

THE MANAGER - AN INTERFACE BETWEEN EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL ORGANIZATIONAL STRESSORS IN THE MANAGEMENT ORGANIZATION

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ABSTRACT: This paper offers an analysis of organisational stress management based on the fundamental autoadaptability difference between man, other living elements and „intelligent machines”, expressed in man’s case through the existence of a category of additional self-adjusting loops: the intellectual self-adjustment loop. The intellectual energy quantified in competence units (CU) is the only form of artificial energy generated by man for himself, which turns him into an self-adjusting energetic amplifier.

1. INTRODUCTION

It is known that stress is an inadequate reaction of living organisms to internal and/or external stimula of high intensity. Therefore the understanding of this reaction is strictly connected to the study of the descriptive models of human autoadaptability.

Starting from these hypotheses, the cybernetic model of self-adjustment is no longer relevant in the social field and even less so in the managerial one, because it produces significant distortions in the quantification and the processing of human information. The irrelevance of the cybernetic model of self-adjustment for the social system leads to the necessity of an in-depth study of „the realistic model” suggested by Jay Forrester¹, developed in [3] and completed by the authors of this paper², so that people can know more about managers’ role of organisational stress moderators.

Organisational stress management must start with the understanding of stress causes for position holders, because only this way can we identify the methods and means necessary for its evaluation and decrease on an organisational level.

By introducing the concept of „intellectual energy” [3] we can highlight more clearly the two categories of loops which are specific to human self-adjustment, because of this type of energy, therefore of the type of eustres and distres which are produced, according to fig. 1 and fig. 2. Based on the two schemes, one can fund in-depth multidisciplinary systematical studies on each category of loops, for the identification of effects, methods and means of positive control of stress.

In this study we aim to emphasize the role of moderator of the organisational stress level of execution position holders (named The position holder in fig. 2), generated by one of the managers’ self-adjustment loops: the self-adjustment to „Formal and non-formal educational pollution”, highlighted in fig. 1 in bold.

For this purpose it is necessary to emphasize the fact that the managerial system, made up of all the position holders who have leading attributions in an organisation, act as an „energetical” interface between the external and the internal environment of the organisation, according to fig. 3, an in-depth study of the self-adjustment loop highlighted in fig. 1 with bold outline.

