2009
IIJIS Summit

Grant Writing Best Practices
Grants are Project Specific Strategic Plans

Learning Objectives

Illustrate Similarities Between Developing a Strategic Plan and Writing a Grant

Review Best Practices in Writing a Grant

Consider ways to integrate grants into your strategic plans and facilitate sustainability

Organizational Assessment

Grant Sources Depend on Your Organization

- What kind of Business are you in?

- Who are your customers?

- What services do you provide and how?

- "Grants Fit" – Does the grant fit your organization?

Organizational Assessment

Environment

Goals &
Strategies

Culture

Behaviors & Processes

Inputs

Outputs

Technology

Structure

Open Systems Model by Harrison

Strategic Planning Overview

- Three to Five-year goals
  - Mission & Vision
  - Stakeholders
  - Trends & Scenarios
  - Strategic Issues
  - Strategies

John M. Bryson – *Strategic Planning for Public and Nonprofit Organizations:* A Guide to Strengthening and Sustaining Organizational Achievement (1995 revised edition)

Strategic Planning Overview

- Ten Step Method
    1. Initiate & agree upon a strategic planning process
    2. Identify organizational mandates
    3. Clarify organizational mission & values
    4. Assess organization's internal and external environment to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats

Strategic Planning Overview

- Ten Step Method (continued)
    5. Identify strategic issues facing the organization
    6. Formulate strategies to manage these issues
    7. Review and adopt strategic plan or plans
    8. Establish an effective organizational vision
    9. Develop an effective implementation process
    10. Reassess strategies and the strategic planning process

Priority Tasks & Master Task List

1) Review the Grant RFP carefully.

2) Make sure the grant fits – don't force it.

3) Have a grant planning meeting (internal people only at initial meeting-expand to outside agencies)

4) Develop a one page budget and summary to explain the grant and get organizational approvals before moving forward

Priority Tasks

- 5) Review the Grant RFP carefully.
- 6) Take care of those things you have the least control over first
  - Support Letters
  - Memos of understanding (MOU)
  - Letters of intent to apply
  - Register with Grants.gov and CCR
    - Download software (PureEdge/Adobe)
    - Download Application Package
    - Get Adobe professional (recommended) $$

Fundamentals of Good Grants

Focused on evidentiary problem analysis and systemic thinking

Combine budget and performance

Provide a logical framework for successful project management

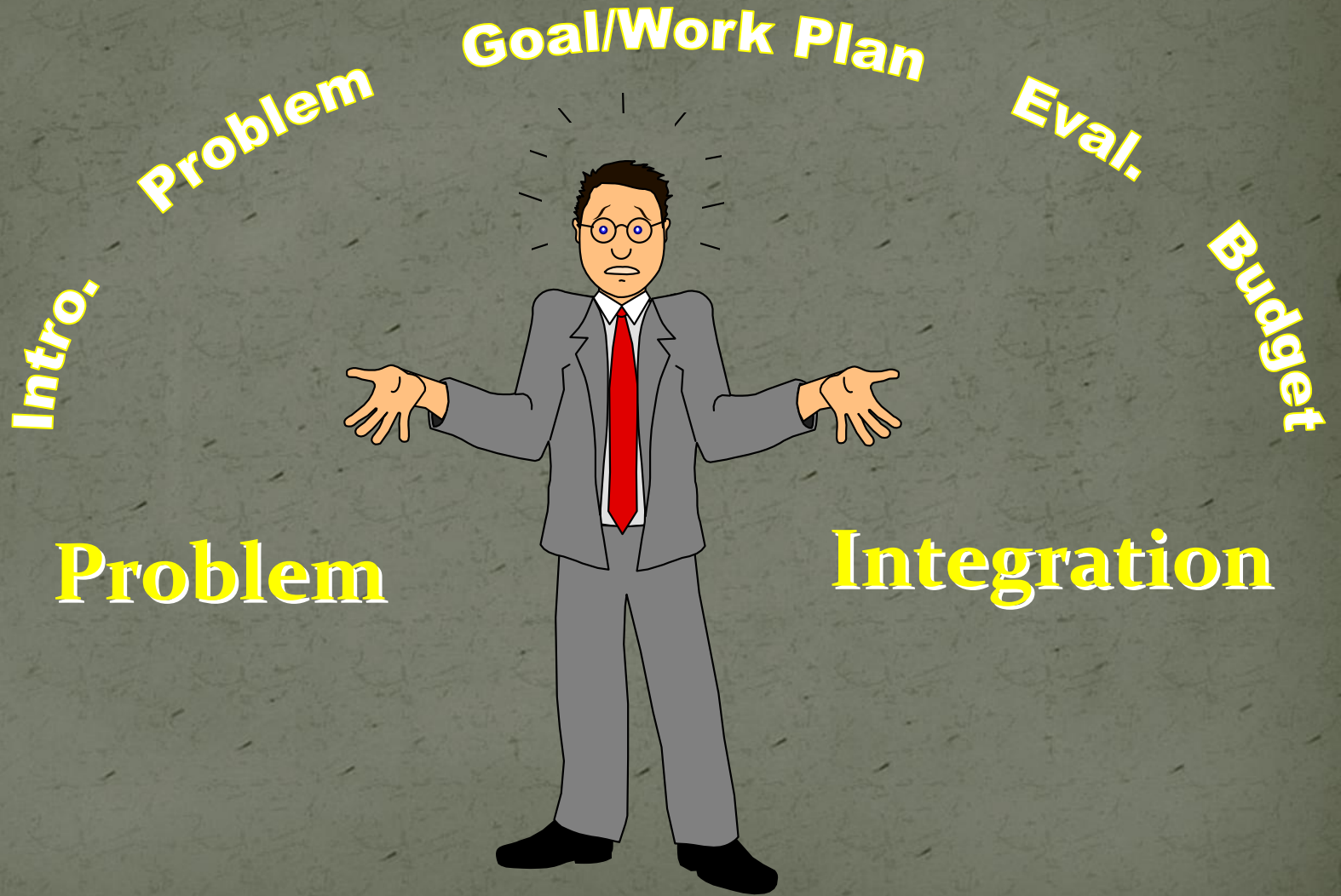Don't allow the reader to draw too many conclusions

