

The Go-To Guide

for Remote Interview Questions



Presented by

SPARK HIRE 

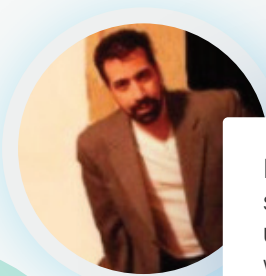
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Many companies around the world offered flex time and shifted roles to remote work long before the 2020 global crisis. However, no one ever expected full organizations would be thrust into the virtual work world. The most agile teams prevailed; and it turns out, the benefits outweigh the cons of managing a virtual workforce for many companies.

Remote roles are here to stay, so we asked hiring experts to share the questions they ask candidates to determine the right fit for a remote role. Here are 50 interview questions to effectively grow your remote team:

Kick if Off



Tell me about yourself.

I find that the 'old' questions still apply, except now I pay less attention to what they say and more to how they say it. I am more likely to consider someone who understands the significance of the words they use and how they use them; someone who is mindful of the tone of their voice when responding to questions and making their point.

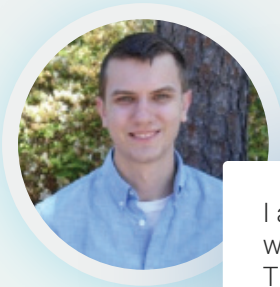
Mario Almonte, President at [Herman & Almonte PR](#)

How would you describe yourself in two sentences?

I'm trying to suss out if the candidate has the qualities that would make him/her a good remote employee. Are they honest, independent or detail-oriented? When someone only has a few words to describe themselves, they start with their strongest qualities. If they don't have at least one dominant quality that would help them thrive in a virtual role, they are not fit for the job.



Reuben Yonatan, Founder and CEO at [GetVoIP](#)



Do you think the shift to remote work will be permanent?

I always start the interview with questions that settle a candidate's nerves. One easy way to do this is to ask 'what do you think' questions, rather than 'what can you do?' This can give you a better perspective on the employee, since it opens up their thoughts in a way that's targeted around your question.

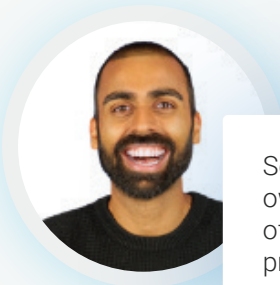
David Cusick, Chief Strategy Officer at [House Method](#)

What aspect of your last job brought you the most joy?

This is a great icebreaker. You get to see what makes the candidate light up about virtual work. This question also shakes off [interview stress](#) and eases you into the more serious topics of the interview by evoking a positive emotion from the start.



Experience with Remote Work



Why do you want to work remotely?

Some people tend to idealize the freedoms remote work can offer - like setting your own schedule, no more long commutes, pajama days etc. However, they also don't often realize that it can result in an unhealthy work-life balance if not managed properly. Ask this question to get a better idea of how they think the job is going to operate.

Deepak Shukla, Founder at [Pearl Lemon](#)

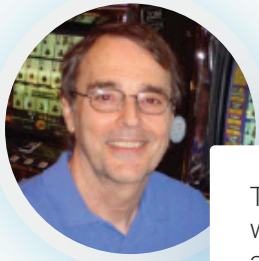
What is your ideal remote work setup?

I like to dig in to see how prepared people are for remote work. Candidates that have proven to be prepared have easy access to a printer, a comfortable chair, reliable internet, a camera, a good headset that blocks out noise and has a good microphone, and a bonus would be a non-distracting background.



Vincent Scaramuzzo, President at [Ed-Exec, Inc.](#)

What is your ideal work environment and how comfortable are you with working independently?

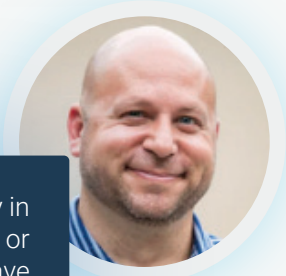


These two questions will help me understand how this potential employee will feel working virtually with less collaboration than when we were in an office. Now that we are working from home, it is super important to make sure that an employee can hold themselves accountable while working at home.