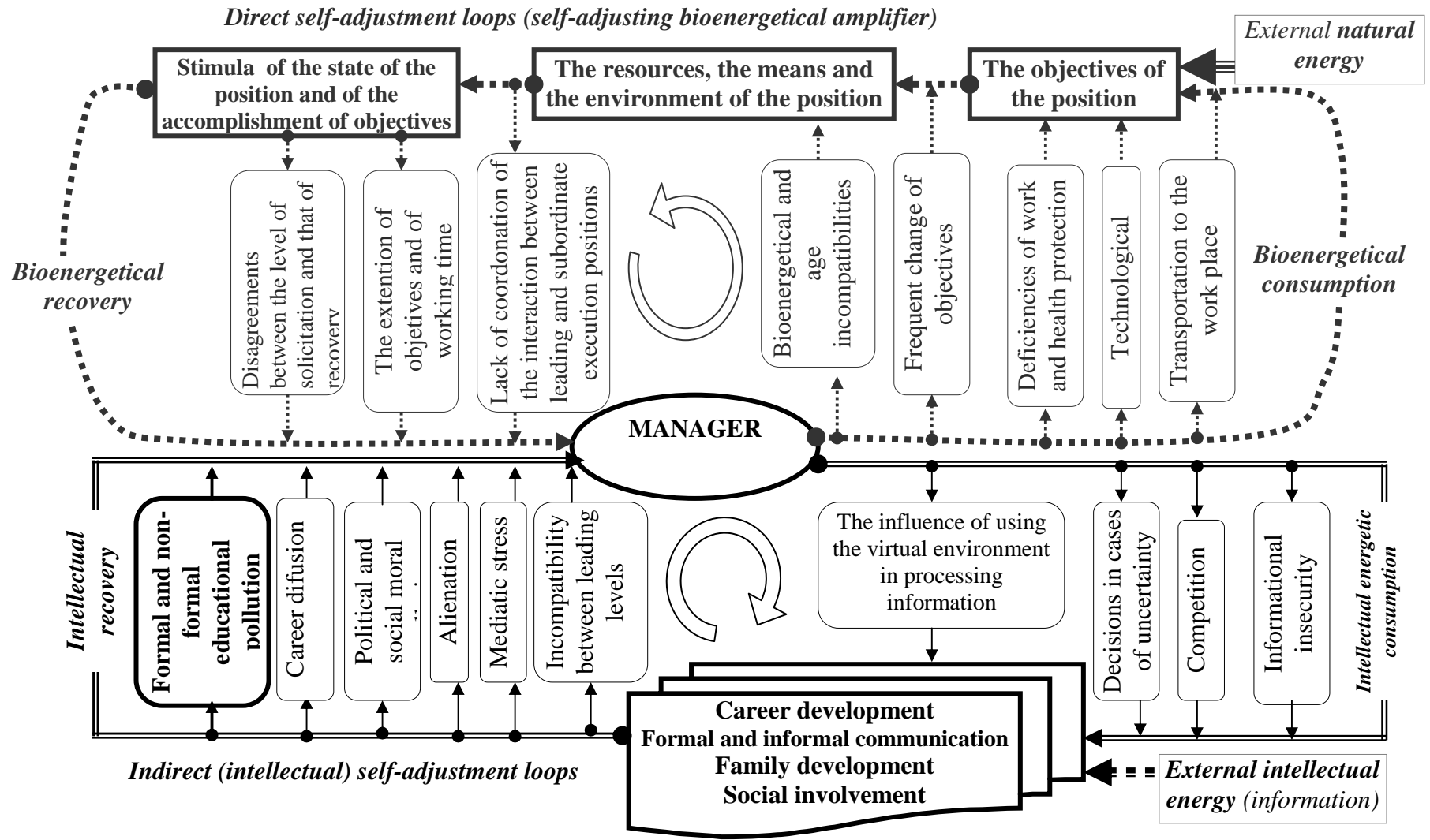


Figure.1. The main categories of self-adjusting loops of the manager and of their specific stressors

