



The Meaningful Connection between Job Crafting and Protean Career Attitudes

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Abstract

Purpose – The present study bridges a significant gap in the literature by investigating the complex relationship between job crafting and protean career attitudes. It has been demonstrated that job crafting, which entails the proactive redesign of work roles, responsibilities, and relationships, empowers employees, and elevates.

Research design, data, and methodology – This study employed a tailored search approach with specific terms linked to job crafting and protean career attitudes to ensure a thorough and focused analysis. The keywords include "Job crafting," "protean career attitudes," "career development," and related terms. This strategy uses an organized method to identify, screen, and choose appropriate studies.

Result: This study synthesizes prior studies and identifies four critical links between the development of jobs and protean career attitudes. To begin with, task crafting, which entails job requirements and scope modifications, leads to protean career attitudes as employees match their roles to their skills and passions. Second, rational crafting, which is adjusting interactions with coworkers and superiors encourages flexible career attitudes.

Conclusion – This study insists that organizations must consider the essential practical ramifications. Employers may improve employee growth, engagement, and talent retention by encouraging job customization, recognizing protean workers, cultivating a protean culture, investing in ongoing learning.

Keywords: Job Crafting, Protean Career Attitudes, Employee Management

JEL Classification Code: J24, J28, O15

1. Introduction

In today's rapidly changing workplace, people are increasingly looking for methods to take charge of their careers, shape their work experiences, and find purpose in what they do (Bruning & Campion, 2019). Job crafting and protean career attitudes have become significant concepts that offer insight into how workers actively shape their work and careers. This study investigates the critical relationship between job crafting and protean career attitudes to explore how these phenomena overlap and support individual career growth and organizational performance. The modern workplace is made of volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity (VUCA) (Hu et al., 2020). Employees now view their jobs as dynamic journeys they manage through various career experiences rather than linear progressions inside a single business. Understanding how people shape their employment and careers becomes essential for employees and employers.

Job crafting, the proactive adjustment of one's employment functions and responsibilities to align with personal preferences and strengths, has drawn interest in enhancing employees' job satisfaction, engagement, and well-being (Costantini & Weintraub, 2022). In contrast, protean career attitudes demonstrate a person's dedication to adaptability and self-direction in making career decisions (Hong et al., 2022). This is especially important when traditional career paths are becoming less relevant. This study is helpful to practitioners, human resource specialists, and organizational leaders who want to create a work setting that promotes employee autonomy, engagement, and career fulfillment (Hulshof et al., 2020). Additionally, it advances the study of the relatively unexplored relationship between job crafting and protean career attitudes, which is valuable to the academic community.

The main goal of this study is to investigate and comprehend the significant relationship between job crafting and protean career attitudes. To reach this goal, the following objectives have been established which include: 1. To identify the key components and dimensions of job crafting as described in prior research. 2. To explore the dimensions and characteristics of protean career attitudes as discussed in the existing literature. 3. To investigate how job crafting practices may influence an individual's protean career attitudes. 4. To assess the implications of the relationship between job crafting and protean career attitudes for organizational outcomes, such as employee retention, performance, and innovation. However, the following research queries and hypotheses have been developed to further my study objectives. 1. What are the main components of job crafting, and how have they been studied in prior research? 2. According to existing literature, what are protean career attitudes' defining characteristics and dimensions? 3. How do job crafting behaviors correlate with an individual's protean career attitudes? 4. What organizational outcomes are associated with the relationship between job crafting and protean career attitudes?

Hypothesis 1: There is a positive association between job crafting practices and protean career attitudes. Hypothesis 2: Employees who engage in higher levels of job crafting will exhibit greater adaptability and self-direction in their career choices. Moreover, this essay is structured as follows: A thorough overview of the pertinent literature is presented in Chapter 2, where the ideas of job crafting and protean career attitudes are discussed, and the research gap this study seeks to fill. The technique used in this study is described in Chapter 3, along with the steps for choosing and analyzing earlier research using the PRISMA approach. The study's findings are presented in Chapter 4, which outlines four linkages between job crafting and protean career attitudes. The ramifications of these findings for practitioners are discussed in Chapter 5, which also makes recommendations regarding how companies can benefit from encouraging job-crafting behaviors and protean career attitudes. The research's shortcomings are discussed in Chapter 6, along with suggested future research exploration. The primary findings and their importance in expanding our knowledge of the relationship between job crafting and protean career attitudes are summarized in Chapter 7, which also serves as the paper's conclusion.

