Upon completing this chapter’s training, you will be able to:

1. Explain how a speaker’s delivery style can enhance or detract from the speech
2. Distinguish among the following delivery modes: memorization, manuscript, extemporaneous, impromptu, and sound bite
3. Determine the best method of delivery for a speech
Poor delivery kills good ideas. Having something to say is only half the battle. The other half is conveying your message effectively and with sincerity—delivering it as if you mean it.¹

Good delivery connects you and the audience. A well-delivered speech lets your audience believe that you care about both your topic and them. It helps your audience interpret your message appropriately, and it closes whatever gap may exist between you. Because good delivery feels natural, and because it is conversational in tone, it also sounds as if you are talking with rather than at audience members. In other words, good delivery makes you sound spontaneous, as though you were speaking the words in your presentation for the very first time.²

Audience members expect you to be confident and your words to be heartfelt—they want to believe you. To be effective in delivering your speech, you need to master whatever mode of delivery you choose to use. To do this, you need to learn the options, set a goal, and monitor your progress—just as an elite athlete does—when preparing for game day.

In this chapter, we consider delivery styles—the manner or mode of presentation you select to communicate your speech. Thus, our focus is switching from researching content and preparing your speech to actually delivering it.
**Chapter 14: Styles of Delivery**

**14.1 Choose a Delivery Mode**

How do you choose an appropriate delivery style? You take the following three factors into account:

1. The nature of the speaking occasion
2. The purpose of the presentation
3. Your strengths and abilities

Decide whether it is best to deliver a speech from memory, read it from a manuscript, make a few impromptu remarks, speak extemporaneously, or present a sound bite or “Twitter speak” for media consumption. In effect, it is your decision whether to memorize and recite the speech (also known as oratory), adhere to a manuscript, deliver impromptu remarks, speak extemporaneously, or provide a succinct sound bite, similar to a Twitter feed.

Whichever method you choose, the mode of delivery should not call attention to itself. Listeners need to be free to concentrate on your ideas, not your mode of delivery. Each of the styles is appropriate for different occasions, purposes, and speakers. Let’s see why.

**Table 14.1 Delivery Modes and Likely Uses**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DELIVERY MODE</th>
<th>LIKELY USE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Memorization</td>
<td>When delivering a brief special occasion speech such as a toast or speech of introduction; when no lengthy quotations or statistical proof are required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manuscript</td>
<td>When precise wording is crucial; when you need to avoid being misquoted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extemporaneous</td>
<td>When you are given sufficient time to prepare, develop a working outline or speaker’s notes, and practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impromptu</td>
<td>When you are asked to speak on a moment’s notice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sound bite/Twitter speak</td>
<td>When you need to provide a quotable, tweetable statement</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
14.1a Speaking From Memory

When you write your speech out in full, commit it to memory, and then recite it word for word for an audience without using a manuscript, outline, or speaker’s notes, you are speaking from memory. Speaking from memory, also known as oratory, requires considerable skill and speaking expertise. For one thing, the pressures brought about by the actual presentation could cause you to draw a blank at any point during the speech. Should that occur, instead of listening to you speak, your audience faces a stunning silence as you grope for the words you lost. When you speak from memory, you attempt to deliver your speech word for word, and that makes it even more difficult for you to recover if you make a mistake.

The tension you feel when delivering a memorized speech could affect your delivery in other ways as well. Your delivery could come off as stiff, stilted, unnatural, and machine-like rather than flexible, friendly, and relaxed. Because you are afraid to deviate from your memorized text for fear of forgetting something, your ability to respond easily to audience feedback might also be inhibited. The danger for some speakers is that they come off sounding mechanical, making this a technique they should not rely on unless absolutely necessary.

Memorizing a speech does, however, offer certain advantages. It is much easier to establish and sustain eye contact with the members of the audience when you don’t have to continually look down at a manuscript or notes. Your hands also are freer to gesture and support the meaning of your message.

Although there certainly are a number of speaking occasions that lend themselves to speaking from memory, including toasts and testimonials, acceptance speeches, speeches of introduction, and eulogies, the bulk of your speechmaking experiences will be a composite of the remaining delivery methods. Of course, even when using these, you might find it useful to memorize some sections of your speech such as the introduction, conclusion, or a particularly effective quotation.

