Literature Review on Change Management

Seminar paper

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Abstract

Change has always been a topic that preoccupies people and organizations. Especially in times when change is becoming more normal and frequent due to digitalization, it has become even more important to adapt to these changes. It is important to understand what triggers change in people, how they react to it, and how you must and should react to it yourself as a change agent. The most important aspects for successful change are communication, stakeholder engagement, and creating an environment where change is possible.

The goal of this literature review is to provide an overview of the topic of change management and to capture the current state of the literature. In addition, it is intended to provide a solid and up-to-date basis for business practice and for further academic work. Four different dimensions of change management are addressed in the paper. It starts with change management models and the right change leadership. It then discusses resistance to change. Finally, it highlights the success factors for successful change.

Keywords: "Change Management", "Change Leadership, "Organizational Change", "Resistance to Change".

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1   Introduction

Change management is a very established and well researched topic. According to Moran and Bright-mann (2001), change management means: "the process of continually renewing an organization's direction, structure, and capabilities to serve the everchanging needs of external and internal customers".

In a world like ours, where change is part of everyday life, it is even more important to be able to adapt to change (By et al. 2012). As change in the digital world constantly impact organizations and they have to face these sometimes-unpredictable changes, it is even more important to understand how these changes can and should be handled (Burnes 2004).

Many in the literature have struggled to develop the right change management model. It starts in 1947 with Lewin's 3 phase model (Lewin 1947). Countless models have been built on this model, trying to optimize it by including more and more aspects (Burnes 2004; Bullock and Batten 1985). While these models were developed, in practice they were forgotten to be used properly. Kotter (1995) has already mentioned in his model that there are no shortcuts in the implementation of change - change must be given time.

According to one study, 70% of change processes are not successful (Beer & Nohria 2000). This is due to the fact that theories have been used but not properly implemented. Basic things that are essential to the change process were missing. This includes good communication during the change process (Pollack & Algeo 2014). Nowadays, it is more important for managers to advance their own goals because they are measured by them, and they forget their responsibility to employees and the organization as a whole (By et al. 2012). Understanding how people or employees think and feel also requires a leader who has that thinking and leads in that direction (Herold et. al. 2008). It is important to understand, to see the long-term success and to prepare people for the change and to create the commitment (Pardo del Val et. Al. 2012).

Change management is not just a process that you go through, but you also have to consider the emotions of the people involved. You must be able to empathize with the person to understand what might cause them to perceive the change negatively (Ford & Ford 2010; Kotter 1995).

As mentioned at the beginning, the topic of change management has already been well researched and many gaps that have opened up over the years have been explained by new studies. Nevertheless, everyone deals with change differently (Herold et. al. 2008). This also makes it difficult to create a universal concept for every change process. There is also currently not much work that deals with the change management process as a whole, but rather specialized work on individual dimensions of change management. Therefore, the aim/ research question of this paper is to give an overview of the current state of the literature on change management and to see how far research is currently going.

The paper will deal with the methodology in the next section, how I proceeded to find the relevant literature. After that, the results will be presented in which the four dimensions: "Change Models", "Change Leadership", "Resistance to Change" & "Success Factor" will be presented. After that there will be a discussion part in which the limitations, the practical relevance and the fields of future research will be presented. At the end there will be a conclusion.

2   Method

It is important to conduct a clear and structured literature search for an academic literature review. In order to achieve the highest possible quality of the literature, it was divided into three subsections, which are described below.

- Literature search
- Literature selection
- Qualitative analysis

Literature Search

In this section, I explain how I proceeded with the literature review. I used the method of Webster & Watson (2002).

To get a first overview of the topic, I did a simple Google search. Then I focused on high quality databases to be able to use them in the paper.

I searched in the databases Google Scholar, EBSCO, Springer Professional, ScienceDirect.

In order to search the databases, I first formed keywords that I wanted to search with. I started with the keyword "change management". Since change management is a topic that has been researched for a long time, a lot of paper were displayed, and it was difficult to find relevant papers.

As a result, I expanded the search with additional keywords such as: "Organizational Change", "Change Leadership" or "Resistance to Change".

When searching the database, the search was also narrowed to look only for peer reviewed articles.

