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CIPS L4M1 Exam Syllabus Topics:

Topic	Details
Topic 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Understand and analyse the key steps when procuring goods or services: This section measures that skills of purchasing managers and procurement officers in identifying and evaluating stages in the sourcing process, planning, supplier selection, and contract management.
Topic 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Public, private, charity, not-for-profit, manufacturing, retail, construction, financial, agriculture, and service sectors. It also covers analyzing the impact of the public sector on procurement and supply chain activities public sector objectives, regulations, competition, accountability, and value for money. It finally covers the impact of the private sector on procurement or supply chain activities.
Topic 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Procedures, strategies, manuals, and internal function involvement.
Topic 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Understand and analyse aspects of organisational infrastructure that shape the scope of procurement and supply chain functions: This section measures that skill of supply chain strategists and organizational analysts in understanding corporate governance, documented policies, accountability, and ethics. It also covers the impact of organisational policies and procedures on procurement and supply

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L4M1 Latest Real Scope and Influence of Procurement and Supply Exam & Free PDF CIPS Realistic Scope and Influence of Procurement and Supply

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CIPS Scope and Influence of Procurement and Supply Sample Questions (Q15-Q20):

NEW QUESTION # 15

Explain how the new procurement department can use the CIPS Procurement Cycle to influence the spend on raw materials, deliver cost reductions and enable other value benefits.

(25 marks)

Answer:

Explanation:

See the solution in Explanation part below.

Explanation:

Electronica Manufacturing

Jane Henderson has been brought in to set up and lead a new procurement department at Electronica Manufacturing. It manufactures a range of electronic products, components and sub-assemblies for clients in the Information technology sector. Jane has carried out an initial analysis of procurement practices and has discovered that the company has never focused on how procurement tools and techniques can be used to reduce costs. She is also keen to improve procurement added value, increase quality and increase end-user satisfaction.

Jane wishes to introduce a more robust approach to procurement and is considering implementing new processes and procedures in the procurement of raw materials and sub-assemblies.

Using the CIPS Procurement Cycle to Influence Spend on Raw Materials, Deliver Cost Reductions, and Enable Value Benefits Electronica Manufacturing has historically not focused on procurement's role in cost reduction or added value. By implementing the CIPS Procurement Cycle, Jane Henderson can establish a structured and strategic procurement process to optimize spend on raw materials, achieve cost reductions, and generate other value benefits. Below is a detailed analysis of how each stage of the CIPS Procurement Cycle can support these goals:

1. Understanding Needs and Developing Specifications

* How it Helps:

* Jane must assess raw material requirements based on product designs, production needs, and customer expectations.

* Avoiding over-specification ensures that materials are fit for purpose rather than unnecessarily costly.

* Impact on Electronica Manufacturing:

* Prevents unnecessary spending on premium materials that don't add value.

* Ensures cost-effective sourcing without compromising quality.

2. Market Analysis and Supplier Identification

* How it Helps:

* Conducting supplier market research helps identify competitive suppliers offering better pricing and quality.

* Analyzing market trends (e.g., commodity price fluctuations) allows for timely purchasing to mitigate cost increases.

* Impact on Electronica Manufacturing:

* Reduces costs by sourcing from cost-effective and reliable suppliers.

* Identifies potential new suppliers that offer better value and innovation.

3. Developing a Sourcing Strategy

* How it Helps:

* Jane can implement strategic sourcing using techniques like long-term contracts, supplier partnerships, and competitive bidding.

* A well-defined strategy ensures that procurement aligns with business goals.

* Impact on Electronica Manufacturing:

* Reduces supply chain risks by diversifying suppliers.

* Maximizes cost savings through bulk purchasing and supplier negotiations.

4. Supplier Evaluation and Selection

* How it Helps:

* A structured evaluation process ensures selection based on cost, quality, reliability, and sustainability.

* Supplier benchmarking and total cost analysis ensure best-value sourcing.

* Impact on Electronica Manufacturing:

* Reduces waste and costs by selecting suppliers that provide consistent quality.

* Helps mitigate supply chain risks, ensuring reliable raw material availability.

5. Contract Management and Negotiation

* How it Helps:

* Jane can introduce structured contracts with cost-control mechanisms, such as fixed pricing, volume discounts, and service-level agreements (SLAs).