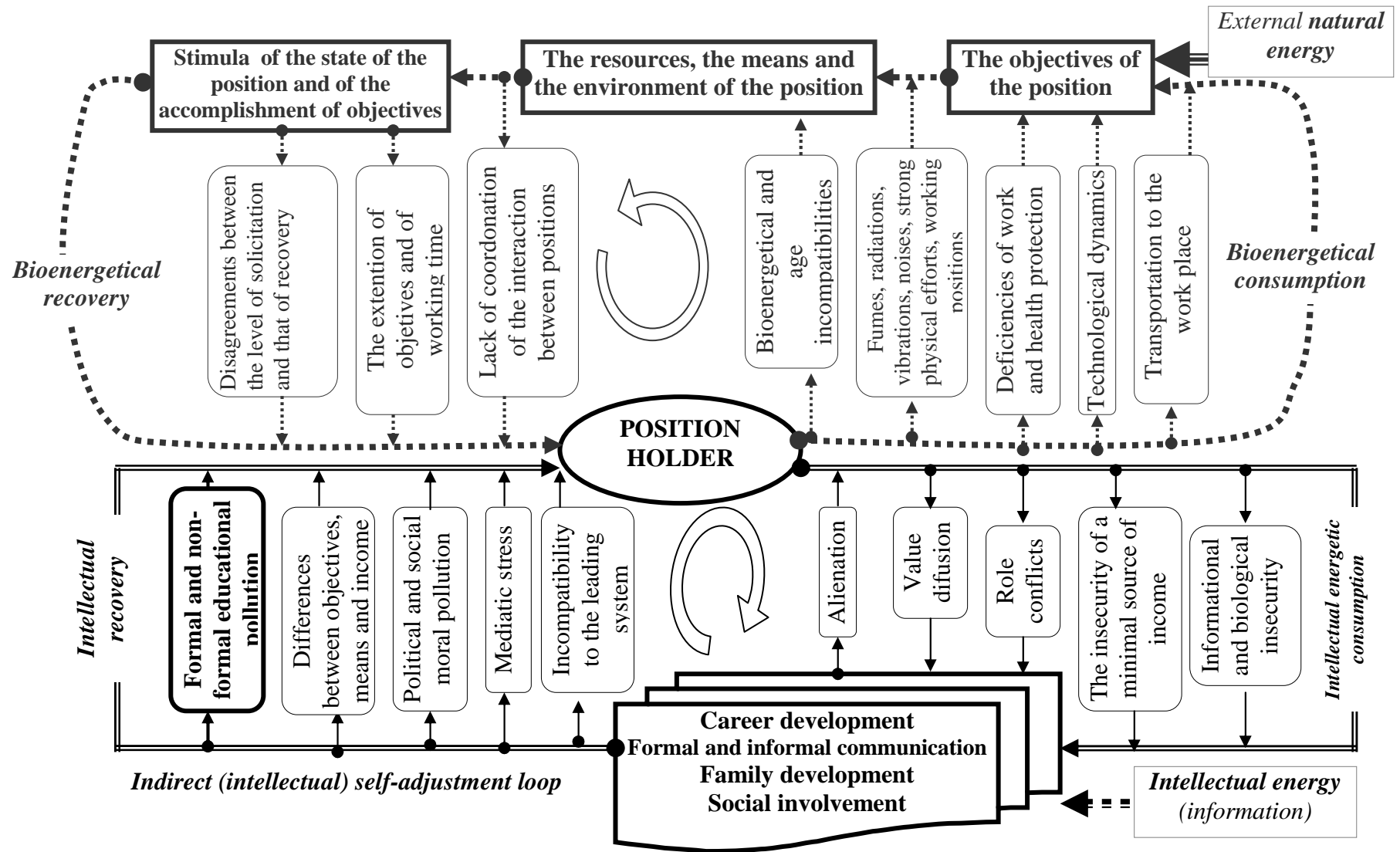


Fig. 2. The main categories of self-adjusting loops of the execution position holder and of their specific stressors