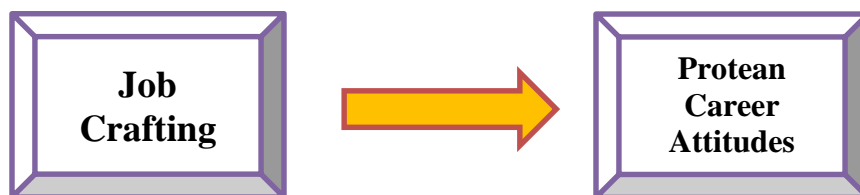


Figure 1: The Relationship between Key Factors

2. Literature Review

The current employment arena has encountered fundamental changes like increased autonomy, flattened hierarchies, and decreased traditional career paths. Job crafting and protean career attitudes have become more prominent in this dynamic context. This literature review attempts to give a thorough knowledge of these ideas, investigate how they relate to one another, and highlight the current research gaps that emphasize the necessity of this study.

According to Ghadi and Almanaga'h (2020), job crafting is a dynamic and proactive strategy that allows employees to modify their roles, responsibilities, and relationships to reflect their talents, interests, and values. This idea acknowledges that people actively shape their work experiences rather than simply being passive recipients of their duties. This strategy consists of three components, each necessary to change one's professional life. They comprise task crafting, relational crafting, and cognitive crafting. Task crafting refers to the initiative employees take to change the nature and scope of their job activities (Geldenhuis et al., 2021). This might include looking for new projects, rearranging their responsibilities to fit their interests and passions better, or delegating tasks that do not work their skills well. Relational crafting focuses on cultivating relationships with coworkers and superiors, including looking for mentorship, forming partnerships, or changing communication methods. Employees can dramatically improve their job happiness and overall performance by cultivating positive relationships (Harju et al., 2021). Finally, cognitive crafting involves changing how people perceive their work. Those who use this tactic could reframe obstacles as chances for development, find meaning in seemingly meaningless work, or view failures as helpful learning experiences. By making these cognitive changes, people can develop a more positive and motivating attitude toward their work, eventually improving their well-being and sense of purpose (Kim & Beehr, 2021).

A substantial corpus of empirical evidence highlights the benefits of job crafting. According to Bakker et al. (2020), workers who participate in job crafting express more significant levels of job satisfaction. People are more likely to feel fulfilled and have their roles and responsibilities aligned with their beliefs when they have a say in how those roles and responsibilities are designed. Job crafting is also associated with higher levels of work engagement (Tims et al., 2013). Employees who customize their work environments are more likely to put their hearts, minds, and creativity into their work. Their performance and inventiveness are enhanced as a result of this increased participation. Importantly, job crafting leads to improved well-being (Ha & Lee, 2022). Employees feel better about purpose and life satisfaction when their employment aligns with their interests and strengths. This has a favorable effect on their mental and emotional well-being. Additionally, job crafting gives people a sense of autonomy and control over their professional lives (Kuijpers et al., 2020). Employees feel a stronger connection to their work and a better understanding of ownership over their positions due to this autonomy, which promotes intrinsic motivation. Instead of being passive bystanders, they take control of their professional futures.

On the other hand, Protean career attitudes are characterized by a person's dedication to making self-directed career decisions and their capacity to adapt to changing conditions (Hoefsmit et al., 2023). Instead of following predetermined trajectories, employees with protean career attitudes actively shape their career paths by looking for learning and personal development possibilities. These individuals value autonomy and a proactive approach to progress, which enables them to thrive in a constantly shifting work environment. They see their professions as dynamic, multidimensional experiences. According to research, people with protean career attitudes are more likely to be satisfied, adaptable, and have a sense of self-direction while making career decisions (Knotts & Houghton, 2021). Instead of concentrating simply on upward mobility inside a company, they frequently regard their jobs as a sequence of events contributing to their growth and development.