It was possible to find a lot of high-quality literature by adjusting my search. I conducted a forward and backward search based on Webster & Watson (2002) to find more such literature. Also, I used "Connected Papers" to find more literature. Through the tool it was possible to find papers, which content had links to each other.

In total, I came up with a number of 120 literatures. The information such as "year", "author", "title" "abstract", "ISSN". "keywords", "search string" etc. were recorded in a table. This literature was filtered in the next step.

Literature selection

To select the right literature, I took several steps. First, I removed duplicates created by searching in different databases.

The VHB ranking was one of the main criteria. All papers that did not have a VHB ranking were sorted out and thus not considered, eliminating a large part of the literature, exceptions were made if the source was very frequently cited and thus relevant to the topic area.

In the next step I looked at the keywords and titles to see if they fit my topic area, if not they were removed as well.

Next, I had a look at the abstract of the article to see what the core content of the article was.

Finally, I looked at the structure of the articles to see if there was any overlap in the content of the papers. In the end, there were 19 Paper that were part of the research process.

Qualitative analysis

For the qualitative analysis, I used the proven and accepted method of Wolfswinkel et. al. (2013). This is divided into the following three steps: open coding, axial coding, selective coding.

In the first step, I used open coding. In doing so, I broke down the text at hand into individual small paragraphs and then converted these into codes.

After that, I applied axial coding. This allowed me to make connections between the previously created paragraphs and form groups.

Lastly, I used selective coding to optimize the groups and connect them to dimensions.

3 Results

I have created a matrix here that shows all the papers that were used for the literature review. These are also the papers that remained after filtering in the previous chapter.

The matrix shows the four dimensions: "Change Models," "Change Leadership," "Resistance to Change," and "Success Factors."

The matrix is intended to show how the literature is related and what topics each paper covers in relation to the dimensions.

It can be seen that the literature ranges from current to very old, showing that the topic area is heavily researched, and the "older" papers are still relevant today.

References	Change Models	Change Leadership	Resistance to Change	Success Factors
Beer at al. (1990)			●	●
Beer & Nohria (2000)		●	●	●
Bullock, R. J. and Batten, D. (1985)	●			
Burnes (2004)	●	●		
By et al (2012)		●		●
Ford & Ford (2010)			●	●
Herold et al. (2007)		●	●	
Herold et al. (2008)		●		
Hiatt (2006)	●	●		
Kotter (1995)		●	●	●
Kotter (1996)	●			
Kurt (1947)	●			
Lawerence (1969)			●	●
Nadler & Tushman (1990)		●		●
Pardo-del-Val et al. (2003)			●	
Pardo-del-Val et al. (2012)		●	●	●
Pollack & Algeo (2014)		●		●
Rousseau et al. (2022)		●	●	●
Waddell & Sohal (1998)			●	●

Table 1. Concept Matrix

3.1   Change Models

A central aspect for organizations which want to adapt and operate successfully in a dynamic environment is Change Management. In the Field of Change Management there are numerous models which try to explain how Change Management works and how to implement it.

The literature has shown that there are different models that have evolved and been optimized over time. These Models help to understand and structure the process of change management. This section presents the most important and frequently cited models that have made a significant contribution to the development of change management. These models include Lewin´s 3-phase model, Bullock & Batten´s further development of this model, Kotter´s 8-step model and the ADKAR-model of Prosci.

Lewin 3-Step Model (1951)	Bullock & Batten Four-Phase Model (1958)	Kotter 8-Step Model (1995)	Prosci ADKAR-Model (1999)
1. Unfreeze	1. Exploration	1. Establish a sense of urgency	1. Awareness
2. Change	2. Planning	2. Form a powerful guiding coalition	2. Desire
3. Refreeze	3. Action	3. Create a vision	3. Knowledge
	4. Integration	4. Communicate the vision	4. Ability
		5. Empower other to act on the vision	5. Reinforcement
		6. Plan for and create short term wins	
		7. Consolidate improvements and produce change	
		8. Institutionalize new approaches	

Table 2. Change Models

Lewin's model is the simplest and oldest of all developed models, since it was developed in 1951. However, it is the most relevant model because many others have evolved from it. The 3 phases Unfreeze, Change and Refreeze are recognizable in many other models (Burnes 2004). Investing in substantial resources is crucial for the three-step approach to change (Lewin 1949).

