

# **The Creative Leadership Model for Principals of Intermediate Vocational Schools in Guangzhou of People's Republic of China**

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## **Abstract**

The objectives of this research were: 1) To study the elements of creative leadership of managers of middle vocational schools in Guangzhou of People's Republic of China; 2) To develop creative leadership elements for managers of secondary vocational schools in Guangzhou of People's Republic of China; 3) To evaluate the creative leadership elements of secondary vocational school managers in Guangzhou of People's Republic of China. The sample size was determined from the total population of 32 schools (70 managers and 5450 full-time teachers). The research tool is Statistical Product Service Solutions, which conducts descriptive analysis with results including frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation. The research results were found as follows:

1. The overall average level of creative leadership model projects in all aspects is at a high level. All the standard deviation values are very close, which means that in all dimensions, the expert opinions are relatively consistent, and there is no particularly prominent term.

2. The creative leadership model for managers of Guangzhou Intermediate Vocational School, People's Republic of China, consists of three parts: the first part is visionary leadership, the second part is effective management skills, and the third part is to support collaboration and coordination. The whole process is divided into four steps: the first step is the research before the construction, the second step is the construction of the model, and the fourth step is the evaluation after the construction. In addition, the researchers also compiled a guide manual on creative leadership models used by managers of secondary vocational schools in Guangzhou.

3. The model has been evaluated by experts and school administrators. Experts believe that the accuracy and appropriateness of the model have been evaluated at the highest level, and the feasibility and practicality of the model have been evaluated at the highest level after trial by school administrators.

**Keywords:** Guangzhou City; Intermediate Occupation; Needs Analysis; Manager

## **Introduction**

As China's education system continues to evolve, secondary vocational schools (known as vocational schools) are gaining a more prominent position in the country's educational landscape. As a vital component of China's education system, vocational schools not only assess the academic achievements of junior high school graduates but also serve as a pivotal gatekeeper deciding whether they advance to general high school education or opt for vocational education (Guangming Daily, 2022). Given China's prominence in manufacturing, the significance of vocational education is unmistakable. It plays an indispensable role in

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\* Received: June 16 2027; Revised: June 25 2024; Accepted: June 29 2024

enhancing employment competitiveness, elevating skill levels, and facilitating industrial advancement and innovative growth.

The Chinese government has invested heavily in the development of vocational education, constructing the world's largest vocational education system through a suite of policy measures that includes boosting capital investment, enhancing faculty development, and refining career guidance and educational training. Particularly in Guangzhou, the government has actively facilitated the articulation between secondary and higher vocational education, fully implemented the vocational education college entrance examination system, resulting in a significant enhancement in educational quality. Secondary vocational school students can now pursue further education via multiple avenues, such as the college entrance examination, specialized individual enrollment tests, the integrated three-year and two-year vocational education programs, and exemptions for top-performing skilled students. This undoubtedly offers these students a broader spectrum of developmental opportunities (Ministry of Education's official We-Media "Weiyan Education", 2022).

In the 2021 academic year, Guangzhou further expanded the pilot scope and enrollment scale of the "three or two sections". This measure not only promotes the organic connection of secondary and higher vocational education, but also provides a more diversified growth path for students. At the same time, Guangzhou also strongly supports the construction of vocational education groups (alliances), creates a high-quality platform for the integration of industry and education, and realizes the full coverage of the development of vocational education in municipal secondary vocational schools.

In this context, it is particularly important to study the creative leadership model of secondary vocational school administrators. Creative leadership can not only stimulate the innovative spirit of teachers and students, but also promote the overall development of the school and improve the quality of education. This study aims to improve the core leadership evaluation index system based on professional standards from the perspective of evaluation, and jointly promote the improvement of core leadership through the development and use of professional evaluation tools and the leading role of professional standards (Sohu.com, 2023).

In order to achieve this goal, we will use formal methods such as questionnaires and semi-structured in-depth interviews, as well as the most commonly used data collection methods such as observation and informal interviews with relevant managers and full-time teachers to fully and deeply understand the creative leadership status of secondary vocational school managers in Guangzhou. In these ways, we expect to reveal the inherent mechanisms and influencing factors of creative leadership, and provide a useful reference for the cultivation and development of secondary vocational school administrators.