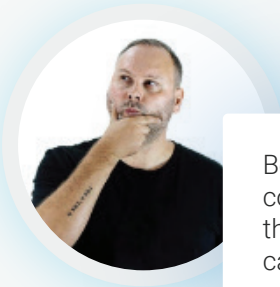
Steve Bourie, CEO and author of [American Casino Guide Book](#)

How are you with working at home, and do you have a quiet, dedicated space to do it?

In the current (and near future), we need people who can work very independently in their homes to accomplish tasks. We also need people who aren't staring at a clock or restricted by hours. Our job has honestly become 24/7 and 365 as Saturdays have become the new Mondays.



Ari Nisman, CEO and President at [Degy Entertainment](#)



How do you communicate when working remotely?

Being a strong communicator means that you're never truly 'alone'. Strong communicators are always able to call on each other when in need of a hand. With this question, I'm looking to find out what good communication means to the candidate.

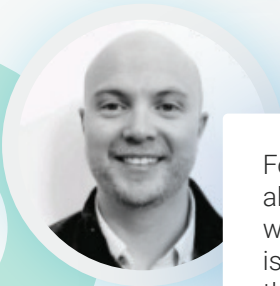
Mark Hayes, Head of Marketing at [Kintell](#)

What challenges have you faced working remotely?

Candidates may be attracted to the idea of working remotely but unprepared for the reality and challenges of doing so. The method of questioning applicants for remote positions has not changed since COVID-19 became an issue, because portions of our workforce have always been remote



Reuben Yonatan, Founder and CEO at [GetVoIP](#)



How can video meetings be more efficient?

For me the biggest difference between hiring someone remotely and in person is their ability to interact with the necessary technology to get their work done. Fitting into the work culture and working hard are all a given, but for an exclusively remote position it is hard to teach the necessary technological skills from afar, so it simply has to be there already.

Ian Kelly, VP of Operations at [NuLeaf Naturals](#)

How do you plan to engage with the team in this new virtual way?

This is a good way to find out the skills of somebody who will need to engage with people without actually meeting them, and show how they are able to use these skills to cement themselves as part of a new team.



Daniel Foley, Director at [Assertive Media](#)

Name one pro and one con of working remotely.

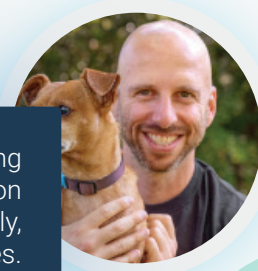


[Working from home](#) is attractive but it comes with a distinct set of challenges. Candidates should be able to acknowledge there are both pros and cons. You can easily see if there are any red flags concerning their fit with virtual work based on their response to this question.

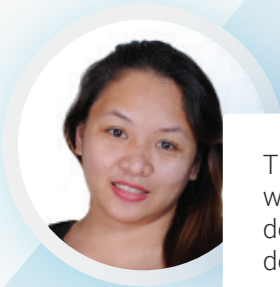
Remote Work/Life Balance

How much of your social life comes from work?

People who rely on the workplace for their main source of friends may find working remotely a lonely and unhappy experience. People who thrive in a remote position tend to have busy lives outside work with social activities that revolve around family, friends and hobbies.



Gilad Rom, Founder of [Huan](#)



How do you balance work and recreation?

The question aims to uncover a candidate's ability to manage their work and wellbeing. Since remote workers are inside their homes 90% of the time, it can be deteriorating to their mental health. Recruiters need to hear how candidates would destress to renew their productivity levels.

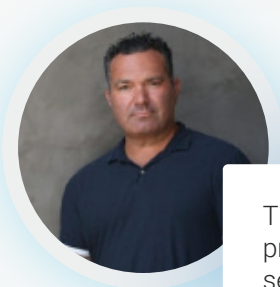
Shem Sherry Mae Mandajos, CMO at [Tankarium](#)

How do you switch off from work?

This question is even more important these days with so many of us blurring the work and home lines. Candidates reveal a lot about their personality here, plus their ability to compartmentalize.



Ty Stewart, CEO & President of [Simple Life Insure](#)



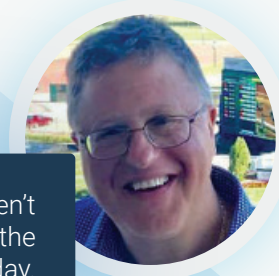
How do you separate your workday from your home life when working from home?