* Contract negotiation can lock in competitive pricing and ensure supplier accountability.

* Impact on Electronica Manufacturing:

* Improves cost predictability and budget control.

* Strengthens supplier relationships, leading to better terms and cost efficiencies.

6. Purchase Order Processing and Expediting

* How it Helps:

* Implementing an efficient purchase order (PO) system reduces administrative inefficiencies and speeds up raw material procurement.

* Use of automated procurement systems (e.g., ERP systems) ensures cost-effective order processing.

* Impact on Electronica Manufacturing:

* Reduces administrative overheads and human errors.

* Ensures faster lead times and better inventory control, reducing stock shortages and excess inventory costs.

7. Supplier Relationship Management (SRM)

* How it Helps:

* Establishing collaborative relationships with key suppliers can drive joint cost-saving initiatives.

* Long-term supplier partnerships can lead to better pricing, innovation, and risk-sharing.

* Impact on Electronica Manufacturing:

* Reduces costs through supplier-led efficiency improvements.

* Encourages supplier innovation, leading to better materials and higher-quality products.

8. Performance Review and Supplier Development

* How it Helps:

* Regular supplier performance reviews ensure that quality, cost, and delivery expectations are met.

* Supplier development programs can help underperforming suppliers improve efficiency, reducing procurement risks.

* Impact on Electronica Manufacturing:

* Improves product quality and consistency, reducing defects and waste-related costs.

* Enhances supplier accountability, leading to more cost-effective procurement.

9. Risk Management and Compliance

* How it Helps:

* Jane can introduce risk management strategies such as dual sourcing, inventory buffers, and price hedging to mitigate supply chain disruptions.

* Ensuring compliance with ethical, legal, and sustainability standards reduces long-term operational risks.

* Impact on Electronica Manufacturing:

* Reduces financial and operational risks, improving business continuity.

* Strengthens brand reputation by ensuring ethical sourcing.

10. Procurement and Supply Strategy Review

* How it Helps:

* Continuous evaluation of procurement strategies ensures alignment with changing market conditions and company goals.

* Data-driven decision-making through spend analysis and procurement reporting allows for ongoing cost optimizations.

* Impact on Electronica Manufacturing:

* Enhances procurement efficiency and sustains cost reductions.

* Ensures procurement remains a value-adding function rather than a cost center.

Conclusion

By applying the CIPS Procurement Cycle, Jane Henderson can transform Electronica Manufacturing's procurement function from an ad-hoc, cost-inefficient process into a strategic, value-driven function.

This structured approach will enable smarter spending on raw materials, continuous cost reductions, and broader business benefits, such as improved quality, efficiency, and stakeholder satisfaction.

Implementing procurement best practices will not only reduce costs but also drive long-term business sustainability and competitive advantage.

NEW QUESTION # 16

Analyse FIVE different sources of added value in procurement and supply.

(25 marks)

Answer:

Explanation:

See the solution in Explanation part below.

Explanation:

In procurement and supply, adding value means going beyond simple cost savings to enhance the overall contribution of procurement to the organization's objectives. Added value can be generated in multiple ways, impacting cost, quality, efficiency, innovation, and sustainability. Below are five key sources of added value in procurement and supply, analysed in detail:

1. Cost Reduction and Cost Avoidance

* Definition: Cost reduction involves lowering the actual purchase price of goods or services, while cost avoidance refers to actions that prevent costs from increasing in the future.

* Explanation: Through effective supplier negotiations, competitive tendering, bulk purchasing, and long-term contracts, procurement can achieve significant cost savings. Cost avoidance can come from proactive management of risks, improving contract terms, or optimizing specifications to prevent future price hikes.

* Impact: This directly improves the organization's profitability by reducing expenditure without compromising quality or service levels.

* Example: Renegotiating supplier contracts to achieve better rates or standardizing materials to reduce complexity and cost.

2. Improved Quality and Performance

* Definition: Enhancing the quality of goods and services procured to meet or exceed organizational needs.

* Explanation: Procurement contributes added value by specifying and sourcing higher quality materials or services that reduce defects, returns, and downtime. Better quality improves customer satisfaction and product reliability.

