

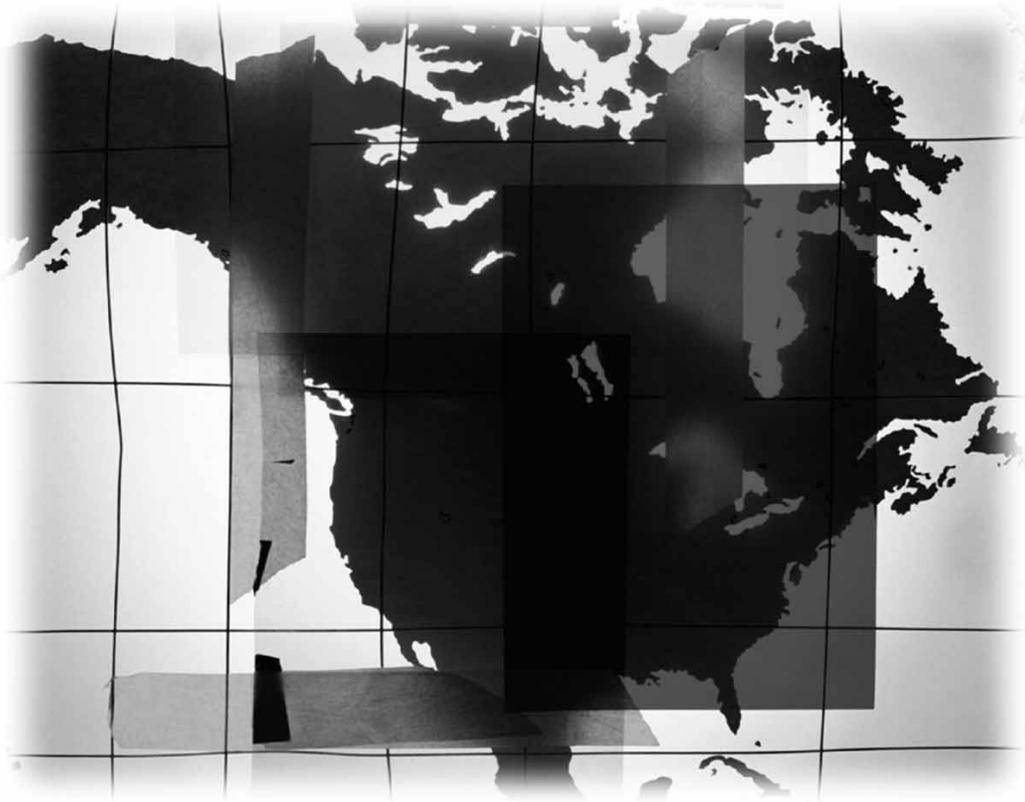
*Associational Life Series*

# *LeaderSearch*



*How to Find the Right  
Director of Missions*

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Director of Missions*

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### **Editor's Note**

The term director of missions (DOM) is used throughout this resource guide. Many associations describe their leader as the associational missionary. NAMB recognizes and affirms both titles for the associational leader. However, in an effort to simplify this guide and ensure its readability, the term director of missions was selected as the singular title used. The use of this title in no way signifies its preference over the title associational missionary.

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## **Introduction**

Of the approximately 1,200 associations scattered across our nation, an average of 10 percent, at any given time, are without a director of missions (DOM). The selection of a DOM is a vitally important decision for the association. In many ways, the person selected as DOM will be the primary individual who leads in charting the future of the association. The selection process should be approached prayerfully and carefully.

This resource guide is designed to help associations through the spiritual process of discovering the DOM that God has chosen for them at this critical time. It offers a systematic, thoughtful process that associations can use to guide their thoughts and actions in their search for a new DOM.

The process offered in these pages is certainly not written in stone! Because each association is an autonomous body, each association is encouraged to take the suggestions offered here and apply them in each particular context. The DOM search process used in Association A may not be a duplication of the DOM search process used in Association B. Associations in differing contexts, by virtue of who they are, will approach the DOM search process with differing perspectives. However, it is hoped that all associations can benefit from the experience and suggestions presented on the following pages.

The Associational Strategy Team of NAMB stands ready to offer counsel and assistance as needed in an association's search for a DOM. Please call us at (770) 410-6525 if we may help you in any way through the DOM search process.

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## **PART ONE**

### *The Associational Interim Period*

The associational interim period is the time between the former DOM and the future leadership of the association. It gives the association time to close the ministry of the former DOM; to look forward to the association's future, in all of its rich possibilities; and to determine the type of leader needed for that future.

Because associations, as a general rule, spend several years in interim periods, these "in-between" times need to be spent wisely. Associational leadership during the interim period is the responsibility of both elected and employed associational leaders. The governing documents of the association often provide guidelines regarding interim leadership and interim activities. For associations whose governing documents make no such provisions, the moderator would accept responsibility for leading the association to consider these decisions. The moderator would enlist associational officers and administrative committee chairpersons (sometimes called the administrative council) to consider alternatives regarding interim leadership and interim activities. This group would take all recommendations to the association-in-session for a vote.

Several decisions should be made regarding what is to happen during the interim period. These include:

#### **❑ 1. Determine the ongoing tasks to be accomplished during the interim period.**

Every association has a cycle of operation that must be fulfilled throughout the interim period. Associational leaders can look at the previous year's calendar to determine the specific tasks, and the person responsible for each task, for their association. Some general suggestions include:

- Conduct annual meetings/semiannual meetings.
- Conduct executive committee meetings/quarterly meetings.
- Keep the resource center open.
- Direct communication between the association and churches as well as between the association and state and national conventions.
- Develop and oversee the associational ministry funding plan.
- Oversee the associational property and equipment.
- Ensure a strong fellowship among the association's local church ministers.
- Enhance a strong fellowship among the churches.
- Focus the association's elected organizational leaders' efforts upon accomplishing the mission of the association.
- Focus the association's administrative leaders' efforts upon operating the association to accomplish its mission effectively and efficiently.
- Maintain open, regular contact with state convention and/or NAMB leaders, particularly if the association depends on these organizations for financial support for the DOM.

