to face problems for which there are no simple, painless solutions – problems that require us to learn new ways.”⁶

Ronald Heifetz describes a form of leadership that involves those with a significant stake in outcomes in the decision. His

strategic approach can be uncomfortable to participants because they must accept responsibility for results. His strategic principles of leadership focus on identifying adaptive challenges, keeping the level of organizational distress within a tolerable range of doing adaptive work, ripening issues, giving work back to the people at a rate they can stand, and protecting voices of leaders who have no formal authority. This approach gives up “expert” control over the outcome.⁷

In summary, leaders mobilize economic, political, and other resources to realize goals mutually held by both leaders and followers. Leaders shape, alter, and elevate the motives, values, and goals of followers through the vital teaching role of leadership. This is transforming leadership.⁸ In responding to their own motives, leaders appeal to the motives of potential followers. As followers respond, a symbiotic relationship develops that binds leader and follower together into a social and political compact. Both leaders and followers shape purpose. However, with our ever-increasing diverse and fragmented society, it has become more difficult for leaders to discern the popular will from which to draw strength and develop a cohesive direction. The challenge is how to rekindle civic engagement so that leaders are able to lead. No easy task in this era with no easy answers.▶

Richard Yukubousky
Executive Director
Municipal Research and Services Center

Throughout the series, we will be looking for examples of excellence in local leadership. If you have a prospective candidate, or wish to comment on any aspect of this series, send an e-mail to Rich Yukubousky at ryukubousky@mrsc.org.

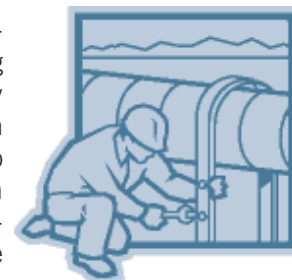
Pipeline Franchise Authority

The cities of Seattle and Federal Way are currently involved in litigation in federal court with Olympic Pipeline, the private operator of a gasoline pipeline running along the I-5 corridor from northern Washington to Oregon. The primary issue is the right of local governments to impose safety regulations upon the company as part of its franchising process. The companies that operate interstate transmission pipelines are licensed and regulated by the federal government (Office of Pipeline Safety) because the pipelines are engaged in interstate commerce. The companies are also under various degrees of regulation by the individual states (in Washington by the WUTC). Cities and counties are increasingly concerned over the safety of their residents, and now they want to play a significant role in the regulation process.

At issue is the basic authority of local governments to use the franchising process as a means to negotiate safety requirements that enhance the margin of safety for their communities. Local governments also are seeking the right to detailed information regarding pipeline testing and safety procedures. The Bellingham disaster in 1999 has raised awareness concerning the dangers of aging pipelines, and the Seattle litigation may help to define the role that local governments will play in this process.

The Washington City and County Pipeline Safety Consortium, formed after the Bellingham disaster, is seeking to pool resources and provide a unified voice for the concerns of Washington local government jurisdictions.

General information concerning pipeline safety may be found on the MRSC Web site, along with information regarding the Pipeline Safety Consortium. See <http://www.mrsc.org/subjects/pubsafe/pipesafety.aspx>▶



1. James MacGregor Burns, *Leadership*, (New York: Harper and Row, 1979), p 461.
2. Robert Putnam, *Bowling Alone*, (New York, Simon and Schuster, 2000)
3. Ibid., p 290.
4. Frances Hesselbein, Marshall Goldsmith, and Richard Beckhard (eds.), *The Leader of the Future*, (New York: The Peter F. Drucker Foundation, 1996), p. xi.
5. John W. Gardner, *On Leadership*, (New York: The Free Press, 1990).
6. Ronald Heifetz, *Leadership without Easy Answers*, (Cambridge, Mass.: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2000), p2.
7. Ibid., P 167.
8. James MacGregor Burns, *Leadership*, p 425.