* Impact: Higher quality inputs lead to better outputs, reducing internal failures and enhancing brand reputation.

* Example: Working with suppliers to implement quality assurance processes or selecting suppliers with robust certification and testing capabilities.

3. Innovation and Supplier Collaboration

* Definition: Encouraging suppliers to contribute innovative ideas, technologies, or processes that benefit the organization.

* Explanation: Procurement can create value by fostering collaborative relationships with suppliers to drive product innovation, process improvements, and new market opportunities. Early supplier involvement can reduce development times and costs.

* Impact: Innovation enhances competitive advantage, supports new product development, and can open up new revenue streams.

* Example: Joint development projects with suppliers or using supplier expertise to redesign components for cost efficiency and performance improvement.

4. Risk Management and Supply Continuity

* Definition: Identifying and mitigating risks in the supply chain to ensure uninterrupted supply.

* Explanation: Procurement adds value by assessing supplier reliability, geopolitical risks, financial stability, and logistical challenges to minimize disruptions. Contingency planning and diversified sourcing reduce vulnerability.

* Impact: Reliable supply chains prevent costly production stoppages and reputational damage, contributing to operational resilience.

* Example: Developing dual sourcing strategies or monitoring supplier performance and compliance continuously.

5. Sustainability and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

* Definition: Integrating environmental and social considerations into procurement decisions.

* Explanation: Procurement adds value by selecting suppliers who comply with sustainability standards, ethical labor practices, and environmental regulations. This aligns with organizational CSR goals and reduces negative impacts.

* Impact: Enhances brand image, meets regulatory requirements, and can reduce waste and resource consumption.

* Example: Choosing suppliers with certified green practices or implementing circular economy principles in supply chains.

Conclusion:

Added value in procurement and supply extends beyond price savings to include quality enhancement, innovation, risk mitigation, and sustainability. By strategically managing supplier relationships and aligning procurement activities with organizational goals, procurement professionals can deliver significant and measurable benefits that improve competitive advantage and organizational performance.

NEW QUESTION # 17

In the supplier selection part of the Procurement Cycle, what criteria can a Procurement Manager use to ensure they award to the best supplier? (25 points)

Answer:

Explanation:

See the solution inExplanation partbelow.

Explanation:

How to approach this question:

- This is quite an open question and there are many different things you could mention. One way to approach it would be to use Carter's 10 Cs- discuss a couple of these. OR just give a couple of criteria in different paragraphs. Some ideas include: Supplier financial status, Reputation / References, Quality, Availability, CSR Policies / Ethics / Environmental considerations, Accreditations, Added Value. This list is not exhaustive.

- If you're going for Carter's 10 Cs you could name a couple of these: competency, consistency, capability, control, cost, cash, clean, communication, culture, commitment

- I don't think either approach is better or worse. Choose the criteria you know the most about and write about those.

- The question doesn't tell you how many criteria to name, so you have to make a judgement call here. I would aim for 5-6. But if you can only remember 4 that's fine. The main thing they're looking for is that you explain for each one 1) what it is 2) how procurement can check 3) why procurement would look at that criteria 4) an example. If you do too many you risk not going into enough detail on each. It's a balance. 5 is always a good number to aim for if the question doesn't state.

Example Essay

In the procurement cycle, the supplier selection phase is a critical juncture that demands consideration.

Procurement Managers shoulder the responsibility of identifying and awarding contracts to suppliers who not only meet immediate needs, but contribute to the long-term success of the organization. This essay explores various criteria a Procurement Manager can employ to ensure the selection of the best supplier: financial stability, reputation, quality, availability, CSR policies, and added value. Financial stability is a foundational criterion in supplier selection. Assessing a supplier's financial status involves a multifaceted evaluation, with liquidity and gearing ratio taking center stage. The acid test, comparing short-term assets to liabilities, offers insights into a supplier's ability to settle debts promptly, with a ratio exceeding 1 indicating financial health. Meanwhile, the gearing ratio, reflecting the proportion of capital funded by loans, aids in gauging financial risk, with a ratio below 50% considered low-risk.

Relying on published Profit and Loss statements and income statements, along with financial credit checks from platforms like Dun and Bradstreet, empowers Procurement Managers to make informed decisions. This financial scrutiny is imperative to avoid entering contracts with suppliers facing imminent financial struggles, safeguarding against potential disruptions to the supply chain.