**❑ 2. Evaluate the association's current effectiveness and determine how to lead it to greater effectiveness.**

A part of determining the association's future is to understand its present effectiveness within its geographic area and within its churches. Measuring associational effectiveness, while not easy, is profitable.

Congregations that felt the need for uniting together formed associations during the early 1700s in America. Associations were theologically rather than geographically based. Early associations counseled with and assisted congregations, secured preachers for the churches, and rallied the denomination to missions and education.

At one time during the history of the Southern Baptist Convention, associations were considered to be only channels through which the Convention touched the churches. Yet, in the early 1960s, associations started becoming strong local organizations that developed their own personalities within their geographic areas. Today, an association is the missional expression of a family of churches. Among the most prevalent functions of associations today are to be a support, teaching, and training system for congregations; to start new work; and to be the people of God ministering and witnessing within their communities and the world.

Associational leaders who are attempting to evaluate an association's effectiveness can begin by studying the association's vision (where it perceives God wants it to go) and the association's mission (what it is doing to achieve its vision).

One way to study the association is to understand the effectiveness of its member congregations. Three guidelines for determining associational effectiveness are:

- (1) Understand the biblical revelation as it relates to congregations and as it guides associations to help congregations.
- (2) Understand the population of the association's geographic area.
- (3) Understand the health and effectiveness of each congregation in regard to the Great Commission.

The state convention and/or Associational Strategy Team of NAMB can offer assistance in evaluating an association's effectiveness.

**❑ 3. Understand why the former director of missions is no longer serving the association.**

Developing an accurate understanding about why the former DOM left the associational position helps develop an understanding of the association. Sometimes underlying reasons for the former DOM's departure give hints to underlying challenges or problems within the association. These challenges or problems may need to be addressed before the search process

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begins. At other times, the DOM's departure is amicable, again giving a true glimpse of the association and the challenges within it. Quite often, as associational Search Teams begin to interview prospective candidates for the position, this question will be raised. It is wise to answer this question before it is even asked. Some possible reasons for the departure include:

- \_\_\_\_\_ Retired after a long tenure
- \_\_\_\_\_ Returned to the pastorate
- \_\_\_\_\_ Went to a state convention, national convention, or other nonprofit office
- \_\_\_\_\_ Left the ministry
- \_\_\_\_\_ Resigned under pressure because of:
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Ineffectiveness
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Moral problem
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Other (Specify) \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_ This will be the first director of missions for the association.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Other

### **❑ 4. Make some choices for the association's future.**

An associational interim period is an excellent opportunity for associational leaders to take a "long look" at the association and make some decisions about its future. These decisions may be difficult; at the same time, they may be invigorating. The primary question to answer as associational leaders chart the association's future course is: "Why does this association exist?"

Many associations are products of history before travel was so easy, a time when the central town was the market center, or a time when agriculture was the primary economy for the people. Time has changed travel, developed new market centers, and altered how people make their livings. Such changes should inspire the association to make decisions about its future based on facts rather than emotion.

During the interim period, associational leaders can answer the question, "Is this association at this time a good steward of God's resources?" In seeking to answer that question, the association may choose to employ a trained intentional interim DOM. This person comes to the association for a specific period to perform specific tasks. He knows that he will not be considered for the position on a permanent basis. More information on the intentional interim DOM is provided on page 11. However, one of the primary tasks that this individual fulfills is to help the association determine its future. Among the choices to be considered are:

- (1) Continue as an association. Grow and expand the association and/or its ministries.
- (2) Merge the association with another association.
- (3) Dissolve the association and encourage member congregations to join surrounding associations that can serve them more effectively and efficiently. If the association chooses to continue functioning, then the intentional interim DOM can help associational leaders determine if they should employ a full-time or part-time DOM.

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### **❑ 5. Determine the anticipated duration of the interim period.**

As associational leaders consider the length of the interim period, it should be understood that it is not uncommon for interims to last 12 to 18 months. The association should be willing to allow as much time as needed for decisions to be made and tasks to be completed. Although this is an important decision to be made, the decision should be fluid, allowing God to work on His timetable rather than our timetable.

### **❑ 6. Determine the type of leadership the association needs during the interim.**

Associations need to make an intentional decision about the type of leadership needed during the interim period. If the leadership option selected involves the employment of an individual, then the association and individual employed should enter into a covenantal agreement. The covenant should describe the hours worked per week, the anticipated duration of the interim, a list of responsibilities, an outline of relationships, and procedures for accountability. It is generally understood that the interim DOM is not to be considered as the permanent DOM. This understanding may need to be written into the covenant. A sample covenant is included in Appendix 1 on page 22.

After the type of leadership is determined, the association's Personnel Committee or other designated group should be given responsibility for selecting an individual to serve in that capacity.

#### **Several leadership options to be considered for the associational interim period include:**

##### ***Administrative Transition Team***

An Administrative Transition Team acts as the DOM through individuals taking responsibility for the various tasks to be accomplished during the interim period. A team of five or six people is adequate for most associations. These individuals could be elected, employed, or a combination of the two. This is a good choice when the association is not in a stressful situation.

##### ***Interim Director of Missions from Within the Association***

A retired local pastor or available layperson with the proper skills and adequate time could serve as the association's interim DOM. Usually, this person will lead the association to maintain the "status quo" without making any dramatic changes in the association's course. This is a good choice when the association enjoys a positive, cooperative relationship among its member churches and is effectively fulfilling its mission.

##### ***Interim Director of Missions from Outside the Association***

An interim DOM from outside the association, because he has little information about and/or history with the association, can lead the association to take a fresh look at itself and its mission

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and accomplish needed tasks. Many people are trained specifically for this task. This is a good choice if the association is in a stressful situation or if the former DOM served a long time.

### ***Existing Associational Staff Person***

Some associations have a ministerial staff person who could serve effectively as the interim DOM. Other, usually smaller, associations may have little business to handle. In these associations, a secretary could possibly handle ongoing administrative tasks, with other tasks being put “on hold” during the interim period. If a staff person is selected, that individual’s regular duties may need to be modified or reassigned to provide the time needed for the additional responsibilities.