- Unfreeze: Lewin emphasized that in order to discard old behaviors and adopt new ones, the existing equilibrium must be destabilized. This includes challenging the status quo, evoking feelings of guilt or survival anxiety, and creating psychological safety. Stakeholders need to feel protected from loss and humiliation in order to accept new information and reject old behaviors. (Burnes 2004)

- Change: You should try to consider all the forces at work and identify and evaluate all available options based on trial and error. This corresponds to the learning approach that is promoted by action research (Lewin 1949). The key here is to change the behavior of the target group.

- Refreeze: The most important aspect of refreezing is that the new behavior must be compatible with the rest of the learner's behavior, personality, and environment to a certain degree, otherwise it will lead to a new round of questioning (Burnes 2004). For this reason, Lewin viewed successful change as a group activity. Individual changes in behavior are not sustainable without simultaneous changes in group norms and routines. (Lewin 1949)

Because Lewin's model is so old, it has been much criticized over the years and adapted and developed by others. Criticisms were, for example, that it is only applicable to small organizations or that it does not consider the organization as a stable construct (Burnes 2004).

That's why Bullock and Batten developed the four-phase model, which for the first time looks at the organization as a whole. They view the organizational change as an ongoing and long-term process. (Bullock and Batten 1985). Awareness of the change process is created and explored during the "Exploration Phase". In the "Planning Phase", goals are defined and a plan to change is created. The "Action Phase" is the design and implementation of change management rules, and the "Integration Phase" is the introduction and integration of new behaviors into the organization (Bullock and Batten 1985). The model addresses change processes, which describe the methods used to move an organization from one state to another, and change phases, which describe the stages an organization must go through to successfully implement change (Bullock and Batten 1985).

Kotter has developed a model which functions as a kind of guide. He describes the organizational change process, which is divided into eight steps and requires a lot of time to go through. It is important not to skip any of these steps, as this can affect the result. Kotter's Model is divided into eight phases, but can be subdivided into 3 upper phases, which again shows similarities to Lewin's three phase model (Kotter 1996). Kotter's model also considers the human psyche and its impact on the change process. Among other things, he focuses on the emotions of the employees and the way in which they react to the change. For him, the success of change lies in preparing the environment for the change and implementing the change correctly, for example through good communication (Kotter 1996).

The ADKAR model focuses on how people adapt to change. It does not focus solely on the change itself. ADKAR represents the five concrete and tangible outcomes that a person must achieve to achieve sustainable change: Awareness, Desire, Knowledge, Ability, and Reinforcement (Hiat 2006).

- Awareness: You need to be aware that changing is necessary to meet the current challenges.

- Desire: To promote success, you should have a desire to actively support and participate in the change.

- Knowledge: It is important that people have the knowledge to make the change a success. They need to understand what steps are required and how to implement them effectively.

- Ability: To implement the change effectively, you must have the necessary skills and resources. This includes both the technical and interpersonal skills needed to support the change.

- Reinforcement: Reinforcing mechanisms must be provided to ensure that change is sustained. To maintain motivation and progress and to prevent regression, this can take the form of rewards, recognition, and support (Hiat 2006).

3.2 Change Leadership

In general, it can be said that leaders who have the ability to provide information about change, encourage employee participation, and communicate about change have higher levels of change readiness among their employees (Herold et al. 2008).

A critical factor in increasing employee readiness for change is the specific characteristics of a leader and how he or she drives change (Herold et al. 2008).

Change leadership refers to the characteristics and change-enabling behaviors of direct reports that shape and shape organizational change and foster the ability of people to implement the change. The style of leadership plays a critical role in determining the success of the change process.

In the literature, two leadership styles can be distinguished: Transformational Leadership and Change Leadership (Herold et al. 2008).

Transformational Leadership:

Transformational leadership, which views change as a situational factor that influences the effectiveness of certain leadership styles, is an approach well established in the leadership literature.

In times of change, charismatic or transformational leadership is considered to be particularly effective. This style of leadership can be effective at both the individual level and at the group level (Herold et al. 2008).

At the individual level, it reflects the discretionary stimuli that are directed by the leader to individual followers, while at the group level, it reflects the environmental stimuli that are shared or experienced by all members of the group (Herold et al. 2008).