Fundamentals of Good Grants

Provide a strong project management methodology for accomplishing the grant related tasks

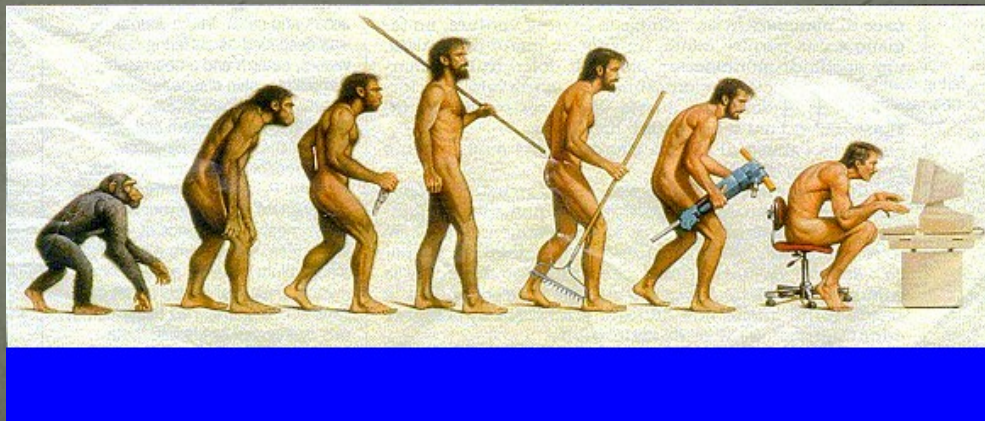Sell the strategy as superior to other alternative strategies

Consider and or developed with collaborative needs of stakeholders

Evolution of Problem Development

- Perceived Problem
- Stakeholder Analysis
- Align problem based upon systems thinking

Conducting a Stakeholder Analysis

Why Are We Doing This?

What's In It for Me?

What's In It for US?

What's In It for our Customers?

Making Your Case Through Problem Identification and Analysis

- Explaining your statistical analysis

- Why the problem can't be solved without the grant

- The Vinnie Barbarino Level of Understanding

- Who

- Where

- Why

- How

4 Steps in Problem Solving

1. Recognizing A Problem Exists
2. Formulating the Problem
3. Deriving the Solution
4. Implementing the Solution

Problem Formation

Four Perspectives on Problems

Scientific/Technical

Existential

Interpersonal/Social

Systemic

Scientific/Technical Perspectives

Warrants

- Multiple systems and database formats

- Lack of broadband capacity

- Lack of understanding of XML or NIEM

Interpersonal/Social Perspectives

Warrants

- Psychological stress of having to seek a warrant

- Victims need to feel safe

Existential Perspectives

Warrant

- Basic issues of the human condition – Meaning and purpose

- Existential wounds – Why here? Why now?