### ***Moderator***

Some associations have a moderator who could serve effectively as the interim DOM. This works particularly well in associations that have employed a bivocational DOM.

### ***Intentional Interim Director of Missions***

The intentional interim DOM is a fairly new concept. This person is usually from outside the association and agrees to serve in this position for a specific period of time. This individual moves to the association, works as a full-time DOM, and is paid the same salary as the former DOM, plus housing and travel. Some, mostly retired, DOMs have attended pastoral interim training and would be good choices as an intentional interim DOM. Your state convention or the Associational Strategy Team of NAMB can provide a few suggestions for this individual.

### ***No Interim Director of Missions***

Some associations with large staffs or active moderators discover that they can “survive” for a season without a DOM. Associational leaders need to closely examine the tasks to be accomplished during the interim period before selecting this option.

### ***Former Director of Missions***

A few associations have contracted with their former DOM to serve in an interim capacity. This is usually not a good choice because it does not allow for a necessary time of transition and may inhibit objectivity in determining associational direction for the future.

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### **❑ 7. Develop a smooth transition during the interim period.**

A smooth transition during the interim period is the goal. Three things must happen to ensure a smooth transition. They are to:

- (1) Close the ministry of the previous leader and grieve the loss.
- (2) Bring the association “through the wilderness.”
- (3) Begin the association’s ministry again as the association determines the need at this time.

### **❑ 8. Select a Director of Missions Search Team.**

The selection of a Search Team should be a prayerful and careful decision. As the task of selecting a Search Team begins, the local association’s guiding documents should be researched, understood, and followed. If the guiding documents do not give direction to Search Team selection, then the moderator should design a process for selecting the team and have that process approved by the association’s governing bodies. Then, the same governing bodies should approve the actual makeup of the DOM Search Team.

The size of the Search Team is an associational decision, but five to seven persons is recommended. When seeking to establish a DOM Search Team, consider the following suggestions:

- (1) Give consideration to balance and diversity on the team. Include members from various size churches, as well as both men and women and older and younger adults.
- (2) Be sure all team members will be able to give the necessary time to the task and are knowledgeable about, involved in, and committed to the association.
- (3) Look for skills in decision making and collaboration.
- (4) Include at least one personnel professional. Such a professional would have knowledge and expertise regarding state legal ramifications in the area of hiring.
- (5) Include both past and future leaders in the association.

## **PART TWO**

### *The Search Process*

The Search Team has several key tasks to be completed in the quest to discover the DOM whom God has chosen for the association.

#### **❑ 1. Build a trust relationship with each other.**

It is important for the Search Team to begin its quest by spending significant time in building a trust relationship among team members. Most teams are composed of people from different churches in the association. While these people may know each other by name, they probably do not know each other well enough to have already developed a trust relationship. Building such a relationship requires time and commitment. Each person on the team should be accepted and appreciated for who that person is as an individual and for the unique gifts and perspective that person will bring to the team's vital task. Time given to the task of team building at the beginning of the search process will be time well-invested as the process continues. The state convention and/or NAMB can provide help in building a sense of trust and teamship among DOM Search Team members.

#### **❑ 2. Elect officers for the Director of Missions Search Team.**

While situations vary, most Search Teams should elect at least two officers. First, the chairperson will be responsible for convening meetings and keeping the team focused and moving forward. Second, the secretary will be responsible for keeping detailed minutes of each meeting and, as the process continues, corresponding with candidates for the position. Some teams elect others to fulfill specific tasks, such as a vice chairperson to provide leadership in the chairperson's absence, an individual to spearhead communication with the churches, another individual to lead in prayer and devotional time for the team, and a person to collect and file resumés. Each team can organize itself in the way that seems appropriate for its situation.

#### **❑ 3. Agree on some principles to guide the Search Team's work.**

As the Search Team begins its work, it should strive to reach consensus on how the team will function. Consider these suggested agreements:

- (1) Be open to a spiritual journey and spiritual growth.
- (2) Spend significant time in prayer and Bible study. Pray together and pray for one another. Solicit prayer from the churches within the association.
- (3) Agree to a systematic approach. Decide on a process and adhere to that process in spite of whatever circumstances may occur.
- (4) Keep good minutes of proceedings.

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- (5) Agree that each resumé will be considered, but no one will be considered without a resumé.
- (6) Know the limits on salary and benefits to be offered.
- (7) Secure an expense account for teamwork.
- (8) Be fair, be informative, and respond faithfully to those candidates being considered.
- (9) Agree to confidentiality. This is a must during the process. Search Team members are being trusted with the lives and ministries of people.
- (10) Take the time necessary to do the task entrusted to the team. Don't be in such a hurry that you miss appointments with God.
- (11) Communicate regularly with the association through the newsletter and other means. Be sure to communicate only appropriate information; nothing should be revealed about individual candidates too soon.
- (12) Respect the call of each person considered for DOM. Remember that while all candidates are called to the ministry, only one will be chosen for this task.
- (13) Agree that the recommendation must be unanimous from the Search Team. If the team gets "stuck," it should stop and go to God in prayer. The team should only move forward when it has the confidence of God's leadership.
- (14) Leave all personal agendas at home.

### **□ 4. Develop an associational profile and a director of missions profile.**

The development of an associational profile as well as a DOM profile are important actions for the team to take in preparation for looking at individuals as a potential DOM. An important element in developing both the associational profile and DOM profile is soliciting input from people within the association. Surveys are provided for gathering such input.

The associational profile provides an objective look at the association and is a helpful profile to share with candidates being considered for the position. It allows candidates to have a true understanding of the association, as well as the challenges and opportunities that might await them as DOM.

Use these resources in developing an associational profile:

- Five-year Associational Church Profile that provides critical numerical measures of associational performance (often available at your state convention).
- Current associational staff, with their specific assignments.
- Current budget and financial reports.
- Most up-to-date mission/vision statement for the association.
- Area/county/city profile (available from local chambers of commerce).
- Associational guiding documents.
- Results from associational survey (see Appendix 2 on page 23).
- Compilation of associational information gathered by associational leaders at beginning of interim period and prior to formation of Search Team.