Transformational leadership focuses on the long-term effects that leadership has on the employees/individuals. Transformational leadership is often linked to strategic leadership (Herold et al. 2008).

Change Leadership:

Change leadership or organizational change provides another perspective on the role of leadership in supporting employee change. In contrast to the leadership literature, which is specifically concerned with leadership at the individual and group levels, the organizational change literature is implicitly concerned with leadership at the group level. In this regard, it is assumed that appropriate and largely prescriptive leadership behavior is relevant to the entire work unit (Pardo-del-Val at al. 2012). Change leadership is more associated with tactical leadership styles and focuses on short-term and specific change projects (Herold et al. 2008).

There is another approach that is described in the literature, which can be combined very well with the above-mentioned approaches.

Participative management:

It is very common in the management literature, and it finds a good match in the change management field in particular.

Participative management describes the involvement of employees in the decision-making process. Employees should be encouraged to think for themselves. They should feel included in the decision-making process (Pardo-del-Val at al. 2012).

The process of decision making is not seen as the selection of an option. Rather, it is a process that should be worked out together. The decision-making process consists of "identifying the problem" - the "cognition phase" - "identifying or designing alternatives" - also called the "modeling or conception phase" - "selecting the decision" and finally the "implementation and review phase", in which it is closely observed whether the selected decision has been implemented correctly and whether adjustments need to be made (Pardo-del-Val at al. 2012).

Change leadership has a major impact on the success of the change and whether it will be accepted by all stakeholders. Kotter and Lewin, in particular, have already pointed out how to get it accepted and implemented, and the hurdles that must be overcome. (Kotter 1996, Burnes 2004).

We still live in a time when leaders put their own interests and egos above all else. For example, they are measured by short-term goals rather than long-term ones. As a result, leaders think only about the here and now and not about the long term, which leads to dissatisfaction for many (By et al. 2012).

For this reason, the ethical dimension plays an important role in change management. Leaders must have an understanding of the people for whom they are responsible and help them accordingly (By et al. 2012).

The different leadership styles discussed earlier show the need to adapt and respond to the needs of employees. When a change needs to be implemented and the employees do not like or want to accept the change, the leadership position can convince them if it holds the same values as the employees and the employees want to follow it. The moral compass must be aligned with that of the organization. Leadership is more than pursuing one's own interests, it evolves into a participative leadership style (By et al. 2012, Pardo-del-Val at al. 2012).

3.3   Resistance to Change

There are different perceptions of how resistance is perceived or what resistance is in the first place. The term resistance is defined by Waddell (1998) as the occurrence of dissenting opinions that can have a negative impact on an organization's effectiveness and performance. Traditionally, resistance has been viewed as the enemy of change. It has been associated with conflict. One approach has been the avoidance of resistance in order to have an atmosphere of harmony in the organization. (Waddell 1998).

Waddell classifies resistance into four domains: rational factors, non-rational factors, political factors, and management factors.

- Rational factors: Inconsistency between individual assessment and management's proposal for action, which then lead to resistance (Waddell 1998).

- Non-rational factors: Personal preferences or social relationships may lead to resistance, regardless of the economic impact (Waddell 1998).

- Political factors: Resistance to strengthen one's own power or position by scoring points against the change agent. It is strategically motivated and is in the service of individual interests (Waddell 1998).

- Management factors: Resistance can also result from inappropriate or poor management styles (Waddell 1998).

Ford & Ford (2010) takes a similar approach to the issue of resistance as well. He says there are different understandings of resistance from a manager's perspective. These include "push-back," "not buying in," "criticism," "foot-dragging," and "workarounds. Because there are so many types of resistance, resistance is more in the eye of the beholder and therefore has a different meaning for each manager (Ford & Ford 2010).

Ford also identified three primary forces that lead to resisting change. These include cognitive biases, social dynamics, and managerial missteps.

- Cognitive biases: Resistance is often blamed on other problems or external factors. Success is attributed to one's own performance and failure is seen as the result of someone else's bad luck or fault.

- Social dynamics: The fear of negative consequences, such as loss of reputation, failure to be promoted, or even the loss of one's job, leads to a powerful and paralyzing fear of failure in the competitive world of business. The blaming of resistance is accepted by managers because it is common knowledge that people are resistant to change.