In China, many researchers have conducted in-depth research on creative leadership. For example, Wen Liqun (2017) discussed the impact of creative leadership on the creativity of subordinates; Pan Hong and others (2018) discussed the relationship between creative reform and creative leadership by recording the speeches and interviews of Tadanori Nagasawa, president of Musashino University of Fine Arts; Li Minghao (2017) studied the impact mechanism of creative leadership on employee creativity. These studies provide us with valuable theoretical foundation and practical experience.

This study is entitled "Creative Leadership Model for Managers of Intermediate Vocational Schools in Guangzhou". It is not only conducive to guiding the managers of secondary vocational schools in Guangzhou to improve their creative leadership, but also hopes to contribute to the development of creative management of intermediate vocational education

in Guangzhou, China. Through in-depth exploration and analysis of the creative leadership model of secondary vocational school managers, we hope to provide useful inspiration and suggestions for the sustainable and healthy development of secondary vocational education in Guangzhou and even the whole country.

## **Research Objectives**

The researchers identified the following research objectives.

1. To Study the constituent elements of creative leadership among managers of intermediate vocational schools in Guangzhou.
2. To Develop a creative leadership model for managers of intermediate vocational schools in Guangzhou.
3. To Evaluate the creative leadership model of managers in intermediate vocational schools in Guangzhou.

## **Literature Review**

According to the research findings of Zhang Xingmin (2000: 1), Cheng Chun (2011(24): 26-27), and Fu Changqing (2021: 18), Chinese scholars have identified Visionary Leadership as a crucial and essential capability that facilitates educational institutions in adapting to change, inspiring team members, and fostering adaptability and innovation.

According to Shen Zhidong .(2007: 6), Jia Huiliang. (2004: 4), and Nong Guoxiang (2017: 215-216), Chinese scholars have suggested that effective management skills can facilitate clear communication of the school institution's vision, efficient integration of resources, team coordination, and rapid problem-solving abilities among managers, all of which directly impact the development and success of the school.

According to Liu Jianling . (1999: 2), Chang Shangwen.(2011: 1), and Su Hualong (2010: 12), Chinese scholars have concluded that the development of advocacy and collaboration-related competencies can enable managers to apply systems thinking as a framework for coordinating diverse factors, thereby facilitating collective efforts towards advancing school development.

In conclusion, the triad of Visionary Leadership, Effective Management, and Advocacy and Collaboration constitutes a framework. The specific research based on Chinese scholars' literature materials will provide detailed standards and indicators for defining each element.

1.The three most frequently cited indicators in the scholarly literature on Visionary Leadership1) Predictability and Planning 2) Adaptability3) Developing the Potential of Successors

2.The three most frequently cited indicators in the scholarly literature on Effective Management1) Ability to plan and allocate resources 2) Organizational and Capability Coordination

3.The three most frequently cited indicators in the scholarly literature on Advocacy and Collaboration 1)The ability of leaders and representatives 2) Ability to solve problems and negotiate 3)Ability to establish interpersonal relationships

In this study, researchers focused on the development of creative leadership models for secondary vocational school managers in Guangzhou, analyzing the elements that need to be developed for creative leadership, covering three aspects of academic management concepts,

including: 1) visionary leadership; 2) Effective management skills; 3) Advocacy and Collaboration.

## Research Methods

This study mainly uses qualitative research methods, specifically the following three types:

1. Literature research and analysis

Search and study relevant literature, concepts, and expert research theories on creative leadership of Chinese secondary vocational school principals, and establish a basic theoretical system. Collect data through a questionnaire survey, use confirmatory component analysis (CFA) to analyze the data and test its consistency with the creative leadership indicators of secondary vocational school principals.

2. Semi-structured interviews

A semi-structured interview was conducted on the creative leadership issues of principals in intermediate vocational schools in Guangzhou, with a total of three individuals. Including Guangzhou Textile and Clothing Vocational School, Guangzhou Finance and Trade Vocational School, and Guangzhou Transportation Vocational School.

3. Focus group interviews

Drafting a creative leadership model for secondary vocational school principals, with expert groups discussing and confirming the draft model, and improving the draft template based on expert suggestions.

### Population and sample group

1. Population

There are currently 70 managers and 5450 full-time teachers of intermediate vocational schools in Guangzhou, Guangdong Province, China.