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A DOM profile is a helpful tool as the Search Team begins to look at resumés and individual candidates. It can help the team make informed decisions about the type of person they are seeking as the associational DOM. The Search Team should understand and agree that the profile developed should have some degree of flexibility. The intent of the profile takes precedence over the specific criteria developed in the profile.

Use these resources in developing a DOM profile:

- Results from associational DOM survey (see Appendix 3 on pp. 24-26).
- Results from random interviews with significant leaders in the association (see Appendix 4 on p. 27).
- Evaluation of current DOM job description and possible revised job description and/or performance agreement.
- Completion of the profile of characteristics survey (see Appendix 5 on p. 28).
- A thorough understanding of the role of the DOM and how that role might need to be configured to fit your particular association (see Appendix 6 on pp. 29-30).

### **□ 5. Collect and prioritize resumés.**

More than likely, the Search Team will begin receiving resumés immediately following the resignation or retirement of the former DOM. One or more resumés may come from within the association. In addition to these, the Search Team should request resumés formally through a variety of sources, such as associational leaders at the state convention, seminaries, Associational Strategy Team of NAMB, and friends of the association.

Public notice should be given that resumés must be received by a specific deadline. As resumés are received, they should be placed in a holding file, without immediate review.

When the deadline arrives, the review process begins. All resumés received after this deadline should be placed in a separate file for later review if needed.

A copy of each resumé received should be given to each Search Team member. Depending on the Holy Spirit for guidance and using the associational and DOM profiles developed earlier, each Search Team member should place resumés in one of three categories:

1. Fits the association's DOM profile.
2. Somewhat fits the association's DOM profile.
3. Does not fit the association's DOM profile.

After individual team members have prioritized the resumés, the team can come together as a whole and prioritize them. The group of candidates in the first category, those with resumés fitting the association's DOM profile, will be the group that the team contacts for follow up.

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### **❑ 6. Make initial contact with candidates who fit the association's director of missions profile.**

The Search Team should write a letter to each candidate whose resumé fits the DOM profile. In this letter:

- Briefly tell the reason for the contact.
- Describe the association, its potential, reason for seeking a new DOM, challenges facing the association, and so forth.
- Determine their availability and willingness to be considered.
- Obtain from them a list of references of those who may be contacted.
- Notify them of the next steps in the process.
- Give a recommended deadline for candidates to respond to the letter.
- Ask candidates to sign and return a Reference Release Form (see Appendix 7 on p. 31).

### **❑ 7. Select the top five candidates for the Search Team to pursue further.**

The Search Team, at this point in the process, should be able to reach a decision on the top five candidates. To do so, each team member ranks their top five choices, using a “point” system. Each team member gives five points to their first candidate; four points to their second candidate; three points to their third candidate; two points to their fourth candidate; and one point to their fifth candidate. After each team member has done this, they come together as a group and share their rankings.

### **❑ 8. Write the references provided by the top five candidates.**

The Search Team should write each person listed as a reference by the top five candidates. In this letter:

- Describe the type of person your association is seeking for a DOM, based on the profile.
- Ask for an honest assessment of the candidates' “fit” to that profile.
- Promise, and practice confidentiality.
- Ask for the names, telephone numbers, or addresses of one or two other people who know the candidate and could possibly provide a reference.

As reference letters are received, they should be photocopied and given to Search Team members.

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### **❑ 9. Make a second contact with the top five candidates.**

After developing its list of top five candidates, the Search Team should write each of them. In this letter, ask each candidate to pray with the team about the search process. Inform the candidates that the team is going to proceed in gathering information from references. Allow candidates to approve, in writing, all secondary reference names gathered since contacting certain references could adversely affect the candidates' present ministries.

### **❑ 10. Gather secondary references on the top five candidates.**

Information from secondary references can be done either by telephone or letter. If the reference check is done by telephone, be sure to give your name and the name of the association, your position on the team, the reason for your call, and the name of the person being considered. Ask if it is a convenient time to talk. If the person does not have time to talk, set up an appointment to call him or her back.

Ask specific questions in order to obtain specific answers. For example, instead of asking, "What is the candidate like?" ask, "What kind of personality does the candidate have?" Depending on the person being called and his or her relationship to the potential candidate, the questions should deal with some or all of these areas:

- Spiritual gifts
- Experience
- Personality
- Doctrinal positions(s)
- Work habits
- Personal mission
- Family
- Leadership style
- Denominational relationships
- Character
- Community relationships

Do not hesitate to ask additional questions to get specific answers, particularly when you sense a hesitancy to provide adequate answers in any area. Also, avoid generalities (such as, "liberal" or "conservative," etc.). Rather, ask specific questions that will define your terms (such as, "To the best of your knowledge, what is the candidate's doctrinal position about the Bible?").

Make sure all team members collecting information from references are using the same set of questions. This ensures a "level playing field" when comparing responses from references.

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See Appendix 8 for suggested questions. Other questions can be added to these as appropriate and necessary. Consider mailing this list of questions to references prior to the telephone reference check.

Again, ask these references for the names, telephone numbers, or addresses of one or two other people who know the candidate and could possibly provide a reference. After “clearing” these names with the candidate in writing, contact them with the same set of questions. A thorough check of references should help provide an accurate understanding of the candidate.

The Search Team should set a deadline for having all the reference checks completed on the top five candidates. After the reference checks are completed, they should be photocopied and given to each team member for review. Although churches cannot share with the team information about individual candidates, they should be asked to pray for the team at this critical time.

### **❑ 11. Select and prioritize the top two or three candidates for the Search Team to pursue further, and make contact with all five top candidates.**

Based upon the references received, the Search Team should be able to narrow its list of top candidates to two or three. Usually through honest team discussion, these choices can be made. However, it may be necessary to use a “point” system as mentioned earlier.