HEADS UP

Emerging information for local government

America's Promise

Several Washington jurisdictions - Lakewood, Sunnyside, Spokane, and Pierce County - are participating in the America's Promise program. The program was founded after the Presidents' Summit for America's Future in 1997. Presidents Clinton, Bush, Carter, and Ford, and First Lady Nancy Reagan representing her husband challenged the nation to make youth a national priority. Their call to action included a commitment on the part of the nation to fulfill the "Five Promises." The promises are (1) to provide on-going relationships with caring adults — parents, mentors, tutors, or coaches — who offer youth support, and care and guidance; (2) to provide safe places with structured activities during nonschool hours that provide both physical and emotional safety for youth; (3) to provide adequate nutrition, exercise, and health care to pave the way for healthy bodies, healthy minds, and smart habits for adulthood; (4) to provide marketable skills through effective education that help youth successfully navigate the transition from school to work; and (5) to enhance self-esteem, boost confidence, and heighten a sense of responsibility to the community by providing opportunities to "give back" through community service. For more information see: <http://www.americaspromise.org/>

"Tobacco Free Zones" in Spokane City Parks

This past June, the Spokane Parks and Recreation Department launched a six-month pilot project designating "Tobacco Free Zones" in most city parks. The program is in cooperation with the Spokane Regional Health District's Tobacco Prevention and Control Program and the Tobacco Free Spokane Coalition.

The purpose of the pilot program is to increase public awareness about the health risks of tobacco use and the dangers of second hand smoke, especially in park ar-

eas used by children. The program is self-enforcing. "Tobacco Free Zones" include park playgrounds, outdoor municipal swimming/wade and spray pools, picnic shelters, park restrooms, Under the Freeway Skate Park, Manito Park's formal gardens and Gaiser Conservatory, and certain park facilities, such as the Riverfront Park Carrousel & Pavilion and the Finch Arboretum's Woodland Center. "Tobacco Free Zone" signs will be posted in all restricted areas; tobacco use will be permitted in the rest of the park.

Other Washington cities with smoke free parks programs are Sultan, Ridgefield, and Olympia, as well as cities that participated in one day awareness programs. See *DOH Tobacco Program* page: <http://www.doh.wa.gov/Tobacco/default.htm>

Federal Way Shopping Cart Round Up

Every month local stores lose hundreds of dollars due to shopping carts removed from their stores, never to be returned. Stores with sufficient staffing regularly patrol their neighborhoods to retrieve what they can find. Others rely on phone calls from the public to provide them with information on the location of carts. Besides being a costly problem for local stores, shopping carts can cause safety problems and detract from commercial and residential neighborhoods. In the city of Federal Way, city staff teamed up with local stores and volunteers to round up 231 displaced shopping carts. In "Operation Go Carts!" teams of city staff members and store volunteers followed assigned routes to retrieve carts from apartment parking lots, bus stops, vacant lots, city parks, etc. The carts were sorted and then returned to the appropriate store. The city will focus on a public education campaign to let people know that taking shopping carts is illegal. RCW 9A.56.270 makes the theft of shopping carts a misdemeanor. Contact *Kathy McClung, Community Development Services Director*, for more information on the program. ■

It's Here . . . Election Season

Since it's "that time" again - election season - let's once again review the rules regarding the use of public facilities and staff for political purposes.

The Rules

Elected officials may not:

Use or authorize the use of public facilities, either directly or indirectly, to support or oppose a candidate for public office or a ballot measure. A municipality may make meeting rooms or facilities available on a nondiscriminatory, equal access basis for political uses.

Elected officials may:

Express a collective decision supporting or opposing a ballot proposition.

Requires special notice for the meeting, which must include the title and number of ballot proposition.

Opposition comments must be allowed.

Make a statement at an open press conference or in response to a specific inquiry.

Engage in activities that are part of "normal and regular conduct" of elected officials. Municipalities may make an "objective and fair presentation of facts relevant to a ballot proposition," such as providing details about the financial impact of an initiative on the local government, or how revenues will be impacted by passage.

Public employees may not:

Work on an election campaign during office hours.

Use any municipal facilities, equipment, or supplies for political purposes. This includes office space, stationery, postage, computers, machines, vehicles, etc.

Public employees may:

Provide neutral information about the impact of ballot propositions on municipal activities. (See WAC 390-05-271.)

continued on page 8

ASK MRSC

Summaries of recent inquiries answered by MRSC consultants

Bidding: Local Preference – May a county or city grant a preference for bids submitted by local vendors or contractors?