People who exhibit protean career attitudes have a unique viewpoint on their professional development. They report higher levels of work satisfaction and have a remarkable capacity for adaptation, enabling them to accept change and uncertainty confidently (Kooij et al., 2022). Furthermore, they actively shape their job pathways based on their goals and aspirations, demonstrating a strong sense of self-direction. They perceive their professions as an intricate tapestry of varied experiences rather than the usual pursuit of upward mobility inside an organization, which aligns more with their self-directed attitude (Lo Presti et al., 2023). These encounters are not just steppingstones but essential elements that significantly impact their career and personal development. As a result, people with flexible career views motivated by the quest for fulfillment and lifelong learning succeed in their chosen fields.

Moreover, although job crafting and protean career attitudes stress employee autonomy and self-direction, the research must explore the relationship between these ideas. But several things point to a significant connection between them. First, job crafting allows people to redesign their jobs and responsibilities to their values and interests, fostering a sense of autonomy at work (Letona-Ibañez et al., 2021). This sense of autonomy is critical to protean career attitudes, in which people actively direct their professional trajectories. Second, workers who actively craft their jobs

are more likely to look for chances for learning and personal growth, traits that fit with protean career attitudes (Kundi et al., 2021).

Despite the relative virtues of job crafting and protean career attitudes, a significant study gap exists about how these two ideas connect. Although both are acknowledged as essential factors in determining employee well-being and career satisfaction, little study has looked at how job crafting practices may affect someone's protean career attitudes or the other way around. It is crucial to comprehend this connection for several reasons. One is for improved worker well-being. Understanding the interactions between job crafting and protean career attitudes can help employers create work environments that enhance employee satisfaction and well-being (Lo Presti & Elia, 2020). The second reason is that organizations can improve their talent management strategies by attracting and keeping workers who are productive and actively involved in shaping their careers inside the company by better understanding how these ideas interact. The last reason is the research gap. The absence of empirical studies evaluating the connection between job crafting and protean career attitudes portrays a clear research gap. We must bridge this gap to improve our knowledge of how people manage their careers in modern organizations.

3. Methodology

This section describes the approach used to compile, evaluate, and analyze earlier research on job crafting and protean career attitudes, the methods used for screening and selection, and the justification for choosing research sources. The first step in our process entailed methodically gathering earlier research from scholarly databases and peer-reviewed journals. We employed a tailored search approach with specific terms linked to job crafting and protean career attitudes to ensure a thorough and focused analysis. The keywords include "Job crafting," "protean career attitudes," "career development," and related terms (Han & Kang, 2020; Nguyen et al., 2020; Kang & Hwang, 2020).

We used a systematic approach, principally adhering to the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) standards, to ensure the accuracy and relevance of our literature review. This strategy uses an organized method to identify, screen, and choose appropriate studies, assuring the inclusion of reliable and timely research (Rethlefsen et al., 2021). Identification: First, we thoroughly searched several databases, finding many potential sources. This stage produced a range of studies on job crafting and protean career attitudes (Mäkikangas & Schaufeli, 2021). During the screening phase, we carefully evaluated the titles and abstracts of the retrieved articles. Studies that did not fit our study goals were filtered out using predetermined inclusion and exclusion criteria. We specifically considered research on job crafting and protean career attitudes that were peer-reviewed, authored in English, and published in English-language journals. This procedure was taken to make sure the sources were reliable and relevant. Following thorough screening, we chose a group of studies for in-depth analysis. These selected studies received full-text reviews, during which we examined their conclusions, methods, and content critically. Studies that demonstrated relevance to the link between job crafting and protean career attitudes were included in the final selection because they matched our study objectives (Phommahaxay et al., 2019; Woo & Kang, 2020; Nantharath et al., 2016).

The choice of pertinent earlier research was influenced by the requirement to address our research questions and objectives successfully. We prioritized studies that shed light on how job crafting and protean career attitudes are related, concentrating on empirical research, theoretical frameworks, and models that examined this relationship. We sought to include papers that offered solid conceptualizations, robust techniques, and empirical support. We also took the studies' recentness into account to have the most recent research findings while also highlighting fundamental works that helped lay the groundwork for this field of study. Therefore, we assembled a comprehensive and varied set of earlier studies to properly examine and synthesize the available literature by adhering to the systematic identification, screening, and selection processes (Woo, 2020). This research strategy guarantees the validity and dependability of the conclusions in the following chapters, laying a robust groundwork for comprehending the significant relationship between job crafting and protean career attitudes (Hong, 2021).