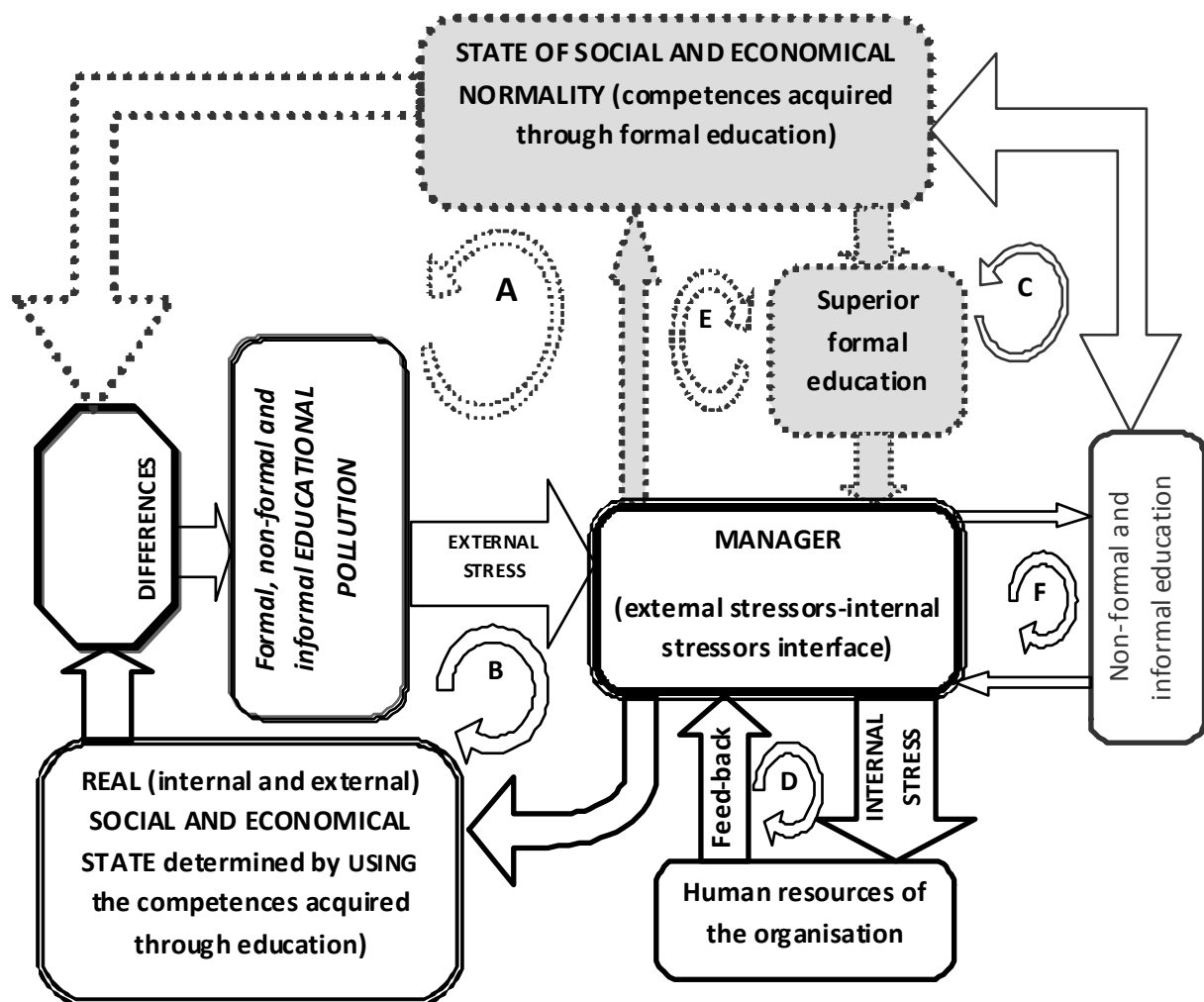


Figure 3 – In-depth study of the loop of stressors generated by educational pollution

To try the descriptive evaluation of one of the most important stressors of organisational managers, the formal and non-formal education pollution, we will use fig. 3

Fig. 3 expresses the fact that „the manager” is the person with the legal power to decide on the dynamics of all organisational components. Any of the managerial decisions are „an internal intellectual” stressor to the subordinated human resources (loop D).

The decision-making process is the most stressful managerial process and its main stressor are the differences which continuously occur between the theoretical and the real intellectual and moral concepts, models, instruments, existing in the economical and social practices.

In fig. 3 we notice the 4 main sub-loops of self-adjustment to managers’ educational stressors, named using the generic word „loops”:

A. the loop of „the managerial interpretor of the information” [4], meaning the multitude of

theoretical, managerial theories, habits, methods and instruments, acquired mainly through superior education as a consequence of the qualification in managerial sciences;

- B. the loop of acquisition of information from the real environment and of comparison of the competences acquired through formal education with the real life in which the manager performs his activity;
- C. the loop of connection between the contents of formal, non-formal and informal education, which aims to update knowledge and good practices according to the culture and the civilisation specific to each organisation;
- D. the internal decisional loop, one of the main stressors of the organisation’s execution staff system, a consequence of loops A, B, C;
- E. the loop of formal professionalization and perfecting is temporary, but it has significant effects over the managers’ entire lives;

F. the loop of non-formal managerial education, consultancy, examination etc, through which the manager tries to diminish the level of uncertainties caused by the other loops and to diminish the stress of executives' intellectual loops through the non-formal education they promote in the organisation.

2. EDUCATION

Formal education should offer the university graduate an intellectual image of the state of social normality, of the real state in which he will live over the next predictable period of time and of the possible ways of passing from the real state to the normal one. This is the theoretical component of reality which any university graduate, potential manager or executive, receives in a more or less effective way.