A county or city may not grant a local preference for bidders unless there is specific authorization in state law for granting the preference. There is only one preference authorized in state law in relation to the bid law. RCW 39.30.040 was enacted in 1985 and provides that whenever a city or county is required to make purchases from the lowest responsible bidder, it can take into consideration tax revenue it would receive from purchasing the supplies from a source located within the jurisdiction. Tax revenues that may be considered include sales taxes and business and occupation taxes. This preference only applies to purchases of supplies, materials, and equipment, not public works contracts.

Meeting Participation by Newly-elected Officials – May a newly-elected councilmember or mayor participate in council meetings or executive sessions prior to the beginning of their term on January 1?

Clearly, a newly-elected official may attend any public meeting of the city, just as any citizen may. However, until the successful candidate has been sworn in, assumes office, and the new term begins, he or she has no rights that are not shared by other citizens. A newly-elected official may not vote on issues before the council, nor attend executive sessions unless invited by the governing body.

Newly-elected Officials: Salary Increase – May newly-elected councilmembers receive a salary increase at the beginning of their new term in January, if the increase is enacted by the city council after the election in November of the previous year?

No. The constitutional prohibition against raising the salaries of councilmembers applies to the term of office and also to any

increase enacted after the election. So, if a city council intends a salary increase to apply to councilmembers elected in November and beginning a new term in January, the council must enact the salary increase prior to the November election. A salary increase for councilmembers enacted after the November elections will not apply to those councilmembers beginning a new term in January.

Oath of Office – When can the oath of office be given to newly-elected councilmembers after their election in November?

The oath of office is the last step in qualifying for office. First, the election results must be certified, then any required bond must be posted, and, finally, the winning candidate must take the oath of office. The oath of office can be taken up to ten days prior to the beginning of the new term (January 1) or at the last regular council meeting of the year. The oath can also be taken at any time after the beginning of the new term. Many cities administer the oath at the first regular council meeting of the new term. The oath need not be given at a council meeting.

Oath of Office – Who can administer the oath of office?

The oath can be administered by many officials, including the following: a notary public, a judge, a justice of the peace, a city or town clerk, a city or town mayor, a court commissioner, a clerk of the court, a county auditor or deputy auditor, or a county legislative authority.

Political Sign Regulation – May a city or county require that political campaign signs be taken down within a certain amount of time after an election?

Yes. In *Collier v. Tacoma*, 121 Wn.2d 737 (1993), the state supreme court invalidated *pre-election* restrictions concerning when political campaign signs may be displayed, but it upheld the valid-

ity of the city's *post-election* requirement that the signs be removed within seven days after the election.

Pregnancy Discrimination – How long must a local government employer make light duty available to a pregnant employee?

In general, an employer is not required to provide a light duty assignment for pregnant employees. However, because of the federal Pregnancy Discrimination Act (PDA) and our state anti-discrimination law (see WAC 162-30-020), an employer may not treat pregnant employees any differently than it treats other employees with a non-work related injury. (Note that pregnancy is not considered a disability under the ADA.)

Similarly, the state Human Rights Commission regulations provide that it is an unfair labor practice “for an employer, because of pregnancy or childbirth, to . . . impose different terms and conditions of employment on a woman.” WAC 162-30-020(3)(a)(ii).

So, if an employer provides light duty assignments for employees with a non-work related injury or temporary health problem, it must treat pregnant employees similarly. Federal courts have held that the PDA is not violated when it offers light duty solely to employees who are injured on the job and not to employees, including pregnant ones, who suffer from a non-occupational “injury.” There is no legal requirement that an employer provide more light duty than is available to other employees with a non-work related injury or temporary health problem. ▀

How to “Ask MRSC.” Assistance from MRSC may be obtained by **Phone** (206) 625-1300 or 1-800-933-6772 for long-distance calls; **Letter** 2601 4th Avenue, Suite 800, Seattle, WA, 98121-1280; **Fax** (206) 625-1220; or **E-mail** mrsc@mrsc.org. Telephone inquiry service is available from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. If a consultant is not immediately available, you can record a detailed request on voice mail 24-hours a day, and a staff member will call back as soon as possible.

