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CULTURE & THE PROJECT MANAGER

A Presentation for PMI Westchester
April 12, 2022
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Valorena Online, L.L.C.

Agenda

- Intro
- Culture, In A Few Words
- In My Research & Pedagogy
- In My Professional Practice
- In Project Management
- Q & A



Valerie Williams-Sanchez, Ph.D., P.M.P

“Putting Pedagogy into Practice”

Background

Academic

- U.C. Berkeley – English Literature – BA
- Columbia University – Journalism – MSc
- St. John’s University – Literacy – PhD

Marketing & Communications

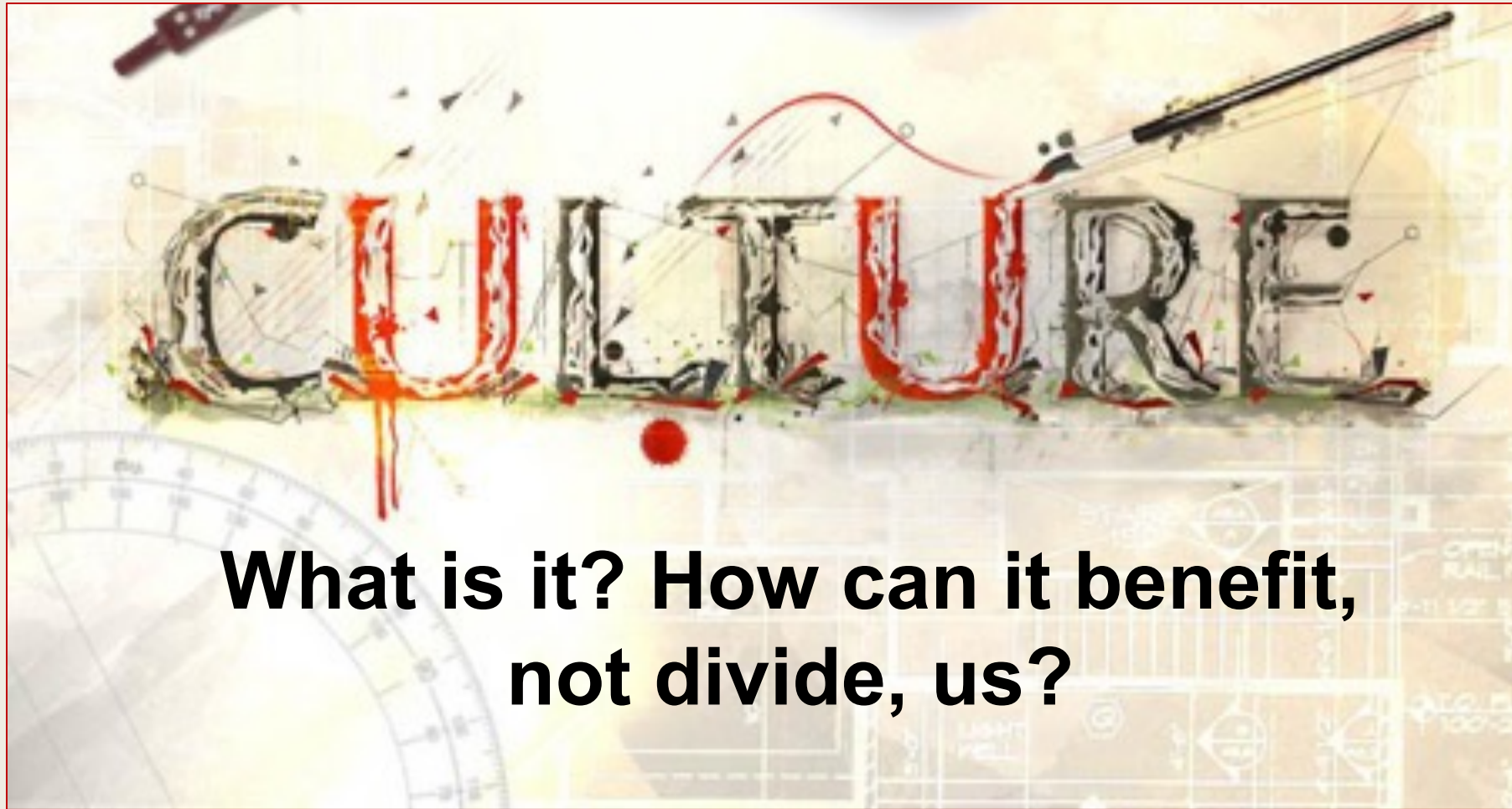
- Blue Chip Marketing Worldwide – Cultural Intelligence & Relevance
- Columbia University Medical Center – Marketing
- Deloitte (Spain) – Translator
- Disney – Sponsorship Marketing
- National Geography – Interpreter
- Volvo Cars of North America – Product Launch, Sales Planning, and Tactical Advertising

PMI

- NYC & Westchester Chapter Member



PROJECT MANAGEMENT CERTIFICATION – JAN. 25, 2015



**What is it? How can it benefit,
not divide, us?**

CULTURE



Culture is the totality of the following attributes of a given group (or subgroup): shared values, beliefs and basic assumptions, as well as any resultant behavior of a given group.