Reputation and references are another pivotal criterion. Seeking references from previous contracts allows Procurement Managers to gauge a supplier's track record in successfully delivering on similar commitments.

Independent reviews and informal market inquiries supplement this information, providing a holistic understanding of a supplier's performance. However, caution is advised in overreliance on past performance, as variables like personnel changes or contract scale differences may impact outcomes. Recognizing that past shortcomings may have been addressed internally further emphasizes the need for a balanced approach to reference evaluation.

Thirdly, Quality. Beyond the product itself, considerations extend to the supplier's technological capabilities, manufacturing processes, and relevant accreditations such as ISO 9001. Physical visits to supplier sites may be warranted, especially for products like raw materials where samples can be requested. Adhering to recognized safety standards and assessing factors like fire retardancy ensures that the quality of manufactured goods aligns with established benchmarks.

Next, Availability is another important criteria to consider. Procurement Managers must evaluate a supplier's capacity and capability to meet specific requirements. Inquiries about existing contracts and flexibility in response to demand fluctuations provide insights into a supplier's commitment and responsiveness. Assessing the supplier's workload and the significance of the buyer in their client portfolio helps determine the level of attention and service the buyer can expect. A buyer may wish to avoid working for a supplier who is already stretched very thinly with other contracts.

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) policies and ethical considerations have gained prominence in supplier selection. Beyond legal compliance, Procurement Managers may scrutinize a supplier's history for convictions or negative press related to corruption, bribery, or fraud. The presence of a Modern Slavery Policy and Environmental Policy, along with relevant accreditations like ISO14001 or Fair Trade certification, attests to a supplier's commitment to ethical and sustainable practices. Procurement would likely seek to appoint a supplier whose CSR vision aligns with their own company's.

Lastly, added value is an important criteria to consider. This is particularly so for Public Sector Organizations governed by the Social Value Act. In addition to meeting contractual requirements, suppliers may offer knowledge sharing, training, improved processes, or contribute to social value by employing local community members or providing apprenticeships. This criterion aligns procurement decisions with broader organizational goals, enhancing the overall impact of supplier relationships and benefitting the local community.

In conclusion, a careful combination of financial scrutiny, reputation assessment, quality evaluation, availability considerations, CSR policies, and added value analysis forms the bedrock of effective supplier selection in the procurement cycle. Procurement Managers, armed with a holistic understanding of these criteria, should seek not only to fulfil immediate needs, but also consider the long-term impact of supplier appointments.

Tutor Notes

- A 'good' scoring answer (50-70%) will explain the criteria well and give examples. If you're looking for a distinction level answer (70%+) you could also mention advantages, disadvantages and risks associated with each of the criteria. For example, when looking at references and reputation it's important to know that a supplier would only ever provide a good reference to you, they would never tell you of a contract that failed.

Another example is that financial data may be skewed- a supplier may have a low score if they are just starting up or have recently remortgaged a property. It's therefore important to get a commentary as well as the figures / scores.

- You could also mention that criteria could be weighted e.g. more importance given to quality than financial status and also consider how easy or difficult it would be to get the information e.g. a supplier may say they have lots of availability to deliver the service you require, but they may just be saying this to win business.

How do you know for sure?

- Social Value Act isn't in this syllabus. If you work in Public Sector procurement it's something you'll be very familiar with. If you don't or you're outside of the UK do not worry about this. I've just included it to show how you can bring in your own knowledge to questions like this. You could think of particular criteria that's important to your industry and write about that. The Social Value Act: What is it, and why is it important? (samtaler.co.uk)

- Study guide p.77

NEW QUESTION # 18

What is meant by Stakeholder Mapping? Describe a tool that can be used by a Procurement Professional to map the stakeholders at their organisation (25 points)

Answer:

Explanation:

See the solution in Explanation part below.