LIBRARY LISTINGS

New resource materials now available

New Acquisitions

This list contains new publications, ordinances, and other materials recently received by the MRSC library. We also prepare a more comprehensive list of new acquisitions each month which is posted on our Web site at www.mrsc.org/library/newacq.htm. If you would like to borrow one or more of these publications, please contact Amy Harper in our library at (206) 625-1300.

▼Economic Development

Economic Development: Strategies for State and Local Practice, by Steven G. Koven, Thomas S. Lyons, 2003

Compact Development Compact Disc Toolkit [computer file], Local Government Commission, 2002

Emergency Management 101 for Local Elected Officials, presented by Association of Washington Cities, 2003

▼Environment

Wetland Design: Principles and Practices for Landscape Architects and Land-Use Planners, by Robert L. France; illustrated by Carlos Torres and Mathew Tucker, 2003

Innovative Small Lot Housing: Selected References, Urban Land Institute, 2003

Force under Pressure: How Cops Live and Why They Die, by Lawrence N. Blum, 2000

▼Finance

Evaluating Financial Conditions: A Handbook for Local Government, revised by Karl Nollenberger; 4th ed, 2003

Kenmore Downtown Plan, City of Kenmore, 2003

Homeland Security: Practical Tools for Local Governments, National League of Cities, 2002

Design-Build Manual of Practice, Design-Build Institute of America, 2000

Land Development Calculations, by Walter M. Hosack, 2001

Public Works Inspectors' Manual, by Silas B. Birch, Jr., 2001

▼Governance

Governance Coordination Manual, City of Spokane, 2003

Master Planned Resorts "Washington Style", by Susan C. Enger, 2003

▼Transportation/Traffic/Streets

Planning for Street Connectivity: Getting from Here to There, by Susan Handy, Robert G. Paterson, and Kent Butler, 2003

Profiles in Courage for our Time, introduced and edited by Caroline Kennedy, 2002

Mixed-Use Development Handbook, by Dean Schwanke, 2003

Making Intersections Safer: A Toolbox of Engineering Countermeasures to Reduce Red-Light Running: An Informational Report, Institute of Transportation Engineers, 2003.

▼Housing

Innovative Attached Housing: Selected References, Urban Land Institute, 2003

Paying for Prosperity: Impact Fees and Job Growth, by Arthur C. Nelson, Mitch Moody, 2003

▼Utilities

Natural Approaches to Stormwater Management: Low Impact Development in Puget Sound, Puget Sound Action, 2003.

Innovative Small Lot Housing: Selected References, Urban Land Institute, 2003

Smart Growth Transportation Guidelines: An ITE Proposed Recommended Practice, by ITE SMart Growth Task Force, 2003

Seismic Screening Checklists for Water and Wastewater Facilities, edited by William F. Heubach, 2003.▶

▼Planning and Land Use

Cities in Full: Recognizing and Realizing the Great Potential of Urban America, by Steve Belmont, 2002

Smart Growth Zoning Codes: A Resource Guide, by Steve Tracy, 2003

Western by Design: Tools for Discussing Local Growth [kit], Western Rural Development Center, 2001

▼Public Safety

Comprehensive Emergency Management Planning Guide, by Washington State Military Department, Emergency Management Division, 2003

Election Season continued from page 5

Research the potential impact of ballot issues to respond to citizen inquiries or to determine how the proposition will affect the municipality.

Respond to public records requests.

While on their own time, work in support of or opposition to a ballot measure or express their own personal opinions and support for candidates.

Excerpted from an article titled, "Elections: Reminders and Cautions," *Municipal Research News*, Fall 2000.



Questions? The MRSC legal staff and/or the Public Disclosure Commission (PDC) are both available to answer any questions regarding election and campaign issues. MRSC may be contacted by phone at (206) 625-1300; e-mail mrsc@mrsc.org. The PDC may be reached by phone at (360) 753-1111 or by fax at (360) 753-1112.▶



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