2. Sample group

Including intermediate vocational school managers and full-time teachers, the sample size is based on Krejcie&Morgan 1970: 608-609 (Krejcie&Morgan 1970: 608-609), which includes 59 managers and 361 vocational school teachers, totaling 420 people.

### Data collection

The testing tools used include IOC expert evaluation, questionnaire survey, Statistical programs to analyze the data analysis, semi-structured interviews, etc. The discussion on the development methods of these research tools is as follows:

1. IOC expert evaluation, the questionnaire mainly consists of three modes, 51 options, invited 5 experts for review, tested with 30 non samples, and finally used for regional samples.

2. Conduct a questionnaire survey by distributing the questionnaire designed by the "Questionnaire Star" app in China to the sample group's email, and then inviting participants to participate in the survey through WeChat, phone, and SMS in China.

3. Based on the research results, design an interview outline and conduct semi-structured interviews with three demonstration schools to obtain a summary of the interviews.

4. Verify the results of the above data analysis, obtain valid data, and establish an effective model.

### **Data analysis**

1. Data analysis of the questionnaire. The ready-made computer graphics are used to analyze the data as follows:

Part 1: general data of the respondents, analyzed by frequency and percentage.

Part 2: analysis and statistics of data, namely mean and standard deviation.

2. The correlation coefficient is used to conduct preliminary correlation analysis of the data before component analysis.

3. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy (KMO) is used to analyze whether the data is suitable for component analysis.

4. Confirmatory factor analysis is to test the consistency of linear structural relationships with empirical data, and then analyze the data in the questionnaire through statistical software.

5. Check the consistency of linear structural relationships with empirical data.

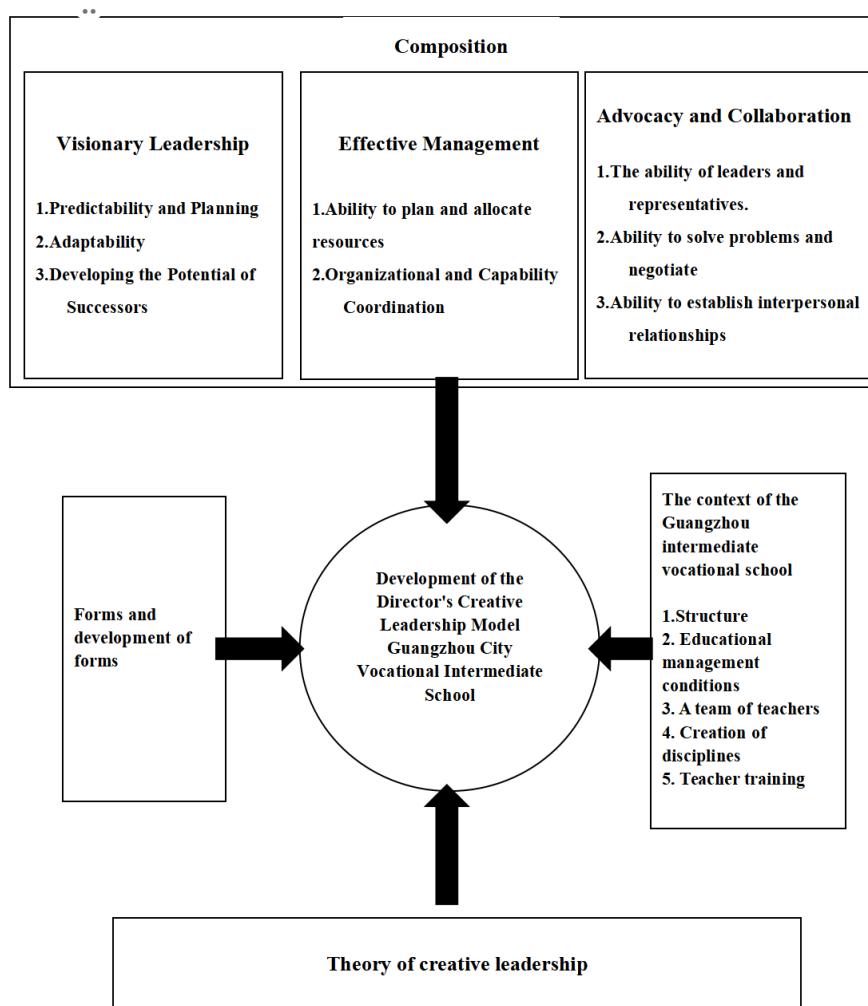
6. Utilize the consistency analysis results of the model.