Explanation:

How to approach this question:

- Define stakeholder mapping - completing an analysis of the stakeholders of an organisation and dividing them into categories depending on certain characteristics. This is often represented visually on a graph or matrix.
- Describe a Stakeholder mapping tool - the most common tool is Mendelow's Stakeholder Matrix so I would recommend using this one. It is explained in detail in the study guide. However, the question is open so you could choose to describe another tool such as Edgar's Stakeholder Position Analysis if you so wished. You wouldn't be wrong choosing this, but honestly, I'd just go for Mendelow. You can't go wrong with Mendelow. Because the Matrix has 4 sections you can imagine you'd get 5 points for the definition of stakeholder mapping, and 5 points for each of the quadrants of the matrix.

Essay Plan:

Introduction - The reason why stakeholder mapping is important is because interests and expectations of stakeholder groups will be different and possibly conflicting. Mapping this allows an organisation to see the variety and decide on an appropriate management style for each stakeholder group.

Paragraph 1 - Mendelow's Power / Interest Matrix maps stakeholders based on their influencing power and the strength of their motivation to use that power. It uses a 2x2 grid and defines power as high or low and interest and high or low. It then provides four strategies for managing the stakeholders based on which quadrant of the grid the stakeholder falls into. These 4 categories are:

Paragraph 2 - Keep satisfied - high power but low interest. If the stakeholder becomes dissatisfied or concerned their interest may peak. Examples include regulatory bodies, shareholders, senior management.

The best approach is to keep them up to date so they are informed of what is going on, but do not burden them with information they do not need.

Paragraph 3 - Manage Closely - AKA Key players - includes major customers, key suppliers, partners, senior management. These stakeholders need to know everything that is going on and approve of what is going on.

The recommended strategy is early involvement and participation, and integrating their goals with yours. This group requires regular communication and meetings. You should take their opinions on board.

Paragraph 4- Monitor - minimum effort required - this is the low priority group as they have low power and low interest. Includes small volume suppliers and other organisational functions with no direct interest in your activities. This group does not need to receive regular communication.

Paragraph 5 - Keep informed - high interest, but low power. If they're not kept in the loop and understand the need for decisions, they may lobby together to protect their interest if they feel threatened. Employee groups, suppliers and community groups may be in this category. This group should receive regular communication.

Conclusion - Mendelow created the matrix in 1991 and it is still used today. It is a popular management tool due to its simplicity. It's important to note that stakeholders can move through the matrix- it isn't stagnant.

For example, at the beginning of a project a manager in another department may be classed as 'low priority' because they are seen to have no interest and no power in the project. However, as the project progresses the manager may become interested. They will then transfer into the keep informed category. Therefore, the matrix should be redone regularly throughout the lifetime of a project to capture any movements. The matrix should also be redone for each individual project - it cannot be assumed that a stakeholder who had interest in one project would be interested in another.

Tutor Notes

- The above essay plan is basically the entire essay, I got carried away. The only thing you'd need to add into that is an example of a stakeholder for each of the sections! (e.g. the CEO is high power, but low interest stakeholder for the procurement department. He/ She doesn't care about the day to day operations but should be kept informed of any big news). For your examples you could use your own place of work.

- At level 4 you don't have to analyse the model, you just have to be able to memorise it and repeat it.

Mendelow comes up again at Level 5 and 6 in a bit more detail. If you want to score super bonus points you could mention in your conclusion that the main disadvantage of Mendelow's Matrix is that it doesn't take into consideration the stakeholder's position on the project - whether they're for it or against it. Therefore, it doesn't provide the full picture or provide much help on how to manage stakeholders. E.g. two stakeholders might both be in 'manage closely' section, but one is for the project and the other against - they'd need to be handled very differently!

- Study guide p. 65

NEW QUESTION # 19

What is a Code of Ethics? What should an Ethical Policy Contain? What measures can an organisation take if there is a breach of

their Ethical Policy? (25 points)

Answer:

Explanation:

See the solution inExplanation partbelow.

Explanation:

- Firstly give a short definition of Code of Ethics: a document that sets out moral principles or values about what is right and wrong.
- What an Ethical Policy should contain: Condition of workers, Environment, H+S, Discrimination, Gift / Bribery Policy, Whistleblowing, Confidentiality, Fair Dealings, Declaration of Conflict of Interests. You won't have time to go into depth on all of these, so pick a few where you want to give an example.
- Measures to take if there is a breach: depending on what the breach is and who breached it this could include: education/ training, sanctions, blacklisting, reporting to authorities, publicise the issue, use a performance improvement plan, issue warnings, dismissal.