- Why do warrants have to be issued so often?

Systemic Perspectives

Warrant

• What is the role of the criminal justice and community partners that may have worked to expedite a warrant?

• Why does it take so long to get warrants from prosecutor to court to law enforcement?

• Lack of training or understanding of data elements needed to make warrants useful

Five Strategies

1. Pick right stakeholders
2. Expand your options
3. Phrase the problem correctly
4. Expand the problem's boundaries
5. Be prepared to manage paradox

(Mitroff, 1998)

COMMON THREATS TO GOOD PROBLEM DIAGNOSIS

1. Picking the wrong stakeholders

2. Setting too narrow a set of options

3. Phrasing a problem incorrectly

4. Setting the boundaries/scope of the problem too narrowly

5. Failing to think systemically

Two Models For Performance Grant Writing

Missouri Strategic Planning Model

Logic Model

Grants Are Project Specific Strategic Plans

Graphic Illustration of your grant

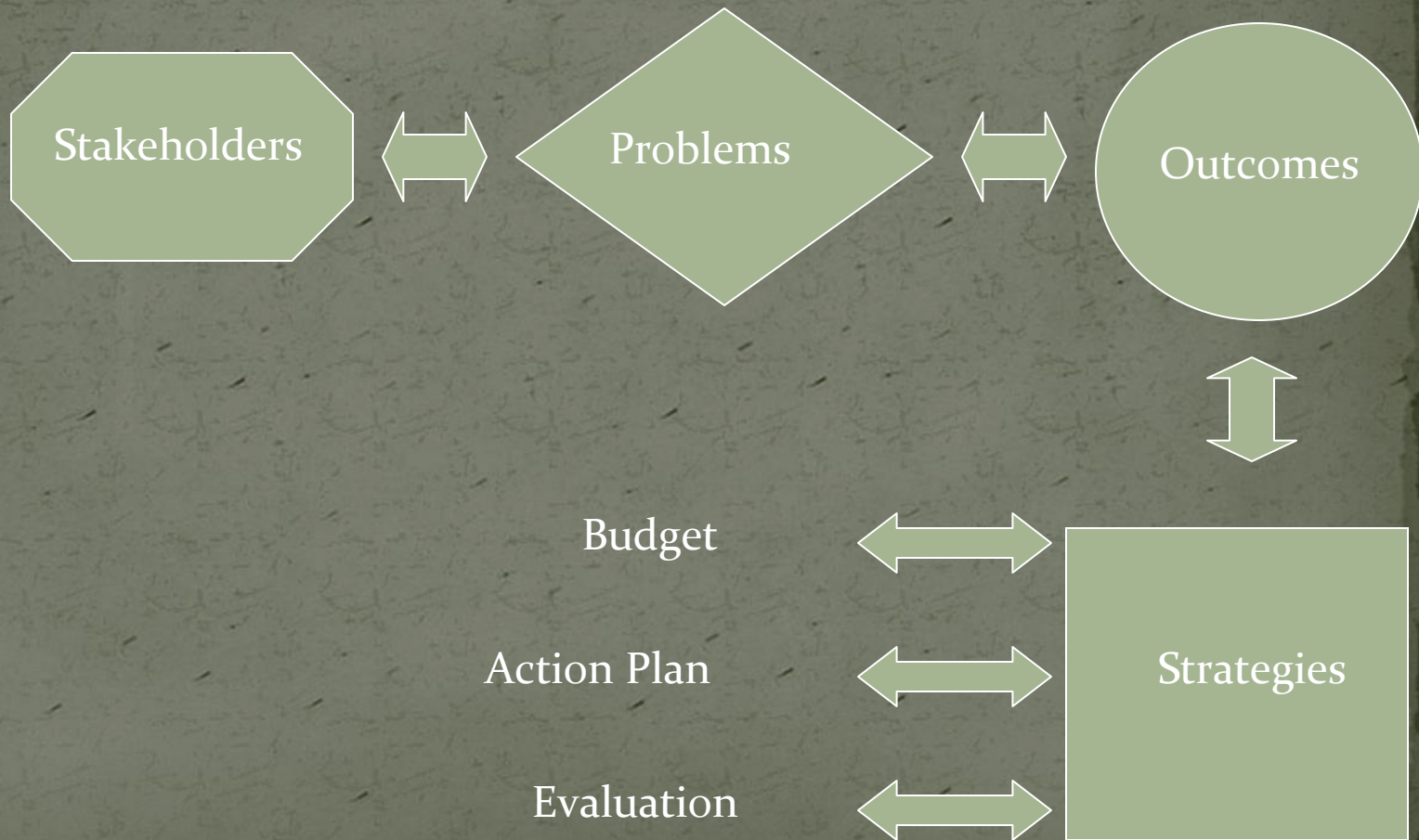# MO Strategic Planning Model

Missouri
Strategic Planning

Model and Guidelines

MARCH 2002

- **Download at: 1hawthorn.com/strategic.pdf**

Outcome Measures & Problems

Outcome Measures & Problems

Outcomes are end points related to public benefits for which a level of success can be determined.

Outcomes

Outcome Measures & Problems

Outcomes are not owned by a single agency...rather by the general public. They often cross agency and program lines in public and private sectors.

Outcomes

Outcome Measures & Problems

Grants should limit the number of outcomes to no more than a few. The more you have the more you have to measure.

Outcomes

Outcome Measures & Problems

Page 19 Missouri Strategic Planning:

• Questions for developing outcomes

• Criteria for outcomes

• Ways to identify outcomes

Outcomes

Outcome Measures & Problems

Examples of Outcomes:

• Reduced Case Backlog

• Decrease in Response Time

• Reduce Cost of Transportation

Outcomes

Outcome Measures & Problems

Outcomes Measures:

- What measures will you use?

- Is the measure reliable

Outcomes

- Is is collected now?

- Does it have value to Avg. Joe

Outcome Measures & Problems

Outcomes to objectives:

• Outcomes are desired benefits for the public. Objectives are specific targets for improved performance. Objectives represent milestones to realize

Outcomes

Outcome Measures & Problems

Specific

Measurable

Aggressive but attainable

Results Oriented

Time Bound

Outcome Measures & Problems

Goal: Improve Public Safety by improving the speed and reliability of information sharing.

Objective: 75% of all warrants will be transmitted electronically by December 2010.

Strategies

Strategies are narrative statements of an approach to achieve an objective.

Budget ⟷

Action Plan ⟷ **Strategies**

Evaluation ⟷

Strategies

Strategies must be understandable by those tasked with implementation.

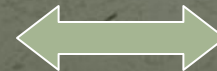| Page 26 of MO Strategic Plan		
	Budget ⟷	Strategies
	Action Plan ⟷	
	Evaluation ⟷	

SWOT Analysis

- What are our major internal or present **strengths**.
- What are our major internal or present **weaknesses**?
- What major external or future **opportunities** do we have?
- What major external or future **threats** do we face?

Bryson
(1995)

Strategic Planning Relevance

- Grant Getting & Managing is Strategic Planning – Thus the need to integrate grants into your planning process!

  - Reminds us to consider the goals of our agency in light of the goals of a grant program
  - Considers the agency stakeholders
  - Provides organizational acceptance
  - Link mandates and external opportunities and mandates
  - Shadows an effective implementation process
  - Helps identify risks through SWOT analysis

Triggers for Integration

- Organizational Mandates

  - Focus Grant Getting on Organizational Mandates
  - Federal & State Laws
  - Triggering Events
  - Tracking Results & Communication
  - Helps Integration Points through SWOT analysis

Implementation of Integration

- Requires strategic planning to be an ongoing effort in your organization (living documents – not paper sitting on a shelf)
    - Who is in charge of monitoring strategies?
    - How do strategies adjust to funding?
    - Are there regular status updates?
- Requires a more formal project management structure
    - Who Approves Grant Projects?
    - Who monitors status on projects?
    - Who is the project sponsor?