Culture is also a function of national character, perception, spatial concept, thinking, language, nonverbal communication, values and behaviors, including norms, rules and manners, social groupings and relationships.

MULTICULTURALISM

Multicultural is inclusive of many cultures.

In sociology, multiculturalism assumes that society as a whole benefits from increased diversity through the harmonious coexistence of different cultures.

It is a synonym for “ethnic pluralism”, with the two terms often used interchangeably, and for “cultural pluralism” in which various ethnic groups collaborate and enter into a dialogue with one another without having to sacrifice their particular identities.



POLYCULTURALISM

Polyculturalism is the belief that cultures change constantly through different racial and ethnic groups' interactions, influences, and exchanges with each other and, therefore, are dynamic and socially constructed rather than static.





ETHNOCENTRIC

S.G. Summer (1906) introduced the concept of “ethnocentrism” which refers to the tendency that most people have their own culture as the center of the universe.

Perceived as the result of naïvete or egocentrism, it typically surfaces with the assumption of the world itself being as it appears to the individual. That is, as a set of self-evident rules, roles, categories and relationships, seen as natural or intuitive.

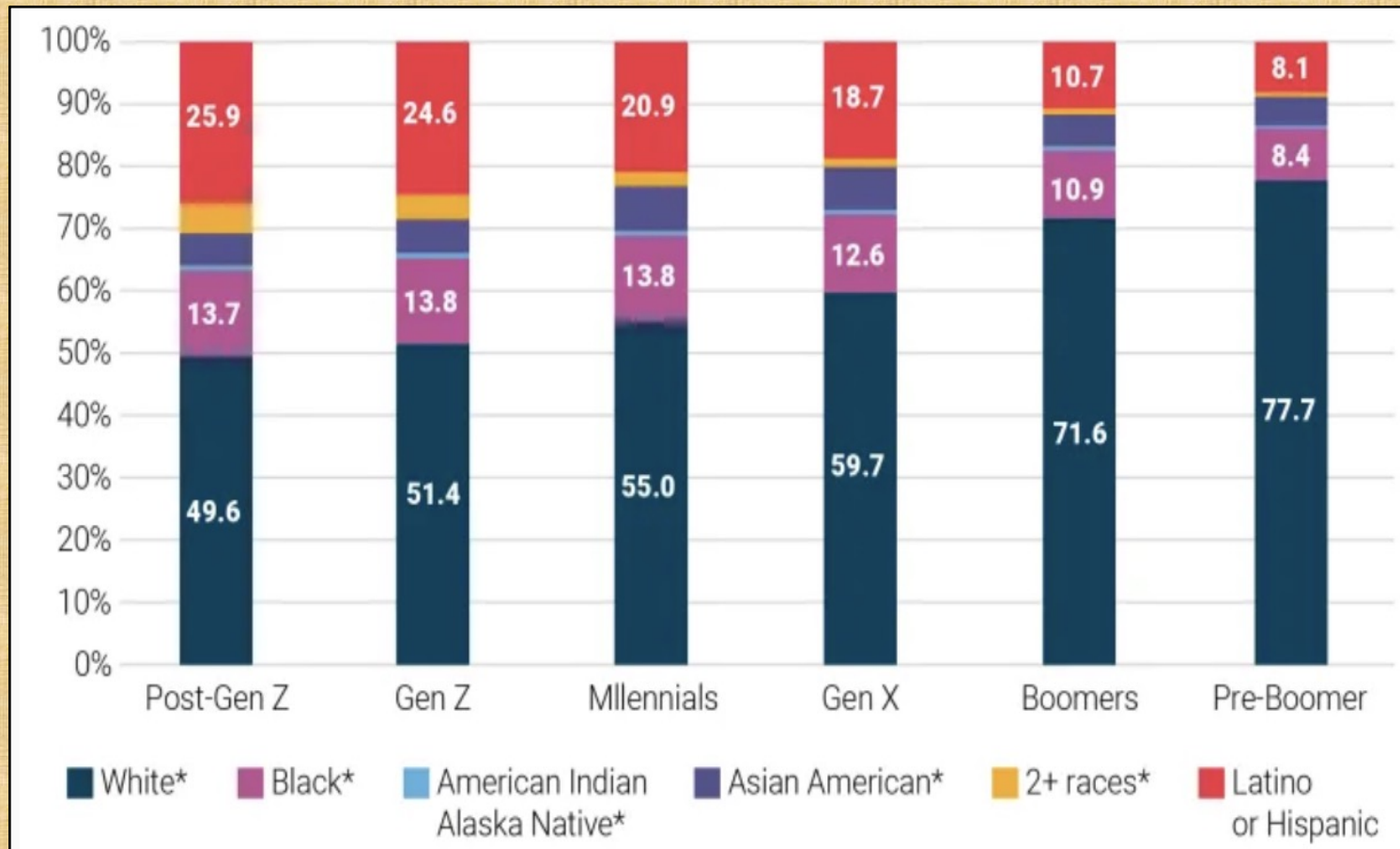
The Realities of Culture and Difference

Monocultural engagement and communication is based on common behavior, language and values. The day-to-day interaction between members of the same culture is based on roughly common definitions. These similarities allow the members of the same cultural background to be able to predict the behavior of others and assume a common perception of reality (Bennett 1998). Monocultural communication therefore is based on similarities of expected situational behaviors by culturally inclusive societal members.