This question can bring up a lot of good information. I need to know that the prospective employee knows the boundaries of their job schedule and will be able to self-regulate enough to not get burnt out. I also learn from this question a bit about how this person will have their daily work time set up.

Eric Sachs, CEO at [Sachs Marketing Group](#)

How can you ensure that you aren't working during hours or times you aren't supposed to be working?

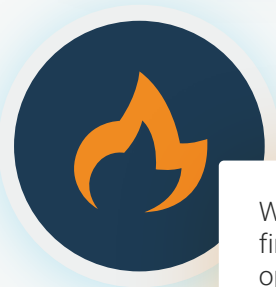
We want to see how a candidate can say "no" to work after hours, so they aren't overworking. We want to ensure candidates can do their jobs, but still have the freedom to do other things throughout the work day.



Michael Kipness, Founder at [The Wizard](#)

What's the first thing you like to do when you finish work?

Work-life balance is essential to employee health and well-being. It's much harder to find that balance when you never leave work. This question gives candidates an opportunity to share whether they have activities they plan for so they are creating balance, how they like to unwind, and possibly fun/quirky things about their personality.



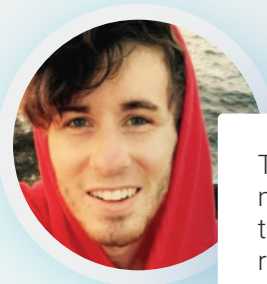
Cultural Fit

How do you spend your free time?

I ask this question to learn more about the candidate and how they might fit into our culture. I also like to see if they are a self-learner and how they take the knowledge or hobbies they are interested into the next level and execute on it.



Loren Howard, Founder at [Prime Plus Mortgages](#)



What does an average day look like for you?

This is a great question to ask to get a lot of insight into how a specific person manages their day. You learn whether or not a person uses schedules, to-do lists, and time slots for planning out their day, all of which are very beneficial for success as a remote worker. At the most basic, you can learn more about how they spend their time, and what they value.

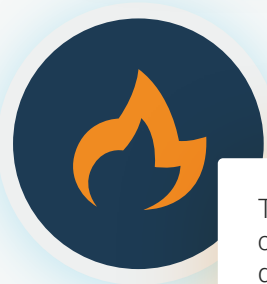
David McHugh, CEO and Founder at [My Mixify](#)

What will your last employer say when I ask them about your performance?

Asking for the previous employer's name, and then saying you will be calling that employer is one of the best ways to elicit honest and accurate answers. Winners will have no problem sharing, and probably have a great relationship with the ex-employer.



Ben Worthington, Founder and Owner at [IELTSPodcast](#)



If you had a day off to volunteer, how would you spend it?

This question lets you easily assess if a candidate shares the same interests as your current team and if their values align with the culture of the company. You can also get a pulse on what they are passionate about and how they apply themselves to make an impact.

Communication & Collaboration

How do you plan on communicating with a remote team?

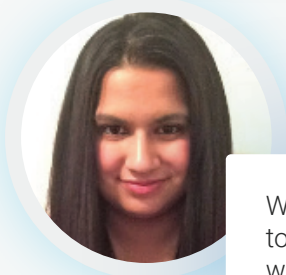
Remote employees should be comfortable using a wide range of communication platforms. Asking what communication platforms they use and why they use them will help you better understand their intent to stay connected and take responsibility for their learning.



Shiv Gupta, CEO at [Incremators Web Solutions](#)

What tools and methods do you use to stay organized and collaborate with others online?

With this question, the actual tools aren't as important, as we have our own internal tools and systems. What I'm looking to gauge from the respondent's answer is whether or not they have organizational processes in place to keep themselves on track and whether those processes are sufficient.



Alicia Ward, Marketing Manager at [See Sight Tours](#)

What will you do to prevent and correct miscommunication?

I'm mostly looking for someone who acknowledges that there will be miscommunication, can predict the cause of it, and has some idea of how to correct it.



Liston Witherill, Founder at [Serve Don't Sell](#)



How would you handle/avoid miscommunication?

It's extremely significant to know how they would ensure that they have clear communication in the absence of in-person communication. Their answer gives you insights about their preferred communication style and how they would handle a situation if there is a misunderstanding with another team member.

Syed Irfan Ajmal, Growth Consultant at [Gigworker](#)

Tell me about a time you didn't communicate clearly.