When delivering a speech, or even a section of a speech, from memory, keep these techniques in mind:

1. Rehearse sufficiently to sound natural.
2. Keep your energy high.
3. Use appropriate nonverbal cues to reinforce the spoken words.
14.1b Manuscript Reading

When running for president in 2008, former candidate John McCain was criticized for his inability to use the Teleprompter. More comfortable in “give-and-take” impromptu settings and town meetings, McCain found it difficult to meet the challenge of more formal speaking demands, often sounding like he was reading rather than speaking, his lines, and creating the impression that he was overscripted. Yet, if McCain misread a line, he was suspected of being unprepared—with his misstatements becoming fodder for YouTube. In contrast to McCain, President Barack Obama is very comfortable using the Teleprompter, turning to it not only for his most important speeches but also for routine announcements and the opening statements at news conferences. For President Obama, the Teleprompter was not the challenge it was for McCain, but a means of ensuring that he stuck to his intended message.

Like speaking from memory, manuscript reading requires that you write a manuscript in full and deliver it word for word, but you need not commit the text to memory. At the same time, because reading aloud well requires every bit as much skill as mastering a script and delivering it expressively, manuscript reading is not as easy as it sounds. In fact, if you do not invest a lot of time practicing reading your manuscript aloud, you could end up eye- and hand-tied to your manuscript, and thus deprive your audience of meaningful eye contact and gesturing.
Bringing the printed page to life for listeners requires that you take your eyes off the manuscript and close the communicative gap existing between you and your audience. If you read in a monotone, if your delivery sounds mechanized, you will bore receivers. The reading of your speech needs to sound like conversation to your listeners. It needs to sound as though you are speaking rather than reading it, or it will not have the impact you desire. Because the manuscript directs the speaker, it also becomes virtually impossible to go off script and adapt it, changing a word or phrase as needed. Thus, a manuscript affords a speaker less flexibility.

Certain occasions necessitate the delivery of a manuscript speech. Among these are presidential, foreign policy, and political addresses; official proclamations; and presentations at business, trade, and stockholder meetings. Any time a speaker needs to be especially careful about the phrasing of a problem or policy, or when time is limited, a manuscript speech may be the right choice. The key to effective delivery of a manuscript speech, however, is to sound and appear natural. It is one thing to rely on a manuscript to help you avoid making a misstatement, committing a slip of the tongue, or otherwise distorting the wording of your message. It is another thing to be able to focus not only on your manuscript but also on your audience. For a manuscript speech to achieve maximum impact, the speaker needs to master the personal touch, creating the feeling that the speech is being spoken with sincerity, not being read from a script. This requires that vocal cues (delivering lines with ease) and physical cues (no poorly timed hand-chops or inappropriate smiles) also support delivery. We cover both these topics in succeeding sections of this playbook.

When the demands of the occasion make manuscript delivery necessary, remember the following:

1. Write the speech to be listened to; the audience will not be reading along with you.
2. Be sure to use a font that is easy to read and large enough to see.
3. Mark up the manuscript with delivery cues. Focus on communicating ideas, not words.
4. Practice reading it aloud so your words sound fresh.
5. Become so familiar with the manuscript that you are able to maintain eye contact and integrate appropriate gestures.
14.1c Impromptu Speaking

How did you feel the last time you were put on the spot and asked to say a few words? Perhaps someone asked you to describe yourself in an interview, answer a question in class, or explain your position during a meeting. Were you ready to respond without having extensive time to plan, prepare, or practice? You are likely to give at least one, if not many, impromptu speeches daily, and a majority of the presentations you will deliver during your business or professional life will probably be impromptu or spur of the moment.5

Unlike memorization and manuscript reading, both of which allow for and even demand extensive preparation time, impromptu speaking is delivered off the cuff and with little, if any, prior notice or preparation. Given on a moment’s notice, an impromptu speech requires that you be able to think on your feet. All you really have to rely on when delivering an impromptu talk is your knowledge and previous experience.