When he is hired, the graduate realizes there are differences between what he knows and what he has to do, which causes him a general discomfort, proportional to these differences:

- If he is hired on an execution position, the differences are smaller because the execution activities are based on the scientific approach of the position's processes, technologies and objectives, based on a narrow specialization, fairly well dealt with in education;
- If he is hired on a managerial position, the higher the level of leadership, the greater the differences. Organisations are complex systems, which have to adapt to a much more complex human society which is permanently changing and which imposes a coherent multidisciplinary preparation of managers, something current university education is not ready to approach.

The greater the difference between the state of social normality and the real state, the greater the intellectual managerial stress, because the manager is subjected to extreme intellectual efforts to offer the organisation, which is in an abnormal environment, an evolution towards normality, without jeopardizing the certainty of its development in a strategic perspective.

The level of the differences between scientific knowledge and the real evolution of society mainly determines the level of uncertainty in managerial processes and consequently:

- Managers' individual stress level, with biological effects that are more and more studied;

- Unproductive organisational decision-making experiments, with stressful effects to all subordinate employees, whose biological consequences are still insufficiently studied.

Fig. 3 also emphasizes the fact that the manager is the interface between external and internal informational stressors because of the very fact that managerial decisions, as the main internal stressor of human resources, may diminish or even cancel the direct influence of some external informational stressors on the same human resources. For example, a government decision of increasing a tax, a stressor to any employee, may have no effect to the human resources of an organisation whose manager decides to cover the difference of expenses through suitable wage rises for the employees.

3. THE ANTI-ENTROPY OF SOCIAL KNOWLEDGE, A FUNDAMENTAL FACTOR OF MANAGERIAL EUSTRES

Knowing reality is the greatest factor of eustres to all position holders, but especially to managers, according to the syntagm „the easiest thing to do is the one you know”. But at the same time, knowledge requires an ever growing intellectual effort, changing the relation of stress level between the biological and the intellectual self-adjustment loops (natural energies and man-specific energy). For this reason, most people are entropic entities, that subconsciously follow only a minimal, circumstantial information, to minimize intellectual stress, which usually affects the central nervous system and implicitly the malfunctioning of the other biological components of personality.

Effective managers are anti-entropic entities, that put in great efforts for the permanent knowledge, information and processing of information (self-adjusting loops of intellectual energy). For this purpose they refer to the structures of initial formal education for the course of their entire lives, which solicitates their central nervous system, with consequences of self-adjustment on all the other subsystems of personality, dealt with in most papers referring to organisational stress.

The current evolution of human society follows more and more often the path to irrationality [1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 8], because of the historical conflict between the interests of economical and social influential groups, called „world elites” [1] and the necessary levels of a durable evolution, determined in a mostly scientific way. Therefore managers are permanently under the influence of the unpredictable generated by the interests of the „elites”, which are usually hidden until the last moment, and the necessities of a

predictable evolution. This is why there occur most of the dissatisfactions caused by role conflicts and role ambiguities [9].

The fundamental problem put forth by this paper is the study of the necessity of establishing an adequate report between the level of the theories which should be assured through initial and continuous formal education from fundamental, social, economical and professional sciences, necessary to any graduate and the informational in-depth studies, for circumstantial situations which can be assimilated through non-formal education, so that intellectual stress be minimal both for leadership and execution position holders.

4. CONCLUSIONS

The European Qualifications Office (EQF) is a good start, but the improvement of its materialization on the level of each nation is only in the beginning. [6, 10]

Ensuring the permanent connection between theory and practice, between necessity and reality through education is the main way of growing the anti-entropic characteristic referring to knowledge in the case of most students. The transformation of knowledge redirected from the case of an imposed effort (distres) to the case of the pleasure of knowing (eustres) is the main factor of eustres both for managers and for executives because confidence in one's potential grows by using knowledge for individual and organisational progress.

Therefore we can state that the fundamental source of intellectual distres may be found in the level of performance of initial and continuous education, which in turn influences informal and non-formal education. This is where the minimal level of graduates' competences is based, graduates who are

the future leadership and execution position holders, and therefore where their initial and subsequent stress level, as employees, is based.

In conclusion, the growth of the dephasing between the content of education and the economical and social reality is the fundamental cause of organisational stress under all its components.

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