Clear [communication](#) in virtual work is critical to team success. Asking a candidate to explain a time they didn't communicate clearly reveals different potential red flags than asking them how they would handle a situation in which they didn't understand directions. This gives you an opportunity to see if they own their mistake, understand what they did wrong, and can communicate how they fixed it.



Problem-Solving



Tell me a time you identified a problem with a process and how you solved it.

One thing I personally look for in remote candidates independence. I want to see how a candidate who operates remotely contributes to the team and makes sure they can work in the most efficient, fulfilling way possible. I also want to see that a candidate can understand when there is a problem and come up with a solution to fix it.

Colin Palfrey, CMO at [Majesty Coffee](#)

If you encounter a client who asks you a question you don't know, what would you do?

What if it needs to be answered immediately and you couldn't reach your manager or any of your superiors and other colleagues? What would you do? We are looking for the ability of the candidates to work independently and to make sound decisions with minimal supervision.



Daniel Carter, Founder at [Zippy Electrics](#)

What is your typical course of action if/when you encounter a problem?

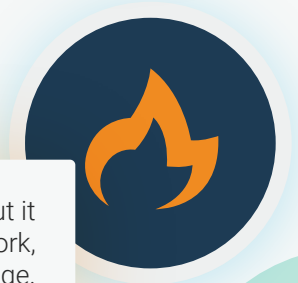


A deliberate method of contact involves virtual cooperation-consistent proactivity, conscientious validation of knowledge, and humble openness. If an applicant is trying to demonstrate a strong compromise of individual proactivity and collective collaboration, talking about problem-solving will help selection panels decide.

Eliza Nimmich, Co-Founder and COO at [Tutor The People](#)

You just lost power and a virtual team meeting is about to begin. What's your first response?

Creating a specific scenario like this lets you see if a candidate can think fast but it could also reveal how they emotionally respond to stress. When hiring for virtual work, you want someone who can both troubleshoot and stand up to the challenge.



Technical Skills



How much time do you spend online and using a computer every day? Are you digitally savvy?

What I'm looking to find out is whether or not this is a person that would embrace a work from home lifestyle, and whether they are suited to it or already have experience in it. I'm looking for someone who is digitally "fluent" and who is familiar with the online world and with communicating online.

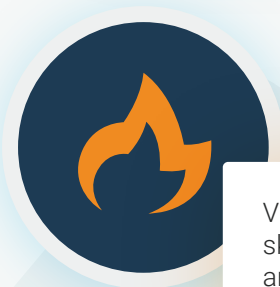
Nelson Sherwin, Manager at [PEO Companies](#)

How would you rate your tech skills?

As a remote worker, tech support may not be available, while the tasks assigned still need to be completed. Working remotely means being able to self-motivate and self-regulate, if they have frequently had to contact managers or IT support in the past, that may be an issue going forward.



Ken Eulo, Founding Partner at [Smith & Eulo Law Firm](#)



What tools/apps/platforms are you most proficient in and which one's your favorite?

Virtual work relies heavily on technology. This question is telling about both their tech skills and preferences toward technology. You can find out how tech-savvy they are and if their favorite is also what they are good at or if they just prefer certain types of tools.

Motivation

What is your favorite part of your current or most recent job?

By doing this, you can get a feel for why they might want to leave and where their preferences align. You'll also be able to get a better picture of their attitude towards work by listening to what they're opinion on their current employer is too.



Charlie Worrall, Digital Marketing Executive at [Imaginaire Digital](#)

How do you motivate yourself to work?



This question is important because remote workers have to be great self-motivators. When working in an office, we have plenty of external factors to motivate us, such as our other co-workers or our boss, or even simply being in the office. This is much more difficult to do when we're at home.

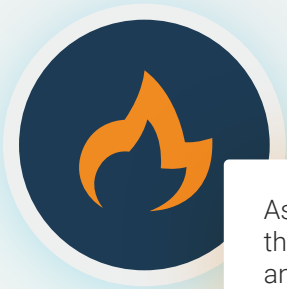
Jenna Carson, HR Manager at [Music Grotto](#)

How do you keep yourself motivated when you're not in an office workspace?

This question tells the employer about whether or not the candidate will be able to stay productive without any oversight. For a remote candidate, this is extremely important because you have to be able to trust them 100% to get the job done.