If you are adept at gathering your thoughts quickly and summarizing them succinctly, then whenever the opportunity presents itself to you, you will be prepared to deliver an impromptu speech. You can apply all the lessons you’ve learned about delivering planned speeches—the principles of effective structure, support, and delivery—to the impromptu situation. Though unplanned speaking may seem unnatural or awkward to you, it offers you both flexibility and the opportunity to demonstrate your speaking versatility. Perhaps more than any other speechmaking style, delivering an impromptu speech helps you reveal to others who you are, what you are like, and what genuinely concerns you—it frees you to be authentic—and sincere—confronting your innermost thoughts or emotions and communicating them in a straightforward manner.6

When called on to deliver an impromptu speech, remember the following guidelines:

1. □ Compose yourself.
2. □ Think about your purpose.
3. □ Relate the subject to what you know and have experienced and receiver interests.
4. □ Organize your talk—connect your ideas to each other, and be certain to use an introduction, body, and conclusion.
5. □ Don’t ramble—keep it brief—covering two to three points.
6. □ Focus—stay on message.
14.1d Extemporaneous Speaking

When a speech is prepared and practiced in advance but is neither written out word for word nor memorized, it is most likely an example of extemporaneous speaking. The extemporaneous speaker delivers a speech using only an outline or speaker's notes as memory joggers. Partly because the speaker selects the exact words virtually at the moment of their delivery, the language seems more natural and spontaneous. The lack of memorization also allows the speaker to exhibit a more conversational quality and generous eye contact, facilitating the monitoring of audience reactions and adjusting to the feedback received. As a result, the extemporaneous speaker establishes a more direct connection with audience members.

The emphasis in extemporaneous speaking is on communication, not recitation or memorization. It requires that the speaker be flexible enough to adapt to the audience and demands extensive planning, organization, and practice. However, it is one thing to be knowledgeable about a topic and quite another to have your mind ordered and prepared to present that knowledge to others. Because it sounds spontaneous and because it builds speaker confidence, extemporaneous speaking is the method preferred by most public speaking teachers and experienced speakers alike.

To prepare a good extemporaneous speech, remember to:

1. Research the topic thoroughly gathering support.
2. Create an outline and speaker's notes.
3. Rehearse, familiarizing yourself with the organizational pattern, including the introduction and conclusion.
4. Speak conversationally.
5. Become so comfortable with the topic that you are able to adjust your speech, adapting to the audience as needed.
14.1e Sound Bite Speaking (Twitter Speak)

According to political media advisor, communications consultant, and Fox Chairman Roger Ailes, contemporary speakers should respond to our “headline society.” Ailes reasoned, “In today’s society, longwinded people will soon be as extinct as the dinosaur.” Although most instructors of speech want students to avoid using sound bite speaking or what we might refer to as Twitter speak in the classroom, out of the classroom there are some speaking situations in which this type of speaking is now seen as required.

During political conventions or events, after the delivery of speeches by public figures, or in the course of introducing new policies or programs, spokespersons, pundits, and politicians “spin their messages,” frequently using sound bites to provide the media and the public with short, memorable statements—often shortened further and tweeted after being delivered aurally. Because audiences today are impatient for information, speakers who use sound bites need to be able to distill their messages effectively.

Notice how speakers can hold or lose the attention of receivers by the way they package a thought:

Having something to say is only part of the speaking equation. The other part is being able to get it across to an audience in a fresh and memorable way. In today’s technologically sophisticated society, you want to be able to adjust and focus your statements to fit the limited time available to you. Then, when time permits, you can amplify those statements with examples, statistics, quotations, and so forth. Keep these techniques in mind when delivering a sound bite or Twitter speak:

1. □ Develop a sentence that captures your subject’s essence.
2. □ Make your comments memorable.
3. □ Abbreviate the speech until it is tweet-size—140 characters. You might also create a 6-second video to accompany it, using Vine. Vine and Twitter share the value that “constraint inspires creativity.” A succinct video will help receivers visualize your message.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DULL</th>
<th>MORE INTERESTING</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The two leading ways to achieve success are improving upon existing technology and diminishing the larger obligation.</td>
<td>The two leading recipes for success are building a better mousetrap and finding a bigger loophole. —Edgar A. Schoaff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To construct an amalgam, you have to be willing to split open its component parts.</td>
<td>To make an omelet, you have to be willing to break a few eggs. —Robert Penn Warren</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital will not produce great pleasure, but it will remunerate a large research staff to examine the questions proposed for a solution.</td>
<td>Money won’t buy happiness, but it will pay the salaries of a large research staff to study the problem. —Bill Vaughan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
“If I’m supposed to sound spontaneous and natural, as if I’m giving my speech for the first time, why do I need to rehearse it?,” asks the novice speechmaker. This question has several answers.