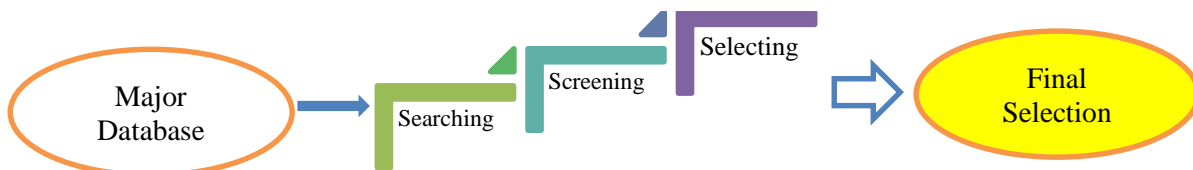


Figure 2: The Procedure of the Obtaining Final Dataset

4. Results

This chapter delves into the core of our study, revealing and analyzing the four beneficial relationships between job crafting and protean career attitudes. Each relation is explained in detail under its subheading and is backed up by convincing evidence from carefully chosen earlier research.

4.1. The Empowerment through Task Crafting

Task crafting, a key element of job crafting, is a crucial motivator for creating protean career attitudes. According to Yoon et al. (2019), task crafting enables workers to modify their jobs better to align their talents and interests. Their study found that people who took the initiative to change their duties reported more adaptability and higher professional satisfaction. This agreement with the fundamental principles of protean career attitudes is significant because it emphasizes how actively individuals shape their professional trajectories to fit their changing goals and interests (Sultana & Malik, 2019).

Job grafting, meaningful work and performance (Junça-Silva et al., 2022). Task crafting enables workers to modify their jobs better to align their talents and interests. Employees can take control of their work experiences through task crafting, which fosters a sense of empowerment and autonomy. Employees who actively shape their work duties start to see themselves as career architects, which propels them in a self-directed style (AlMemari et al., 2023). Task crafting is a foundation for people to adopt protean career attitudes since career pathways are considered dynamic, self-constructed journeys influenced by individual values and interests. This newly discovered empowerment serves as a motivation behind their decision-making regarding their career paths, and adaptability in an ever-changing work environment is motivated (Tian et al., 2022).

4.2. Building Relationships through Relational Crafting

Looking further into this connection, it becomes clear how crucial relational craftsmanship is in forming and shaping protean career attitudes. Relational crafting, a vital component of job crafting, entails deliberate changes in how individuals communicate with their coworkers and managers (Wang et al., 2020). This element fits in perfectly with the core of protean career attitudes, where people actively look for opportunities for their development through deep interpersonal connections. A study by Chin et al. (2019) helped to clarify this connection. According to their research, workers actively engaged in relational crafting—seeking mentorship, developing collaborations, and changing communication styles—reported much greater professional engagement and flexibility. These findings are consistent with the fundamental ideas of protean career attitudes, which hold that people actively seek out possibilities for personal improvement, frequently made possible by social interactions (Wang et al., 2020).

People adopting protean career attitudes see their professional development as dynamic (Park et al., 2022). They understand that their capacity for fostering fruitful interactions at work is closely related to their capacity for adapting, learning, and growing. As a result, relationship building becomes a potent tool in their toolkit for the workplace, allowing them to foster relationships that improve their work satisfaction, adaptability, and overall career satisfaction (Frederick & VanderWeele, 2020). Nurturing positive connections is not only a byproduct of flexible protean career attitudes but is an active approach people use to create a conducive environment for personal development (Zhang & Li, 2020). By doing this, individuals reaffirm their belief that they have the power to form and direct their career paths, perfectly embracing the philosophy of protean career attitudes (Redondo et al., 2021).