### **Research Conceptual Framework**

Based on the research results of three demonstration colleges: Guangzhou Information Technology Vocational School, Guangzhou Urban Construction Vocational School, and Guangzhou Textile and Clothing Vocational School. These three colleges are all public colleges and demonstration colleges for vocational education reform in Guangdong Province, People's Republic of China. It is also an important national vocational college in the People's Republic of China. The results show that the creative leadership model of management personnel in Guangzhou Vocational College consists of three factors:

1) Visionary Leadership; 2) Effective Management; 3) Advocacy and Collaboration.

As shown in Figure 1



**Figure 1** Creative leadership model for managers of intermediate vocational schools in Guangzhou, People's Republic of China

## Research Results

From Table 2, it is found that the opinions of executives and teachers on the creative leadership of executives at Guangzhou Vocational College in the People's Republic of China are at a high level. When considering the highest average level, which is support and collaboration, followed by visionary leadership, the lowest average level is effective management skills. A sub component of visionary leadership. The highest average level considered is predictability and planning, followed by adaptability. The lowest average value is when considering the potential development of successors at the highest average level, the subcomponents of effective management skills are organizational and coordination abilities, and the lowest average level is ability to plan and allocate resources reasonably, support and work subcomponents

**Table 2** The average and standard deviation of opinions on creative leadership among management personnel of Guangzhou Vocational College, People's Republic of China.

NO.	Elements of Creative Leadership	$\bar{x}$	S.D.	grade	sort
1	Visionary Leadership	4.15	0.23	suit	2
	1.1 Predictability and Planning	4.16	0.22	suit	1
	1.2 Adaptability	4.16	0.23	suit	2
2	1.3 Developing the Potential of Successors	4.15	0.24	suit	3
	Effective Management	4.15	0.25	suit	3
3	2.1 Ability to plan and allocate resources	4.12	0.26	suit	2
	2.2 Organizational and Capability Coordination	4.18	0.25	suit	1
	Advocacy and Collaboration	4.16	0.23	suit	1
3	3.1 The ability of leaders and representatives.	4.19	0.22	suit	1
	3.2 Ability to solve problems and negotiate	4.15	0.23	suit	2
	3.3 Ability to establish interpersonal relationships	4.14	0.23	suit	3
TOTAL		4.15	0.23	suit	