Unlike conversation, speechmaking is not one of our most frequent means of communicating with others. In order to sound natural when delivering a speech, we need to practice.

Just as an athlete practices a play until it is mastered, and actors in a play rehearse until they become the part, so a speechmaker needs to rehearse his or her part until it becomes “one” with him or her. For the athlete, every move matters. For the actor, every night of a play is opening night. For speakers, athletes, and actors, it is thinking ahead and practicing that get them to that point.

Finally, the old adage “Practice makes perfect” has merit—that is, if you practice correctly. Aspirants to political office know this well. Prior to the presidential debates, for example, the candidates typically spend weeks preparing, including listening to audiotapes of their past performances and rehearsing intensively by engaging in mock debates that are videotaped and reviewed.

How often and how hard and in what sequence should you practice? As much and as hard as to need to to succeed. Although rehearsal is a highly individual matter, we can provide you with some basic practice plays to ensure you practice right.

Practice makes perfect. Like athletes and actors, speakers need to practice regularly to improve performance.
14.2a Schedule Multiple Early Practices

Don't make time your enemy; make it your friend. Begin practicing at least half a week before you will deliver the speech. Do not wait for the night before. Practicing well ahead of the delivery date lets you master the message.

In these early practice sessions, repeatedly read through your notes, outline, or manuscript. If you will be delivering a manuscript speech or a speech from memory, continue to rehearse using a triple-spaced manuscript with large and easy-to-read fonts that you mark so you can at a glance tell which words and phrases to stress, when to speed up and slow down, and when to pause.

If you will be delivering an extemporaneous speech, this is your opportunity to refine your outline into a spoken presentation. Begin by reading it over a number of times before you stand up and speak it aloud. As you rehearse, develop a list of key words and phrases from that outline and place them on no more than a handful of note cards written on one side of the card only. From then on, use the notes to spark your memory. Be sure to type or print quotations and statistics in large letters on separate cards, but do not reproduce complete paragraphs or the entire speech on these cards. Also, be sure to number and arrange the cards in order to keep from fumbling through the cards when you are in front of the audience.

Keep in mind that though many students use note cards, most professional speakers do not, preferring instead to use a single sheet containing their memory joggers such as key words and phrases, quotations, expert testimony, and key statistics. When used alone or together with the visual aids or the PowerPoint slides the speaker plans to use (if any), this page usually suffices.

14.2b Verbalize Everything

Practice your delivery of every example and illustration, recite every quotation, and say aloud every statistic you plan to use. Familiarity begets clarity and comfort in public speaking. Without sufficient practice, you won't build the self-confidence you need to deliver an effective presentation.

14.2c Prepare and Practice With Your Visual, Audio, and Memory Aids

If you will be using visual, audio, or memory aids during the speech, work with them during your practice sessions. This will help you work out any kinks, electronic or otherwise, and will make your delivery of the speech smoother and more natural.
**14.2d Check Your Time**

Time your presentation in an effort to determine whether it is too long or short. If it is too long, this is the time to cut out nonessential information. For example, if you have multiple main points, you might eliminate one of them. If you have redundant examples, you could cut one. You’ll also want to focus on tightening your phrasing. If your speech is too short, this is the time to make it more substantial. You might add another main point, or include another illustration or example in the effort to ensure you provide enough support to prove your points.

**14.2e Replicate Actual Speechmaking Conditions**

Do your best to mirror the actual conditions and setting you will experience when giving your speech. Although sitting down and running through the speech in your head can help increase your familiarity with your speech’s content, standing in front of an audience is different. Ideally, speak the speech standing up, in a room as much as possible like the one in which you actually deliver the speech. And run through the entire speech rather than continually stopping. Because there will be no calling “time out” during the speech, hold a realistic dress rehearsal. Visualize giving the speech. Imagine the audience. Talk directly to them.