Example Essay:

A code of ethics is a formal document or set of principles that outlines the values, ethical standards, and expected conduct for individuals within an organization. It serves as a guide for employees and stakeholders, shaping their behaviour and decision-making to align with the organization's ethical framework. It may take the form of a Mission Statement, Core Values, Specific Guidelines or established reporting mechanisms. The purpose of the Code is to establish standards, promote integrity, mitigate risks and build trust- with both internal and external stakeholders.

A Code of Ethics may contain the following:

- Condition of workers - stating what the company will provide to the employees to make sure the environment is safe. This could include the physical environment but also hours worked, opportunities for breaks etc. Depending on the sector it could detail shift patterns, expectations regarding overtime and compensation.
- Environment - this section would discuss compliance with legislation regarding pollution, disposal of waste materials etc. Depending on the company's goals- they may have higher commitments to the environment than those imposed by the government. Additional commitments may include NetZero targets or the use of renewable sources of energy.
- H+S- Health and Safety. Ensuring that the working environment is free of hazards and that workers have the training and equipment they need to complete the work safely. E.g. PPE
- Discrimination- a promise not to discriminate based on any characteristic. Aligns with the Equalities Act. Policy should include how the company would handle situations, for example if an employee reports an issue of discrimination or harassment. This may involve the use of a whistleblowing hotline or details on how to contact HR.
- Gift / Bribery Policy - this area of the code of conduct would explain whether the company allows staff members to receive gifts (e.g. from suppliers) and the processes to complete if they do (e.g. return the item, complete an internal document, donate the gift to charity). Different companies and industries will have different rules surrounding this, the Public Sector is much more likely to reject gifts from suppliers for example.
- Declaration of conflict of interests- this explains what staff should do if there is a conflict. For example if they are running a tender and their father owns one of the suppliers who is bidding for the work. The conflict of interest policy will explain what the person should do, how to report it and have mechanisms in place to ensure that nothing untoward could come of the situation. This may be having another member of staff mark the tender to ensure unbiasedness.

Measures to take in case of a breach

A response to a breach will depend on who breached the policy - whether this is an employee or a supplier. It will also depend on the severity of the breach.

Remedies for a supplier breach could include: education / training if the breach is minor. Supplier development if the relationship with the supplier is very important (for example if there are no other suppliers the buyer could turn to) and the breach is minor. If the breach is major such as fraud or misappropriation of funds, a buyer could look to issue sanctions, claim damages and dismiss the supplier. There could be options to claim liquidated damages if this is included in the contract. For very serious offenses the buyer may blacklist the supplier- never use them ever again and could also report the issue to the police if the breach is also criminal (e.g. modern slavery or fraud).

Remedies for an employee breach could include: for minor breaches training may be required, particularly if it was a junior member of the team and it was an innocent mistake like forgetting to fill out a form when they received a Gift. The employee could be carefully monitored and put on an Improvement Plan. If internal issues are found, such as several staff are breaching the Code of Ethics, senior management could look to review policies to make sure issues are being flagged and responded to in the best way. Employees who fail to follow the Ethical Policy, either through routinely failing to adhere to it or through a major breach could be dismissed from the organisation. There would need to be strong evidence of this.

In conclusion it is important for all organisations regardless of size of industry to have an Ethics Policy.

Sharing the code of ethics with staff is a fundamental step in embedding ethical principles into the organizational culture. Regular communication and training reinforce these principles, fostering a shared commitment to ethical behaviour across all levels of the organization.

Tutor Notes

- In an essay like this it's always a good example to use examples. They can be hypothetical - you don't have to know any

company's Ethics policy off by heart. E.g. If a supplier breached a buyer's Ethical Policy by employing Child Labour in their factories, an appropriate measure for the buyer to take would be to cancel the contract and find another supplier. This is because not only is Child Labour illegal, the buyer will not want to be associated with this supplier as it will have negative repercussions on their image. The best response would therefore be to distance themselves from the supplier.

- Code of Ethics and an Ethics Policy are the same thing. Just different language. The terms can be used interchangeably
- Study guide p. 128

NEW QUESTION # 20

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