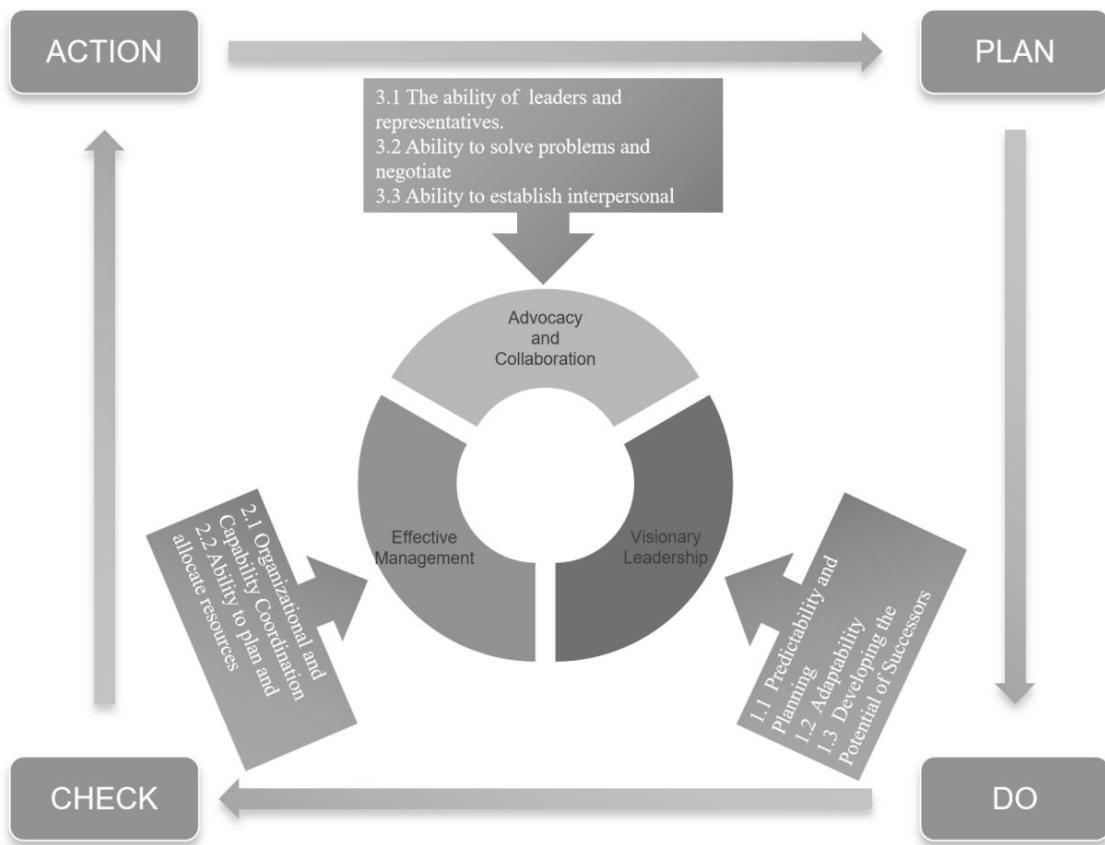
In summary, when considering both parties, the highest average level is 3.1, which is the ability to become a leader and representative  $\bar{x} = 4.19$ ; S.D.=0.22), followed by 3.2, which is the ability to solve problems and negotiate ( $\bar{x} = 4.15$ ; S.D.=0.23). The lowest average level is 3.3, indicating the ability to establish interpersonal relationships ( $\bar{x} = 4.14$ ; S.D.=0.23)

The development of creative leadership models for senior executives in Guangzhou Vocational College, People's Republic of China in the second stage

Step 1: Interview 3 Model University Management Personnel

Step 2: Creation and Development of Creative Leadership Model for Management Personnel of Guangzhou Vocational College, People's Republic of China

The third stage, the evaluation results of the creative leadership model of managers of Guangzhou Vocational College of the People's Republic of China From the end of the expert interview, the information from the experts and the format created are consistent. In order to develop the creative leadership of the executives of Guangzhou Vocational College of the People's Republic of China, it is necessary to consider the following three aspects: 1) Visionary Leadership; 2) Effective Management; 3) Advocacy and Collaboration. The development of the creative leadership model of Guangzhou, a service provider of vocational colleges in the People's Republic of China, should be practical. Results must play a role in all three of the following skills. In short, the development results of the model and the user manual of the executive creative leadership model of Guangzhou Vocational College created by the People's Republic of China are very likely and practical. Therefore, this form and manual are very useful for the managers of vocational colleges. In the development of the creative leadership of senior executives of Guangzhou Vocational College, the details of the executive creative leadership model of Guangzhou Vocational College of the People's Republic of China can be summarized, as shown in Figure 2.



**Figure 2** PDCA Creative Leadership Model of Guangzhou Intermediate Vocational School of the People's Republic of China (Source: Constructed by the researcher)

## Discussion

1. The composition of the creative leadership model for management personnel at Guangzhou Vocational College, People's Republic of China, and research findings

Study the composition of the management and creative leadership model of Guangzhou Vocational College in the People's Republic of China. The overall situation is at a high level in all aspects. When considering the highest average level, support and collaboration are at a high level, indicating that support and collaboration are part of the management creative leadership of Guangzhou Vocational College in the People's Republic of China. Because support and collaboration are considered high-level needs of vocational college executives. This is consistent with the concept of Liu Jianling (Liu, 1999:2). The ability to work together is an important skill that executives must possess. Because successful executives need to know how to solve specific problems well, work together to find solutions, know how to handle them intelligently, and then become high-level visionary leaders. Indicating that visionary leadership is one of the important components of the development of creative leadership models for executives at Guangzhou Vocational College in the People's Republic of China. As a visionary leader of vocational college management, it has the ability to predict and plan. This includes the ability to adapt and develop the potential of successors, which is consistent with the concept of Fu Chengqingt. Fu Changqing (2021:18) said that in the era of digital technology, leaders

must have a broader perspective and a good perspective to manage this complex work environment. The lowest average is a high level of effective management skills. Effective management skills are a part of creative leadership among vocational college executives. Guangzhou, the People's Republic of China, must be very developed, which is consistent with the concept of Jia Huiliang (Jia, 2004:4). Explain that the efficiency of administrative leadership is an important factor in decentralized management within the college. Executives must know how to plan and allocate resources, and coordinate within and outside the organization.