Chris Brenchley, Co-Founder and CEO at [Surehand](#)



What's the last thing you do before closing out your tasks for the day?

Asking this question allows you to see if candidates set themselves up for success the following day or if they make sure they check off their lists. Motivation can wane, and productivity along with it, as the day progresses. Their response shows if/how they like to finish their day strong.

Prioritization

How do you prioritize tasks and organize your working files?

The answer to this question can reveal insights you don't even expect to disclose. One-shot but many hits: soft skills (time-management and the ability to prioritize); basic tech skills (there are numerous apps and extensions designed to facilitate the organization process which should be at the fingertips of each candidate); and problem-solving.



Erika Rykun, Content Manager at [WikiJob.co.uk](https://www.wikijob.co.uk)

How do you cope with a task that has a deadline?

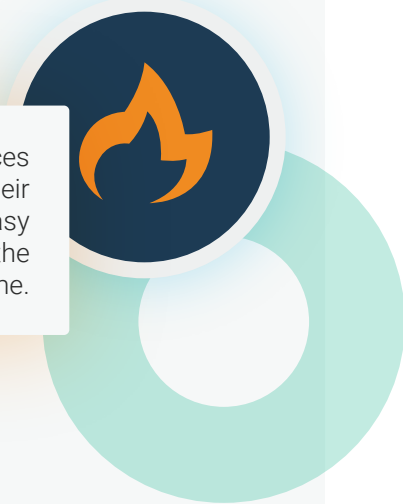
I am looking for an honest but confident answer. An applicant can be a know-it-all or tech-savvy or he/she does not have any experience working virtually. But a candidate should be able to work with deadlines, communicate effectively with co-employees, and especially to possible clients.



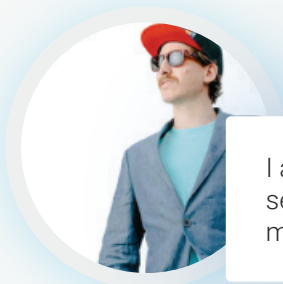
Samantha Moss, Editor & Content Ambassador at [Romantific](https://www.romantific.com)

What makes a task a higher priority over another?

This question helps to see if they can set priorities on their own and what influences those decisions. While it's important remote employees are able to prioritize their workload, it's also important they consider their impact on the team. It can be easy to forget your work contributes to the bigger picture when you work alone the majority of the time.



Autonomy



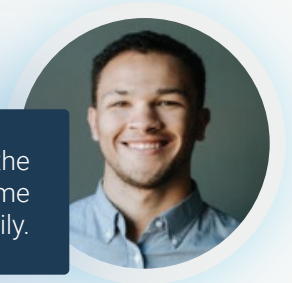
Are you good at managing yourself?

I ask this question to know if a candidate can work independently. Remote work set-up needs to have a person that can work with minimal supervision because managers are not physically present.

Scot J Chrisman, CEO at [THE MEDIA HOUSE](#)

How do you stay focused on your work?

The aim of this question is to gauge the self-discipline and preparedness of the potential hire. Remote work demands that the employee should manage their time well if they are to perform satisfactorily.



James Jason, Human Resources Manager at [Mitrade](#)



You have an urgent decision to make and you can't reach your manager. What would you do?

Remote employees need the ability to make decisions without any guidance since they cannot reach colleagues or managers as easily. Understanding the candidate's thinking process and whether you feel confident in the way they make decisions is a good way to judge if they would make a good remote employee.

Kevin Lee, CEO at [JourneyPure](#)

What would you do if you're given a task with little or no direction as to how to complete the task?

If you get a task with no direction, you have two choices; actively seek direction or proceed without it in whatever direction you deem best. The latter shows that I won't have to hold their hand and tell them what to do, as well as showing confidence in their own abilities.



Phil Strazzulla, CEO & Founder at [Select Software Reviews](#)



Tell me about the last time you had to drive a project without direction?

In remote environments, it can be trickier than normal to get the context you need directly from other teammates in a timely manner. So I'm trying to learn how they've dealt with ambiguity - how do they define what 'without direction' is for them?

Ablorde Ashigbi, Co-Founder and CEO at [4degrees.ai](#)



Tell me about a time when you went above and beyond your regular work duties to make a customer happy.