After the top two or three candidates have been selected, the Search Team should contact all of the top five candidates. Those who are not being considered should be notified of their status with the team. Then they can continue their present ministries without wondering about a future move. Those who are being considered should be mailed a packet of information about the association (see Appendix 9 on p. 33). The candidate will need as much information about the association as possible in order to make an informed and prayerful decision.

As the Search Team proceeds to gather information on these candidates, it may be helpful to administer a “personality test” to each of the top two or three candidates. Gift surveys, Myers Briggs, DISC, and SSP are examples of the types of tests available. Many of these (and other) instruments/processes are available through church members, state conventions, and NAMB. The purpose of using these instruments is to gain a thorough understanding of your candidate’s ability to meet the associational needs identified.

### **❑ 12. Conduct background legal and credit checks on the top two or three candidates.**

Request written permission from each of the top two or three candidates to conduct background legal and credit checks (see Appendix 10 on p. 34).

### ❑ **13. Prioritize the top two or three candidates and interview the top candidate.**

Most of the information on a candidate can be brought together before the interview. A vast body of information is compiled before you ever officially meet a potential candidate. Yet, information gathered in the personal interview is the most rewarding part of the whole process. The search team needs to prepare itself and the candidate for a rewarding validation of his experience and values. The team should invite the candidate's spouse, if applicable, to the interview, prearrange motel accommodations, and determine how meals and other miscellaneous expenses will be handled. Travel can be handled either by reimbursement or prepayment. If lodging and meals become necessary while traveling, the team should reimburse the candidate.

Interview questions are designed to assist you in knowing the person, the quality of his leadership, his ability to communicate, and his style of ministry. Team members should assess not only what is said but also what is unsaid. Body language is an important factor. See Appendixes 11 and 12 on pages 35-37 for guidance on potential questions and how they could be phrased.

This first interview is a good opportunity for all associational staff to meet the prospective candidate. If appropriate, associational and state staff people (in states where they assist in supervision) may be invited to introduce themselves and their associational ministries briefly to the candidate.

If the interview leads the team to determine that the candidate is not the right person for the job, then clearly notify the candidate that you do not feel led to pursue the process further. Proceed to candidate number two. Follow the same process with all your candidates as necessary.

Allow for a dynamic process since other resumés may come in after the process has begun. If there is unanimous conviction that such resumés should receive priority status, then proceed as with other priority candidates.

The purpose of this stage is for the team to get to know the person thoroughly and to get things in proper sequence so they can present a prospect to the association. The call is a spiritual arrangement between God, the candidate, and the association.

If the first interview with a top candidate goes well, the team still may need to schedule one more interview session with him before making a final determination. This interview involves questions geared more specifically to the association. See Appendix 13 on page 38 for some sample interview questions.

### **❑ 14. Work out details to extend a call to the association's new director of missions.**

After completing positive reference checks and interviews and establishing that both parties are ready to proceed, then details of a call to the candidate need to be agreed upon. Your association's guiding documents may provide direction in this area. If not, use the following checklist to prepare for calling the association's new DOM.

- Agree, in writing, on the salary package and benefits.
- Agree, in writing, on details of the call, including allowable expenses for moving, date for reporting to the association, and timetable for settling in to the new field.
- Arrange for conferences with the associational missions group of the state convention to discuss and agree on partnership negotiations and approvals.
- Set a date for the candidate and his family, if applicable, to come to the association for presentation and approval.
- Review the association's guiding documents for election procedures.
- Make plans to present the candidate in an open forum for questions and answers, allowing church members to meet him and his family.
- Make plans to schedule a special called meeting of the association to vote on calling a new DOM.
- Publicize the special called meeting in the associational newsletter and local church newsletters.
- Prepare a published introduction of the candidate. Include brief biographical data, family information, and other information as appropriate. Mail this introduction to all church members in the association.

### **❑ 15. Hold a special called business meeting to vote on calling the association's new potential director of missions.**

As the association comes together to consider and vote on the Search Team's recommendation, details should be attended to with care. The candidate and his spouse should be present. Your association's guiding documents may provide assistance in this area. If not, use this checklist to conduct the business of calling the association's new DOM.

- Introduce the candidate and his spouse to the body assembled, perhaps allowing the candidate to share a word of Christian testimony.
- Present a printed recommendation, including the details, conditions, and financial support of the call.
- Give the team chairperson a chance to validate why the team has been led to this candidate and highlight the candidate's skills and gifts that make him a good "match" for the association.
- Excuse the candidate while the vote is taken.
- If the vote to call the candidate is favorable, the candidate should be notified and his response sought. Offer a prayer of thanksgiving to God for His leadership and commitment to the new task. Set a date and time for an official installation.
- If either party should fail to reach a positive agreement, the Search Team should evaluate and analyze any problem areas and openly receive feedback for future use. The team must then commit itself to resume the search process.

## **PART THREE**

### *The Transition Period*

The Search Team should continue to function, although in a different role, even after the DOM has been selected and has agreed to come. The Search Team should oversee the transition of the candidate and family to the field of service. Often it is practical for the Search Team to serve in an advisory capacity with the candidate for the first six to 12 months. The team should assist the DOM in making the move to ensure that there is a smooth transition of responsibilities and authority, enable him to become established in his work and community, assist him in understanding relationships, and ensure that all previously made commitments are kept.

Upon moving to the community, the new DOM should be formally welcomed and officially inducted as the new leader.

The search team should plan a special service of installation and commitment for the new DOM. All local pastors, church leaders, state convention leaders, community leaders, neighboring directors of missions, and other guests should receive a printed invitation to this service. It should be a celebratory service for what God has done and will continue to do through the association of churches, as well as for whom God has called to be the association's new leader.

The Search Team should send press releases related to the new DOM to the local newspapers, state Baptist paper, and the associational newsletter. The moderator should encourage pastors to have him come early as a guest to the local churches. This will assist in getting his name and ministry before the churches of the association.

The state convention should be proactive in providing counsel and orientation, establishing and developing relationships with other DOMs, and giving guidance in field service, particularly during the first year of tenure.