**14.2f Watch and Listen to Yourself Alone and With Others**

It is important to monitor your progress. During your mid-preparation practices, you should also seek feedback before doing your final polishing and running a last dress rehearsal. The goal is to get feedback while you still have time to make and master changes. Audio or video record your rehearsal, play it back for self-evaluation, and get feedback from people who watched your rehearsal. Practicing in front of other people has been shown to improve the actual performance.11

**14.2g Give Yourself a Preliminary Evaluation**

Pay attention to what works and what needs work. As you review your performance, ask yourself whether you are expressing your ideas as clearly as you would like to. Specifically: Do you have an attention-getting step? Is the language you spoke in the body of your speech understandable to audience members? Is the support you used adequate? Is the organization easy to follow? Does your conclusion contain both a summary and a psychological appeal? Keep in mind that an organized speech will be easier to remember because it will flow logically.
14.2h Refine, Practice, and Refine

In your last stage of practicing, the focus is on refining, not dramatically altering the speech. Practice. Practice. Practice. Make your final practice as realistic as possible.

14.2i Work On Nonverbal Aspects of Delivery

Pay attention to your use of nonverbal cues during your practice sessions. Again, obtain constructive feedback that lets you know whether you make enough eye contact, employ meaningful gestures, and use your voice and appearance to advantage (plays we cover in more detail in Chapters 15 and 16 of the Playbook).

14.2j Hold a Mock Q&A Session

While not all speeches are followed with a question and answer (Q&A) session, knowing how to handle the Q&A session can be just as important as preparing yourself to deliver the speech. Though the Q&A has much in common with the impromptu speech, there are things you can do to prepare yourself so that you don’t blow it during this phase. You can:

1. Anticipate some of the questions audience members will ask, and prepare answers to them in advance.
2. Think about questions you hope audience members won’t ask, and prepare answers for them.
3. Prepare a “Tip Sheet” with points to remember when answering particularly complex questions.
4. Have someone rehearse you by asking you the potential questions you’ve brainstormed as well as others designed to unnerve you.
5. Repeat a question aloud if it is phrased in a neutral manner, before answering it; if necessary, you can rephrase it to remove any venomous or loaded words.
6. Practice saying, “I don’t know,” if you don’t know. You still have time to find out the answers prior to the delivery day. And if you have to answer a question with an “I don’t know” on delivery day, promise to find out the answer and get back to the person who posed the question.
7. Remember, you don’t need to answer more than is asked.

Holding repeated practices lets you revise and improve your presentation prior to delivering your speech. Spreading your practice time over at least three to five sessions will work better than if your try to cram your practice into one long, drawn-out session that exhausts you both mentally and physically. (We cover the Q&A session in more depth in Chapter 27.)
AVOID COMMON DELIVERY BLOOPERS

Your goal is to be fully ready to deliver a peak performance. To ensure you are, don’t commit any of these training fouls:

14.3a Preparing Mentally Does Not Replace Preparing Aurally
Though thinking through your speech is helpful, it should never replace live practice sessions in which you rehearse your speech aloud.

14.3b Don’t Wait to Be Given Feedback
It’s important to seek feedback, not count on others to give it on their own. It is up to you to ask directly what those in your mock audience(s) think and feel about your speech.

14.3c Don’t Skip Practice Sessions
Skipping practice is a sign of overconfidence, a belief you are as good as you can be. Telling yourself you have it down when the truth is you need to continue working does a disservice to yourself and your audience. At the same time, avoid practicing so much that your words sound over-rehearsed. Keep your energy high if you want to share your enthusiasm with receivers. They will respond to you, the person—not you, the machine.