This question helps uncover creativity, and if the candidates can independently go out of their way to do out-of-ordinary things. We need to hear specific examples that show out-of-the-box thinking, customer focus, and quick decision-making.

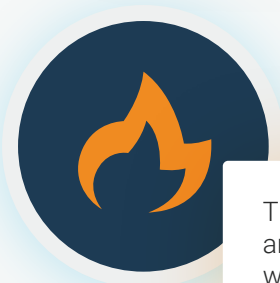
Thierry Tremblay, CEO & Founder at [Kohezion](#)

What is the most ambitious thing you've ever achieved up to this point? How did the experience change you?



Something that's very important to me in remote employees is a willingness to fail fast. Remote workers need to be self-starters, so they need to know how their own brain works. I like to see that a remote worker is willing to dream big, create a plan, and execute that plan. This can tell you a lot about the person and what drives them.

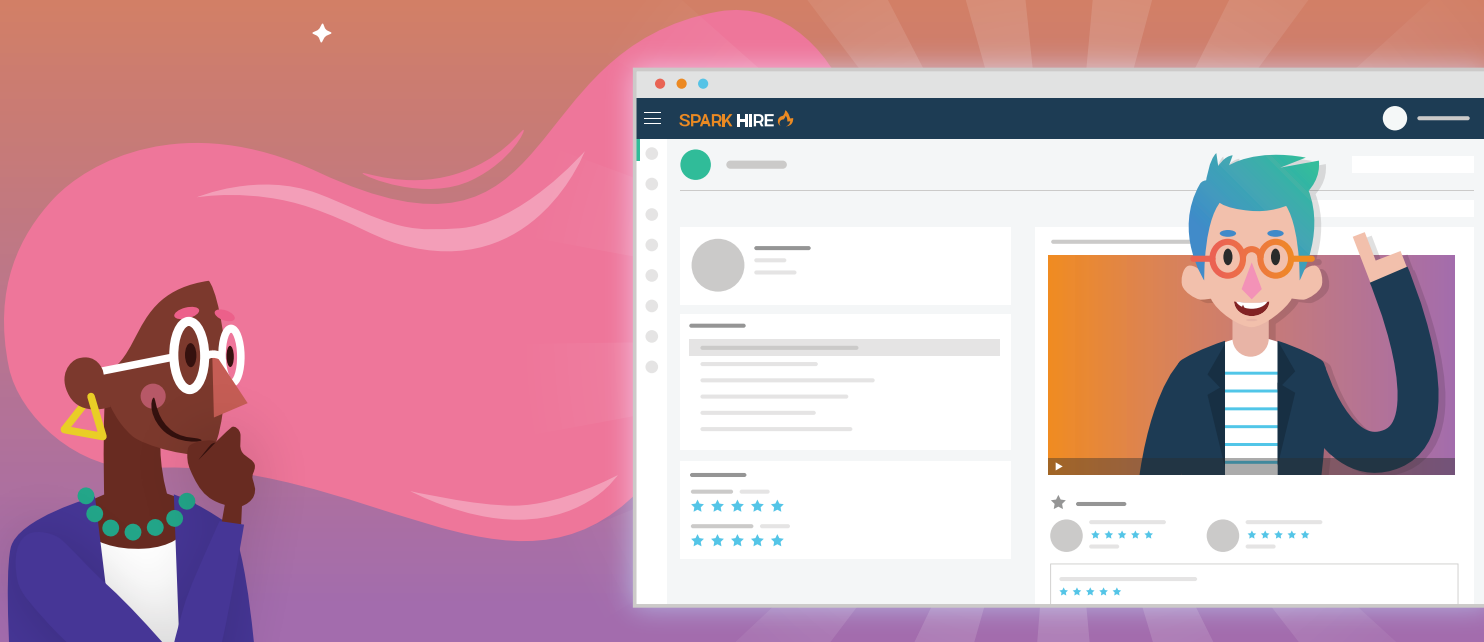
Ian Sells, CEO & Founder at [RebateKey](#)



If left to set your own work schedule, what hours/days would you work?

The candidate's response reveals how motivated and dedicated they are, when they are likely to be most productive/focused, and if their preferred schedule works with what you have to offer. Being put on the spot to figuratively set their own schedule also shows if they can take charge.

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