- Managerial missteps: All leaders make mistakes, but not all of them are willing to admit that they have made them. Mistakes such as breaking promises, overestimating change, failing to fully commit to change, and ignoring core values and rules lead to a loss of credibility and increased resistance to change (Ford & Ford 2010).

The interplay of these three factors - the cognitive tendency to believe the best in ourselves, the social need to explain away mistakes or failures, and leadership misconduct that undermines trust, credibility, and confidence - reinforces each other (Ford & Ford 2010).

There are countless examples of change failures, and the question is always why. Resistance to change always plays a role, and so does the implementation of the change. Clarity should always be created before a change process so that people can adjust to what is coming and feel integrated (Beer 1990).

A study found that 70% of all change processes fail. This was because different methods were used, but none were followed 100% of the time (Beer & Nohria 2000).

Kotter already pointed out in his model that there are no "shortcuts" and that change takes time (Kotter 1995).

In the past, change has always been seen as a threat. According to the definitions above, this should not be the case. It is not the change itself that people resist. It is the uncertainty and possible (negative) outcomes that change brings (Waddell 1985).

According to more recent findings, change should not be seen as an obstacle, but rather as a resource that can be used to increase efficiency. Resistance should be seen as a form of feedback that should be used for improvement and the success of change in the future (Ford & Ford 2010).

Humans are creatures of habit, and people in their work environment in particular have become accustomed to a certain pattern from which it is difficult to break out. A change process is therefore very difficult for people to understand and initially triggers resistance in them. So, you always have to be aware that it is difficult to get people out of their environment and that you first have to create the right setting for this (Kotter 1995).

3.4   Success Factors

Change management is a critical process in an ever-changing business environment. A number of success factors have been identified for the successful implementation of organizational change and have been widely discussed in the literature.

Communication is one of the key success factors. Clear and concise communication of what the change process entails and how it will be implemented is critical to stakeholder engagement and a clear understanding of the change (Kotter 1995; Waddell 1998; By (2012); Pollack & Algeo 2014).

Another key success factor is the creation of a high level of commitment on the part of employees. The motivation of the people and their willingness to take an active part in the process of change are of crucial importance. In order to gain the trust and support of employees, it is necessary to take a targeted approach (Beer & Nohria 2000; Pardo del Val et. Al. 2012; Rousseau & Have 2022).

Finally, setting clear goals and creating a roadmap also play an important role. Showing people where the change is going and how the goals will be achieved creates a clear direction and orientation to successfully drive the change process (Kotter 1995; Rousseau & Have 2022).

The literature also presents different models or phases through which the individual success factors pass. Beer et al (1990) describe six points for successful change.

1. Mobilize commitment to change

2. Develop a shared vision

3. Foster consensus for the new vision

4. Spread revitalization to all departments

5. Institutionalize revitalization through formal policies, systems, and structures

6. Monitor the revitalization process, adjusting in response to problems. (Beer at al. 1990)

The process explicitly states that the commitment of individual stakeholders must be obtained before any change process can begin, and that the starting point for any effective change effort is a clearly defined business problem. Successful change requires Commitment, Coordination, and Competency (Beer at al. 1990).

Evidence-based change management is the practice of managing planned organizational change using scientific evidence. It emphasizes making informed decisions about change initiatives using multiple sources of evidence, including scientific research, organizational data, practitioner experience, and stakeholder input. Evidence-based management is used as a successful way to implement change. Within its theory, it also analyses various success factors. Trust is critical to successful change, and the combination of a bottom-up and top-down approach will lead to longer lasting and sustainable results.

The setting of goals in terms of learning and performance is important for effective change, and communication is key throughout the process. The change process typically consists of four phases: preparing for change, initiating change, transforming or implementing change, and sustaining change within the larger organization (Rousseau & Have 2022).

As mentioned in the previous chapter, leadership is an important aspect of change management. Leadership is also reflected in the success factors. This is because communicating, implementing, and achieving goals are areas that stem from leadership. This also requires the leader and the organization to adapt to change. Especially in order to lead a successful change process in a constantly changing world, one must master change management, or it must not be foreign to you. (By 2012).

Change models have also been part of this paper. The literature considers not only the models but also implementing the models as key to success. Commitment and participation are considered to be key factors for the success of change management (Pardo del Val et. Al. 2012).