4.3. Cognitive Crafting and Career Adaptability

The substantial impact of cognitive crafting on career adaptability in the workplace strongly links job crafting and protean career attitudes. The deliberate modification of one's perspective of work is called cognitive craftsmanship, which ultimately promotes a more adaptable and growth-oriented mindset. Research by Li et al. (2021) offers insightful information about this connection. According to their research, people who actively used cognitive crafting techniques, such as giving meaning to seemingly pointless tasks and viewing obstacles as chances for personal growth, reported better general well-being and work satisfaction. This cognitive flexibility is the core of protean career attitudes, in which people view their careers as dynamic and ever-changing experiences (Tee et al., 2022). Therefore, cognitive crafting gives people the psychological resources they need to succeed in a world of work that is continuously changing. Employees who actively shape their perspectives and attitudes toward their work are more able to welcome ambiguity and adapt to changing conditions. This adaptable mindset aligns with the fundamental

principles of protean career attitudes, where people actively seek out possibilities for personal development and perceive professional setbacks as opportunities rather than impediments (Barclay et al., 2022; Woo, 2020). Employees who actively shape their perspectives and attitudes toward their work are more able to welcome ambiguity and adapt to changing conditions.

4.4. Autonomy and Self-Direction

In contrast to traditional, predefined trajectories, autonomy and self-direction are the fundamental pillars of protean career attitudes, reflecting people's active engagement in constructing their professional pathways by their beliefs and interests. Research by Oh and Koo (2021) emphasizes the empowerment workers feel due to job crafting. Their findings show that job crafting gives people greater control over their professional lives. The core of protean career attitudes, where people take control of their career journeys, is strongly reflected in this newly discovered empowerment (Zhang & Parker, 2019). Employees who actively redesign their jobs and responsibilities through job crafting develop a sense of ownership and confidence in their ability to shape their professional trajectories. As a result, they are more likely to see their professions as active journeys that feature independence and self-direction (Oprea et al., 2019). Therefore, job crafting is a valuable instrument that gives workers the power to take charge of their professional lives and futures. This aligns with the core ideas of protean career attitudes, according to which people actively pursue career paths that match their values, interests, and aspirations (Sei, 2019). In doing so, they embrace the autonomy and self-direction required to succeed in today's rapidly changing workplace.

In summary, our review of the chosen prior studies reveals four unique but related benefits of job crafting and protean career attitudes. These relationships highlight the freedom and control that job crafting offers and its part in encouraging adaptability and self-direction in people's professional decisions (Sloan & Geldenhuys, 2021) These findings emphasize the importance of individual agency in forming dynamic career paths and provide insightful information on how firms can develop cultures that support employee autonomy, involvement, and career satisfaction.

Table 1: Investigation Results of the Current Study

Evidence for the Connection between Key Factors	Prior Evidence Resources
The Linkage between Job Crafting and Protean Career Attitudes	Yoon et al. (2019), Sultana & Malik (2019), Junça-Silva et al. (2022), AlMemari et al. (2023), Tian et al. (2022), Wang et al. (2020), Chin et al. (2019), Wang et al. (2020), Park et al. (2022), Frederick & VanderWeele (2020), Zhang & Li (2020), Li et al. (2021), Tee et al. (2022), Barclay et al. (2022), Woo (2020), Oh & Koo (2021), Zhang & Parker (2019), Oprea et al. (2019), Sei (2019), Sloan & Geldenhuys (2021)

5. Implications and Limitations

The beneficial relationships between job crafting and protean career attitudes that we have discovered have broad ramifications for businesses hoping to promote employee growth, engagement, and success in general. In this chapter, we examine the applications of our results in practice and recommend how businesses might benefit from these relationships. Organizations should actively promote and encourage job crafting among employees by recognizing its connection and protean career attitudes. This requires developing a culture supporting each person's autonomy and ability to determine their career path. Give workers the chance to take the initiative in redesigning their responsibilities, developing collaborative connections, and rethinking how they view their jobs. Encouragement of job crafting improves employee satisfaction while also boosting engagement and adaptability levels.

Organizations should prioritize recognizing and rewarding protean individuals to retain top talent and promote innovation. These people actively direct their professional development, greatly enhancing the organization's flexibility and spirit of innovation. Diverse approaches can be used to acknowledge protean workers. Firstly, companies can provide career advancement opportunities that fit their workers' protean ambitions. By designing growth pathways that accommodate varied interests and skills, companies retain excellent talent and build a more engaged and dedicated staff. Second, mentorship programs can be created to link protean workers with seasoned experts who can mentor and motivate them. Such initiatives help people transfer knowledge, encourage personal

development, and create a culture of constant learning and flexibility. Finally, a commitment to developing protean personnel can be shown by providing customized career paths that consider their changing goals and beliefs. Since these workers offer new perspectives and a variety of experiences to the organization's problem-solving processes, this acknowledgment and accommodation not only increase talent retention but also build a culture where innovation thrives. Therefore, fostering and recognizing protean workers is an investment in talent and creativity, driving the company toward long-term success.