2. The effectiveness of the development of creative leadership models for executives at Guangzhou Vocational College, People's Republic of China

The development of creative leadership models for management personnel at Guangzhou Vocational College in the People's Republic of China includes three aspects: 1) Visionary Leadership; 2) Effective Management; 3) Advocacy and Collaboration. This is a mechanism that is in line with the management development system, Guangdong Province, People's Republic of China. In 2014, the rules and guidelines for the professional standards of vocational college managers were formulated, which defined the scope of responsibilities and specific requirements, as well as the various skills that executives should possess. The creative leadership model of executives at Guangzhou Vocational College in the People's Republic of China is characterized by a quality management cycle, including planning, practice, inspection, and improvement. This is a process for developing a systematic creative leadership model with the goal of sustainable development, consistent with Zhao Xiaowen's research (Zhao, 2016: 270-272). studied the impact of leadership patterns on organizations. He said that creative leaders must possess leadership skills, have a clear vision of what to do, plan to develop what you want to happen in the future, serve others enthusiastically, promote and support work, delegate power to subordinates, execute accounts appropriately according to their abilities, negotiate correctly, understand technology, solve conflicts correctly, communicate friendly, creatively, know how to empower others, use technology, provide modern technology equipment to meet the needs of practitioners, and also comply with the inspiration (Pei, 2018:105). Leadership in interpersonal relationships should be organized. The support of leaders or personnel, as it is the foundation of human nature, It is also an important foundation for excellent executives. Starting from sincere communication, accepting cultural differences and always respecting others.

3. Evaluation results of creative leadership models for management personnel at Guangzhou Vocational College, People's Republic of China

The accuracy and applicability of the Handbook on Creative Leadership Models and the Use of Creative Leadership Models for Senior Management at Guangzhou Vocational College, People's Republic of China. The overall situation is at the highest level. And evaluate the creative leadership model of executive management at Guangzhou Vocational College in the People's Republic of China. Guangzhou, which has the highest level of overall feasibility and efficiency, is suitable. Possibility and utility are at their highest level. This is also in line with Zhou Tingting's research (Zhou, 2013:361), which studied the effective change leader development model of the college and found that the evaluation results of the change leader development model are at a high level in terms of accuracy, applicability, feasibility, and usefulness overall.

## Recommendations

Based on the research results on the creative leadership model of executives at Guangzhou Vocational College in the People's Republic of China, the researchers propose the following suggestions.

### 1. Theoretical Recommendation

The research on the creative leadership model of executives at Guangzhou Vocational College in the People's Republic of China found that the creative leadership model has an average level in all three aspects. The overall situation is at a high level. When considering both parties, the average level is the highest. For effective management skills, support and collaboration score lower than other aspects. Therefore, vocational colleges should have skills training, planning abilities, resource allocation, organization and coordination, and involve vocational college managers in strengthening these skills to improve efficiency.

### 2. Policy Recommendations

The research results found that effective management skills scored relatively lower compared to other aspects. Therefore, vocational colleges should organize training activities. It is normal for vocational colleges to organize annual training. Training activities can be organized in the form of teamwork to practice various coordination and organizational skills both inside and outside the college, and there will be a seminar to write various plans or allocate resources together to achieve good communication among executives, teachers, employees, or stakeholders, which will be improved and developed in the coming years

### 3. Practical Recommendations

The research results indicate that the evaluation of the manual on the development model of creative leadership used by executives at Guangzhou Vocational College in the People's Republic of China is at the highest level. Therefore, executives, teachers, and relevant institutions can apply this model to manage and support the implementation of budget allocation, and find ways to develop sustainable development models.

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