There is a strong emphasis on the need to have a focus on the implementation and on the creation of an attitude towards the change on the part of the participants. There are two common mistakes that should be avoided in change management.

- Mistake 1: Managers do not effectively apply known change management practices, such as developing a vision for the change or involving others. This contributes to their failure to successfully manage the change (Herold et al. 2007).

- Mistake 2: Other critical factors that ultimately influence people's reactions to change are overlooked in the focus on change management practices and processes (Herold et al. 2007).

Assigning the right roles to implement the change is also important. Consider whether the Project Manager is going to get involved in implementing the change. In principle, it is important to have a change manager who accompanies the process. However, when a project manager is also engaged, it is important for them to be in continuous communication with the change manager. In order to be successful, these processes must have a very clear definition. This also includes communicating well and developing a clear vision (Pollack & Algeo 2014).

4   Discussion

The topic of change management has been researched for a long time and with Lewin's 3-phase model one of the most important papers was published in 1947, which is still relevant today and has been used and further developed for further research (Burnes 2004).

There are many commonalities in the literature on change management. Basically, the literature covers the chapters that are also covered in this paper. Most of the literature uses change management models as a basis for investigation. These are not always mentioned, but are assumed, as it is then mostly about the correct application.

It was also interesting that the literature dealt on the one hand with management, which had a strong economic view, and on the other hand with human psychology, which is more concerned with the behavioral patterns of people and deals with the emotional level. However, the human psychology was less dealt with in the paper.

The chapter is mainly divided into three content sections: Practical implications, Future research, Limitations.

Practical implications:

The paper can be relevant for practice. The Key Findings show why change does not work in organizations and how to properly establish change is especially relevant for managers. Understanding why resistance to change arises and how to deal with it is relevant to practice. In this context, it is also important

to understand what types of leadership styles they should use or what types of leadership styles exist. The paper also discusses that change management is not a standardized process. It depends on the leadership style, there are people involved and their emotions, which makes a standardized process almost impossible. This is also an important insight for practitioners to keep in mind when planning change.

From the paper, success factors for change management such as communication, the right implementation of change or creating commitment emerge, which should be taken into account in practice.

Future research:

As change management has been studied for a long time, research gaps have been filled and new ones have been discovered. We know more about people's reactions to change of all kinds. More research can also be done on the long-term effects on people after the pandemic and the effects of the changes that are currently being implemented. Research could be done on how people react when they are uprooted from their newly established habits, if that happens.

In addition, change management models are constantly evolving and can be adapted to different areas, especially as topics such as AI or robotics become more interesting and can bring major changes.

Limitations:
The paper has some limitations. The selection of literature was limited to ranked journals, but the quality of the papers varies widely, ranging from C to A ranked journals. The language of the selected papers is also English only, which may have eliminated relevant papers.

Another limitation is the keywords used. As mentioned at the beginning, the topic of change management is also researched on a psychological level. Keywords and papers that deal strongly with the human psyche were not considered, as this would have gone beyond the scope of the paper.

The database used was also too small. Other databases should have been used to find more diverse papers. This could have increased the number of papers.

Also, a fundamental limitation is that the paper was written alone and thus a subjective opinion on the topic is formed unconsciously and one cannot cover so much literature.

5   Conclusion

The aim of this paper was to provide an overview of the current state of the literature on change management. To this end, I provided an overview of four relevant change management topics.

Change management models, their development over time, and their relevance were highlighted. Then, the aspect of leadership was taken up and different leadership styles were pointed out, which showed that a participative approach or co-determination in processes leads to change being more successful (By et. al. 2012; Pardo-del-Val at al. 2012). Resistance to change has shown that people do not resist the change itself, but the uncertainty of what the change will bring. Therefore, understanding how to deal with these emotions/information is important (Ford & Ford 2010; Kotter 1995).

Success factors for change management were also identified. These include communication, readiness for change, and developing a clear vision (Rousseau & Have 2022; Pollack & Algeo 2014; Pardo del Val et. Al. 2012 Beer & Nohria 2000).

The paper can be used by anyone planning a change process. One has a basis for models to use and can learn about risks and "proper" change implementation. The paper is used to get an overview of what someone needs to consider while planning a change process.

With this literature review, I have created a foundation that includes the most important aspects of change management and also what constitutes successful change management.

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