Integration into your strategic plan promotes

1) Organizational Acceptance

2) Sustainability

3) Support for Matching funds if necessary
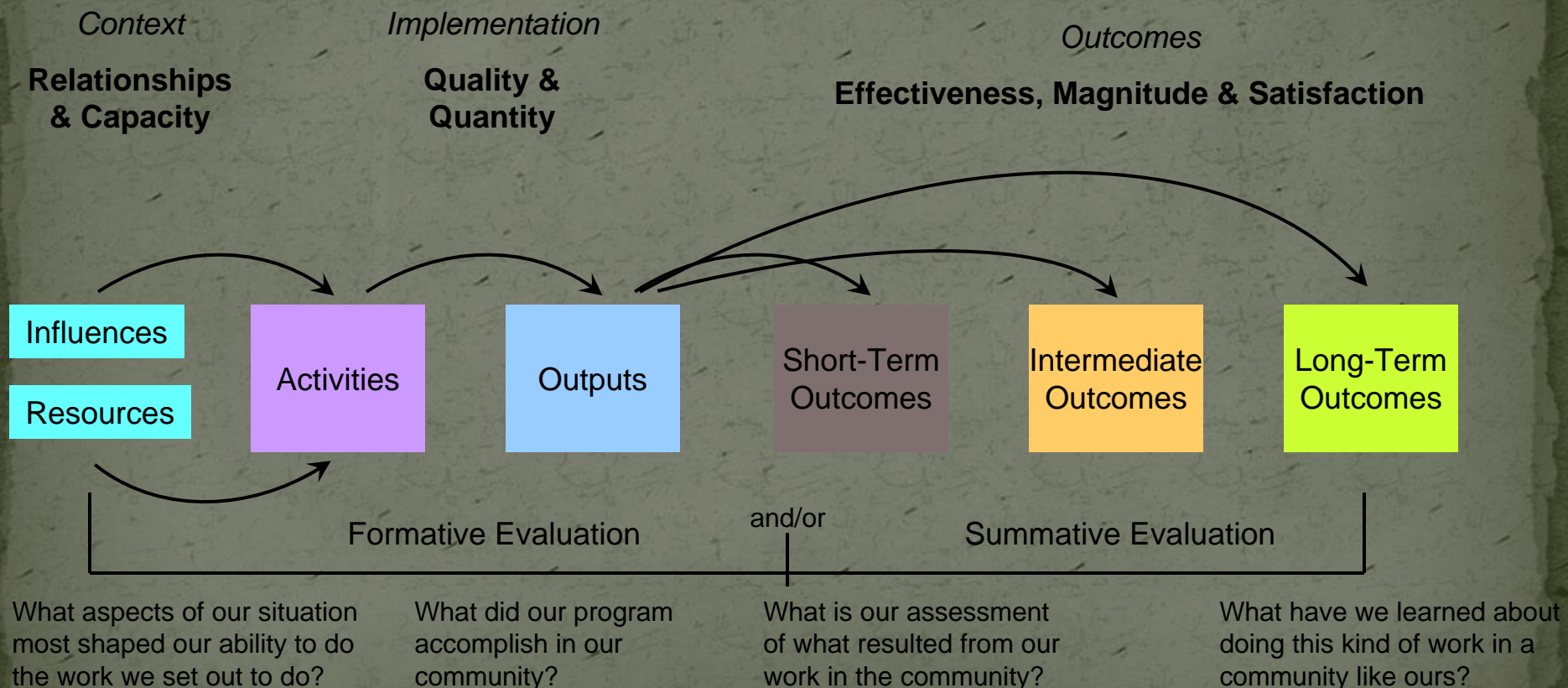
4) Improves staffing resources for success

Questions?

www.1hawthorn.com

A Basis for Program Evaluation
The Logic Model

Ties together inputs, activities, outputs and outcomes

Context

Relationships & Capacity

Implementation

Quality & Quantity

Outcomes

Effectiveness, Magnitude & Satisfaction

Influences

Resources

Activities

Outputs

Short-Term Outcomes

Intermediate Outcomes

Long-Term Outcomes

Formative Evaluation

and/or

Summative Evaluation

What aspects of our situation most shaped our ability to do the work we set out to do?

What did our program accomplish in our community?

What is our assessment of what resulted from our work in the community?

What have we learned about doing this kind of work in a community like ours?

Program and Fiscal Reporting

- Should be build into a project Plan
- Reporting intervals in need of reportable events- typically process related
- Fiscal reporting being mandated online now
- Affects ability to draw down funding

Stakeholders

- 1) Never assume someone will see an opportunity to partner as you do.
- 2) Never assume what is said behind closed doors will remain secret. (Mitroff 1998)
- 3) Building shared interest means asking the right questions

Questions

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