GAME PLAN

REFINING MY SPEECH DELIVERY

- After considering my speech topic, the occasion, and my own level of comfort, I have chosen a style of delivery that will enable me to really connect with the audience.
- Given the delivery style I’ve chosen to use, my speaking notes are clear, easy to follow, and marked with delivery cues such as “refer to slide,” “slow down for impact,” or “stress this word.”
- I’ve practiced my speech several times; at this point, I know the organization and my notes so well that I can adjust to different audience reactions.
- The idea of a question-and-answer session makes me a little nervous so I held a mock Q&A in which I answered some of the questions I anticipate will be asked.
- To control any anxiety I may experience, I’ve reviewed some of the confidence-building techniques from Chapter 1.
- I’ve reviewed video of other accomplished speakers, and through my practice sessions, I have a sense of what will work for me and what won’t in reaching my audience.
WORKOUT EXERCISES
DELIVERY

Prepare and practice so that when you present, whatever the delivery mode, you’re confident and professional.

1. Get More Comfortable in Front of Others

Prepare (in class) a manuscript or notes for a two-minute talk on one of the following topics: A Time When You Challenged a Belief or Idea; A Space Or Environment Where You Are Perfectly Content; To Tweet or Not To Tweet; The Best Advice You Ever Received; or Items on Your Bucket List and Why. Deliver your talk in three ways: (1) read it word for word once, (2) speak from memory, (3) speak using notes. It’s okay if it’s not perfect; just get a feel for the difference in styles and practice. Remember to refer back to the guidelines for each speaking style.

2. Getting to Know You: Introducing the Q&A

Choose something to “show” that tells others about you—perhaps something personal that you use to identify or distinguish yourself from others such as your phone’s ringtone(s), a favorite pair of shoes, an unusual necklace, a special photo from Facebook or Instagram. Your audience will ask you questions about why you chose the item you did, what your choice means, why you think it distinguishes you, and so on.

3. How Talk Show Talents Do It

Compare and contrast the opening monologues of two late-night talk show hosts; for example, you might compare Jimmy Fallon with Jimmy Kimmel. Explain what distinguishes one performer’s style from the other.

4. Analyze a Politician’s Delivery

View a video of former President Bill Clinton’s speech given at the 2012 Democratic Convention nominating President Barack Obama for a second term. Then do the following:

1. Identify and evaluate the effectiveness of the style(s) of delivery Clinton used, providing specific examples of his ability to build rapport, make an argument, and forcefully make his case.
2. Compare and contrast Clinton’s speech with the speech given by Ann Romney for her husband, presidential candidate Mitt Romney at the 2012 Republican Convention.
   • Which of the two do you think more quickly established rapport with the audience?
   • Which of the two came across as more natural and personable?
   • Which of the two made you feel as if she or he was speaking directly to you?
   • Which of the two had better eye contact?
   • Which of the two used his or her voice more effectively?
   • How did both use gestures to underscore their messages?
3. Discuss the extent to which mode and manner of delivery influence the speaker’s ability to personalize a speech and connect with the audience.

5. Approach the Speaker’s Stand

First, deliver an impromptu speech on a favorite recreational activity. Once this is done, write out and deliver the speech using a manuscript. Then revise your notes and deliver the speech extemporaneously.

• How different were these experiences for you? For the audience?
• Which means of delivery do you think had more conversational appeal?
• Which delivery mode was easier for the audience to listen to?

Chapter 14: Styles of Delivery
RECAP AND REVIEW

1. Explain how a speaker’s delivery style can enhance or detract from the speech. Speakers who deliver their speeches as if they mean them are better able to connect with the audience. A well-delivered speech helps the audience interpret the message appropriately, closing whatever gap may exist between them and the speaker.

2. Distinguish among the following delivery modes: memorization, manuscript, impromptu, extemporaneous, impromptu and sound bite. When you speak from memory, you attempt to deliver your speech word for word without using a manuscript or notes. Manuscript reading requires that you be able bring the printed page to life, making your words sound like conversation rather than like reading. When you speak in an impromptu manner, you deliver a speech off the cuff. In contrast, an extemporaneous speech is prepared and delivered in a conversational manner from speaker’s notes. Sound bites are brief, packaged thoughts offering simple solutions that appeal to our “headline society” as well as the Twittersphere.

3. Determine the best method of delivery for a speech. The best method depends on the nature of the speaking occasion, the purpose of the presentation, and the speaker’s strengths and abilities.

KEY TERMS

- Extemporaneous speaking 281
- Manuscript reading 278
- Speaking from memory 277
- Impromptu speaking 280
- Sound bite speaking 282
- Twitter speak 282

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