The Search Team may want to share suggested initial actions with the new DOM. See Appendix 14 on page 39 for some suggestions in this area. There are some areas in these suggested actions where the Search Team should offer assistance.

The Search Team should also ensure that a process of annual evaluation is established for the DOM. While it is not the Search Team's responsibility to conduct the evaluation, a process for doing so should be in place. One method for enabling a good transition is quarterly meetings with the new DOM. Once the process of selection is over, many teams simply dissolve. But as the first contact with the new DOM, their continued assistance would be extremely valuable.

## Appendix 1

### *Sample Covenant with Interim Director of Missions*

*This covenant is an agreement between the interim director of missions (DOM) and the associational leaders. Based upon the association's guiding documents, it may need to be signed by the associational Personnel Committee chairperson and/or the associational moderator, as well as the interim DOM.*

Anticipated hours worked per week by interim DOM:

Total salary package, including benefits, for interim DOM:

Anticipated duration of the interim service (beginning and ending dates):

Responsibilities of the interim DOM:

Key relationships for the interim DOM:

Procedures for accountability for the interim DOM:

I, \_\_\_\_\_, fully understand and am in full agreement that, as long as I serve as interim DOM, I will not be considered for the position of permanent DOM for \_\_\_\_\_ Baptist Association.

Signed and Dated:

*(Interim director of missions)*

Signed and Dated:

*(Associational Personnel Committee chairperson and/or associational moderator)*

## Appendix 2

### *Associational Survey*

*Use the following survey as a guide to developing your own questionnaire about your association. Responses to this questionnaire can be shared with prospective directors of missions (DOM). Distribute this survey to all associational leaders. Also, distribute this survey to as many church members throughout the association as possible. A widespread representation of churches responding to the survey will ensure a more accurate picture of the association.*

In an effort to describe our association to prospective DOM, the Search Team is requesting your input on this survey. We ask for your honest assessments of where our association is and where it should be going. All responses are anonymous. Thank you in advance for your participation in the DOM search. Please return all completed surveys by (date) to (name/address) and (fax number).

1. What do you believe are the major strengths of the association?

- (1)
- (2)
- (3)
- (4)

2. What are the three most critical needs that the association must address in the near future?

- (1)
- (2)
- (3)

3. What new ministry projects or general changes need to occur in the next five years?

- (1)
- (2)
- (3)
- (4)
- (5)

4. What are the major weaknesses of the association at present?

5. Are you willing to provide time and leadership to assist the association to serve at its best?

- Yes
- No

## Appendix 3

### Director of Missions Survey

\_\_\_\_\_ Baptist Association

1. What age person do you believe will be needed to lead our association to its future?

- Age should not be a factor
- 35 and under                       46-55
- 36-45                                       56-up

2. How desirable and significant is pastoral/staff experience to serve as our DOM?

- Very desirable
- Not necessary

3. What formal academic theological training is necessary?

- None
- Bible school/college
- SBC seminary
- Seminary extension certificate
- Master of Theology degree
- Doctor of Theology
- (other) \_\_\_\_\_

4. Rank these qualities or characteristics that need to be present in our next DOM.  
(Rank on a scale of 5 to 1, 5 being highly desirable, 1 being unnecessary)

	5	4	3	2	1
A person of vision	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Self-starter	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Relates to a variety of people	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Builds relationships with people	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Flexible and adaptable	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Utilizes gifts of others	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Builds group unity	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Provides leadership	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Resilient attitude	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Exercises faith	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Develops trust levels	<input type="checkbox"/>				

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5. As a person of faith, what will be important for our new DOM to demonstrate?  
 (Rank on a scale of 5 to 1, with 5 being highly desirable, 1 being unnecessary)

	5	4	3	2	1
A real relationship and evident walk with God	<input type="checkbox"/>				
A specific sense of calling to serve as DOM	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Ability to integrate faith and life issues	<input type="checkbox"/>				
A person of integrity	<input type="checkbox"/>				
A mission heart, demonstrated in past ministries	<input type="checkbox"/>				
One who demonstrates proper motives to become a DOM	<input type="checkbox"/>				
One who sets a good pattern in leading his own family	<input type="checkbox"/>				
One who can embrace the diversity of people in our association	<input type="checkbox"/>				
One who has a “kingdom perspective”	<input type="checkbox"/>				
(other) _____	<input type="checkbox"/>				
(other) _____	<input type="checkbox"/>				

# LeaderSearch

## Profile of Habits

### Director of Missions

Prioritize these characteristics or qualities on a scale of 5 to 1 (5 being the highest).

	5	4	3	2	1
1. Has visioning capacity <i>(notes:)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
2. Is intrinsically mission motivated <i>(notes:)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
3. Creates “ownership” within the association <i>(notes:)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
4. Builds effective relationships <i>(notes:)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
5. Utilizes giftedness of others <i>(notes:)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
6. Demonstrates flexibility and adaptability <i>(notes:)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
7. Builds group cohesiveness <i>(notes:)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
8. Is resilience <i>(notes:)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
9. Exercises faith <i>(notes:)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
10. Plans time and resources <i>(notes:)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
11. Manages finances <i>(notes:)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
12. Is socially adaptable <i>(notes:)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>				

## **Appendix 4**

### *Random Interviews with Associational Leaders*

*As a part of its information gathering on the type of DOM needed for the association, Search Team members should conduct random interviews with associational leaders. Those interviewed should represent a cross section of the association and should be assured of confidentiality. The interviews may be conducted by telephone or in a face-to-face meeting. Team members should ask the questions and record the respondent's answers accurately. Use the following questions as a guide in conducting these interviews.*

1. How would you describe our association to someone who is unfamiliar with it?
2. Why did you become involved in the association?
3. What are the particular strengths/weaknesses of our association today?
4. How can a new director of missions be expected to enhance those strengths and address those weaknesses?
5. What is your dream for the association?
6. How can a new director of missions be instrumental in bringing that dream to reality?
7. Describe the ideal director of missions for our association.