Organizations should consider adopting a "protean culture" to stay competitive in a fast-changing business environment. This means encouraging an environment at work where workers are urged to take charge of their careers, investigate various positions, and adjust to ever-changing circumstances. A protean culture leads to a dynamic and agile workforce prepared to manage changes in the industry landscape and contribute to the organization's long-term success. However, organizations should support continuous learning and development activities because they understand how vital cognitive crafting is in fostering protean career attitudes. Provide tools for continual skill development and encourage staff to reframe difficulties as chances for improvement. This investment enhances employees' adaptability and aligns with their drive for personal gain, boosting a culture of learning and resilience inside the company.

While our study sheds light on the critical links between job crafting and protean career attitudes, it is essential to recognize its limitations. One of the notable limitations is in the scope of the selection of the past research. However, compared to other well-established fields, the research landscape surrounding job crafting and protean career attitudes is still in the early stages of development. Due to the limited number of studies, we could not investigate a wide range of viewpoints and potential factors that might impact the relationships we looked at. As a result, it is possible that our conclusions need to account for all the subtleties in this complex relationship fully.

Secondly, the approaches used in the chosen earlier studies present another difficulty. Research uses multiple measurement devices, sample strategies, or data collection approaches. This methodological variance can add heterogeneity to the study and affect how comparable the results are. Although we took steps to ensure the inclusion of high-quality research, there may be some discrepancies due to methodological differences between studies. Third, numerous prior research on which we drew were cross-sectional in design and collected data at a specific moment in time. Although they cannot prove causality, such studies offer insightful information about connections. Although our analysis of this research shows the correlations between job crafting and protean career attitudes, the causal relationships cannot be proved beyond a reasonable doubt. A longitudinal method might offer more reliable proof in this area.

The body of literature we looked at could have been impacted by publication bias, a tendency for research with substantial outcomes to be more likely to be published. Although we tried to incorporate various studies, this bias may result in an overrepresentation of associations between job crafting and protean career attitudes. Only published studies or those with insignificant results might have been available in our review, which could have affected the conclusion. Finally, another restriction is the generalizability of our results outside the scope of the chosen earlier investigations. These investigations were carried out across various organizational structures, sectors, and cultural situations. As a result, our findings should only be applied cautiously to diverse workplaces.

6. Conclusions

In this investigation, we set out to investigate the significant relationships between job crafting and protean career attitudes. Four favorable correlations were found during our analysis, which helped to clarify how closely these two occurrences are related. These interactions emphasized the importance of job crafting in empowering staff, encouraging adaptable mindsets, developing strong relationships, and encouraging autonomy and self-direction in career decisions. Our findings are significant because they can change organizational procedures. Employee growth, engagement, and talent retention can be improved by promoting job crafting, honoring and rewarding adaptable people, and embracing a flexible culture. Our research also recommends that firms fund initiatives to promote continuous learning and provide flexible career advancement routes to meet the changing needs of their workforce.

Our study fills a significant knowledge gap in the literature by thoroughly explaining how job-crafting methods affect protean career attitudes. By separating these relations, we provide practitioners insightful advice on building work environments that attract and keep talent and prosper in an ever-changing business environment. As we conclude the research, it is essential to recognize the study's limitations, including the limited focus of earlier research, methodological variances, and potential biases. Future studies in this field should focus on overcoming these constraints and investigating new factors that impact the relationship between job crafting and protean career attitudes.

The potential avenues for future research are encouraging. Longitudinal studies might offer a more in-depth understanding of the causes behind these correlations. Our experience may be improved by investigating the moderating factors that affect the strength of these connections in various organizational and cultural situations. Additionally, there is room for investigating how company culture and leadership influence job crafting and protean career attitudes. In conclusion, our study provides a framework for businesses to develop policies enabling staff to direct their career pathways actively. Therefore, organizations can support innovation and growth while adapting to change by fostering job crafting and protean career attitudes, positioning themselves for long-term success in a constantly changing business environment.

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