## Appendix 5

### *Profile of Characteristics*

*In determining the type of person needed to fill the position of DOM, Search Team members should individually prioritize the following characteristics. After individually ranking these characteristics, the team should come together and reach a consensus on the priority of each characteristic desired in a DOM.*

- \_\_\_ Demonstrates a missions motivation and commitment
- \_\_\_ Demonstrates church planting skills
- \_\_\_ Has the understanding and ability to develop and communicate an associational vision
- \_\_\_ Creates “ownership” within the association
- \_\_\_ Builds effective relationships
- \_\_\_ Utilizes the giftedness of others
- \_\_\_ Demonstrates flexibility and adaptability
- \_\_\_ Builds group cohesiveness
- \_\_\_ Is resilient
- \_\_\_ Exercises faith
- \_\_\_ Manages time and financial resources
- \_\_\_ Is able to relate to varying groups of people
- \_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix 6

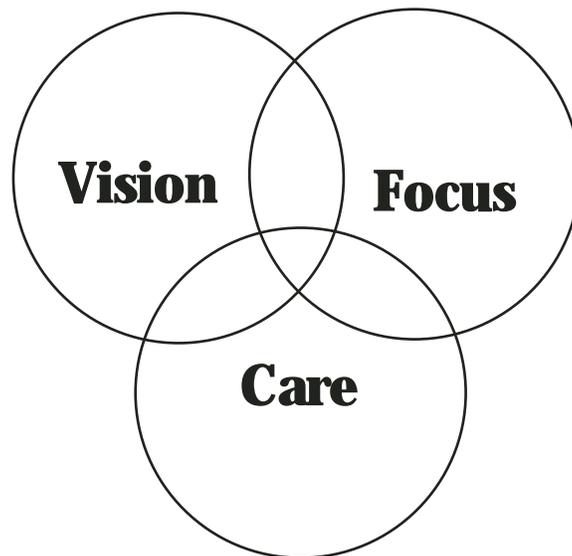
### *Role of the Director of Missions*

*It is important for the Search Team to thoroughly understand the role of the associational DOM. Overall, the role has three overlapping responsibilities. In each association, the “value” placed on each of these responsibilities may vary. However, each is important to the overall role. The three responsibilities necessary in the DOM are vision, focus, and care.*

**Vision** refers to those qualities that enable individuals and organizations to “see” into the future. “Where does God want this association to be in five years?” or “What are the long-range consequences of this particular action?” are questions a strong visionary would ask and answer. Every association needs a visionary to help it look beyond the present to what could be.

**Focus** refers to the individual’s ability to proceed with the task-at-hand. The absence of focus may lead to many great ideas but few achievements. Every individual has a measure of task-oriented drive. How much an individual has must be discovered.

**Care** refers to the ability to keep the good of the individual in mind. “Will this action hurt anyone’s feelings?” or “What will a family within the association think about this?” are typical caregiver questions. Without adequate care-giving capacity, an association may not reach its potential due to inadequate consideration for people’s reactions.



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As the Search Team develops its DOM profile, it can determine how to configure these three overlapping responsibilities. The configuration will be dependent upon the association's current needs. For example, one association may, because of internal conflict, need a DOM with noted strengths in care. Another association, already strong in its fellowship, may need a person who is particularly experienced in casting a vision for the future. As the Search Team configures the DOM role for its association, it should also take into account the makeup of the current associational staff. For example, the association with a staff person who is strongly task-oriented may seek a DOM with strengths in vision and care. Thus, the DOM and staff would complement and balance each other.

In configuring the role of the DOM for its association, the Search Team may want to talk with various associational leaders, asking questions such as the following:

1. What do you believe is the most pressing need in our association: vision for the future, a plan and the ability to accomplish tasks, or a need to enhance fellowship among the member congregations?
2. What personal strengths would you seek in a new director of missions?
3. Are there some areas in which our association seems to have limitations that are difficult to overcome?
4. Consider our current associational staff. What are its strengths and weaknesses?
5. Among our current elected associational leaders, do you sense any particular needs?
6. Ask them to share about their call into missions.

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### Appendix 7

#### Reference Release Form

*It is imperative for the DOM Search Team to have written permission from any individual on whom references are being collected. The following form can be used to secure such permission.*

I hereby authorize \_\_\_\_\_ Baptist Association to verify all information contained in my application or other written communications, including all former churches in which I have served as a pastor or other staff member, been a member, or been ordained.

I recognize that this verification process will include contacts with former church offices, members, pastoral colleagues, association and state convention personnel, as well as other business and professional references.

I further authorize that any personnel at former places of employment, churches, or references may disclose any and all information regarding my work history, personal characteristics, salary, work habits, or other areas of importance to this organization.

Furthermore, I waive the right to take legal action against the aforementioned churches, their members and officers, or references for releasing such requested information.

I understand this authorization form and agree to the release and verification of the aforementioned information.

Candidate's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Appendix 8**

### *Suggested Questions for Reference Checks*

*In talking with references about potential candidates, assure them that all of their comments will be held in strictest confidence. Ask them for an honest assessment of whether they believe the candidate would be an appropriate “match” for the association. Use these questions as guidelines only. Develop your own set of questions relative to your association and its leadership needs.*

1. How long have you known the candidate?
2. How would you characterize your relationship with the candidate? Is he a personal friend, professional acquaintance, former student, et cetera?
3. Please describe the candidate’s leadership style.
4. Do you think the candidate has the appropriate gifts and/or personality for the associational ministry? Why?
5. How do you think the candidate’s ministry experience up to now would prepare him for the associational ministry?
6. What denominational experience or involvement beyond the local church does the candidate have that would be good preparation for the associational ministry?
7. Would there be any reservations or concerns you would have about calling the candidate to be associational director of missions? Please be specific.
8. How would you rate the candidate in terms of his being able to cast a vision before the people and earn widespread support of, and involvement in, bringing that vision to reality?
9. How does the candidate’s family “fit” into his ministry?

## **Appendix 9**

### *Associational Information Packet*

*After the DOM Search Team has narrowed the focus of its search to two or three candidates, each candidate should be sent a packet of information about the association. Use the following list as suggestions for items to include in the packet:*

- Associational profile developed by DOM Search Team
- Associational vision and mission statements
- Associational guiding documents
- Recent budget report(s)
- Current associational budget
- Informational packet from local chamber of commerce
- Brochures on local historical places of note
- Most recent associational annual report
- Strategy plans of the association
- Current DOM job description
- DOM profile developed by the Search Team
- Photograph of associational resource center
- Associational map showing church locations
- Associational history

## Appendix 10

### *Legal and Credit Information Release*

*It is imperative for the DOM Search Team to have written permission from any individual on whom legal and credit information is being collected. The following form can be used to secure such permission. It is often wise to obtain such information not only on candidates but also on their spouses. Separate release forms should be used for each individual. In some states this form may need to be notarized.*

I hereby authorize \_\_\_\_\_ Baptist Association to check my credit and legal history with all appropriate sources. Such information may be obtained for the years of \_\_\_\_\_ to the present.

Candidate's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Other names that the candidate has used, if appropriate: \_\_\_\_\_

Candidate's Driver's License Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Candidate's Social Security Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Candidate's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Appendix 11**

### *Potential Interview Questions, Set One*

*In its interview with the candidate, the Search Team will want to ask questions that seek to gather or confirm information. Use the following questions as your team seeks to develop a list of questions to ask the top candidate.*

1. Please share with us your conversion and call to the ministry.
2. Please share with us your sense of calling to the associational ministry.
3. What personal strengths do you possess that you think might be appropriate for the role of associational director of missions?
4. What kinds of involvement do you currently have in your association?
5. What are your beliefs about Scripture—its authority and relevance for life today?
6. Where does your family fit into your decisions about and involvement in the ministry?
7. What are your beliefs concerning the basic doctrines outlined in “The Baptist Faith and Message?”
8. Who are your closest friends and relationships?

## **Appendix 12**

### *Potential Interview Questions, Set Two*

*In the first interview with the candidate, the Search Team will want to ask questions that bring to light past actions and habits, as these past actions and habits tend to reoccur in the future.*

1. Describe experiences in your spiritual journey that have impressed you with a mission calling. How did you respond to these experiences?
2. Describe an experience in which you became totally dependent on God's provision for you and your future.
3. Share an occasion in which you faced a conflict with a valued person and how you resolved it.
4. What has been the highlight of your ministry so far? Why?
5. Because you will be working with a variety of churches, describe an experience that accomplished kingdom work and in which you served as a leader in a local church.
6. Describe an experience in which you had a vision, shared this vision, and it became a reality.
7. Describe a situation in which there was diversity of thinking. How did you help bring about unity and action in this situation?
8. When was the last time you created an opportunity out of an obstacle? How did you create that opportunity?
9. Describe an unpleasant task that you completed. Why was it unpleasant? How did you handle it?
10. How wide is your circle of friends? About what percentage of these friendships did you initiate?
11. Describe a situation in which someone you were leading to accept a ministry failed to complete the task. Were there errors in your judgment? What did you learn from the experience?
12. Describe a time in which your ministry made extraordinary demands on you. How did you handle the multiple demands?
13. What convictions do you and your spouse share regarding your mutual roles in ministry? How did you arrive at these convictions?

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14. (If the candidate is a pastor) How have you motivated your congregation to commit to growth goals? How did you lead your church to achieve these goals?
15. How have you developed accountability in your personal life and ministry setting?
16. Describe a new church start that you were involved in.
17. Share about a mission trip that you took part in.

## **Appendix 13**

### *Second Interview Questions*

*If a second interview with a candidate is warranted, the Search Team will want to ask questions specifically related to the association. Use the following questions as possibilities.*

1. What do you see as the role of the DOM in this association?
2. We have many volunteers in this association. How do you relate to men and women in positions of ministry?
3. This association has a paid staff. How would you work with a paid staff to accomplish the ministry of the association?
4. Tell us your experience in and/or your vision for keeping an association focused on accomplishing its mission through strategy planning.
5. How would you support the congregations in this association to be Great Commission congregations?
6. This association is composed of people with varying theological beliefs. How would you relate to all the people in the association?

## Appendix 14

### *Suggested Actions for the New Director of Missions*

*After the DOM has arrived on his new field of service, the Search Team can orient him to the association by helping with these suggested actions. Other actions may be appropriate for your association.*

1. Get to know the pastors and churches.  
*Is there a directory? How complete is it? Get to know the pastors' tenure, problems, visions, issues, families, and so forth. What efforts need to be directed toward which churches immediately? How many different size churches are there? How many ethnic/language churches are there? How are these being served by the association?*
2. Get to know associational staff and volunteer leaders.  
*What are their dreams, suggestions, and ideas for the association? What is being done to train or encourage the spiritual pilgrimage of each? How many churches are represented in associational leadership?*
3. Get to know the associational operations and resources.  
*Evaluate associational operations and resources with those responsible. Are finances, facilities, time, and personnel being used appropriately, effectively, and efficiently?*
4. Determine and prepare for immediate responsibilities, such as team meetings or an annual meeting.  
*Check calendars. Learn and understand relationships in these ongoing responsibilities.*
5. Get to know associational cycles and events. Review and evaluate the associational calendar for the next 12 to 18 months with appropriate leaders.
6. Get to know the associational history and culture, including the review of original documents.
7. Evaluate past efforts in: new work, research, organization and administration, ministries, church development, training, church relations, communications, public relations, fellowship, and so forth.
8. Get to know the geography, area, and demographics of the association, specifically in these areas: churches, new work, ethnic/language groups, ministries, population changes, needs, and so forth.
9. Love the people, and listen to them. Affirm each church in its particular mission and ministry opportunities.
10. Evaluate the level of cooperation among and between the churches.
11. Evaluate the perception of the association among pastors and churches. Evaluate the work and relationships of the association. Is the association serving the churches, or vice versa? How do you know?
12. Lead the association to develop a mission strategy.

## *LeaderSearch*

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