So some thinking goes that the “dominant majority” culture is the baseline for monocultural engagement. Arguably, this majority also has a responsibility to the minority by accommodating to varying degrees to that minority which operates within its domain.

But what happens when the minority becomes the majority?

U.S. Culture Today & Tomorrow: The US will become 'minority white' in 2045, Census projects



Youthful minorities are the engine of future growth & *multicultural groups are leading US population growth, specifically:*

- 10 million were Latinx or Hispanic Americans (over half of the nation's growth)
- 4.3 million were Asian Americans
- 3.2 million were Black Americans
- 1.7 million were Americans of two or more races



Culture Today

As our society changes, those changes have a ripple effect on culture.

Those ripples surface everywhere and for everyone – from children and what and how they learn, to adults and what and how they live, work, and interact.

DISSERTATION RESEARCH

READING BUILDS EMPATHY

A CORRELATIONAL STUDY

MEASURING PICTURE BOOKS' IMPACT ON
AFFECTIVE, COGNITIVE & ETHNO-CULTURAL EMPATHY

Valerie L. Williams-Sanchez, PhD
St. John's University


Supervised by: Dr. Brett E. Blake and Dr. Kyle D. Cook

Overview

Purpose: This correlational literacy study was developed to test and measure the relationship between parent's understanding of their child's reading behaviors and children's self-reported levels of affective, cognitive and ethnocultural empathy developed through reading.


Outcomes: This instrument is intended to help educators better understand early readers' use of culturally relevant literature and teaching practices used by students and their families' at-home literacy practices.

Significance: Such a tool will provide a means for current and future at-home, family-literacy teaching innovations associated with picture books (multi-modal texts) to be measured, evaluated, and subsequently replicated.



Help Us Study How Reading Builds Empathy

We are currently recruiting 6-8 year-olds and their parent/caregiver, to participate in a reading research survey.



Study Description:
Empathy enables us to understand others' perspectives. It is a critical life-skill also tied to academic success and lifelong learning. Increasingly, people worldwide are calling for more empathy. But, is this possible? If so, how is this achieved?
This study will take cues from literacy learning, early childhood, and sociocognitive development.
Its goal is to determine whether there is a relationship between different reading behaviors, types of picture book content, characters, and themes are better (or worse) at helping young readers develop empathy.

Study Participation Includes:
Who: Readers aged 6-8 & parent/caregiver
What: A 30 minute interview/survey
When: Sept. 4th, 7th & 9th (with more dates tbd)
Where: At your home and online, via Zoom

Eligibility:
Any interested and consenting young reader and parent/caregiver pair with internet access.

Participants Receive:

- A thank you letter from the researcher
- A certificate of participation, and
- A free ebook!

If you are interested in participating in this study, please visit the website to register:

www.ReadingBuildsEmpathy.Info

Also, if you are unsure of your eligibility, or have questions, please contact: Valerie Williams-Sanchez, Principal Investigator, St. John's University, Dept. of Education:
Valerie.WilliamsSanchez18@StJohns.edu

Theoretical Framework: Vygotsky to Freire to Hammond

The study is grounded and informed by Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory (1978) and Freire's praxis and theories explicated in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970). They assume that:

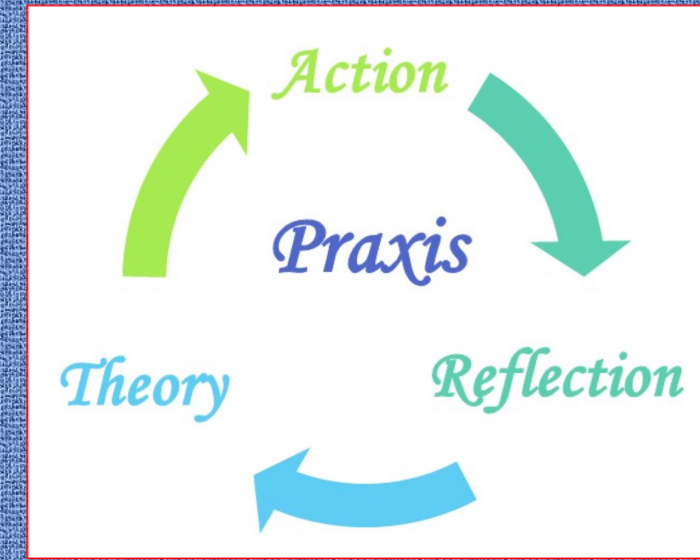
1. Children construct knowledge personally.
2. Learning is mediated and cognitive development is the result of cultural interaction between the learner and mediatory tools (like picture books) that facilitate learning.
3. Language, the most significant socio-cultural tool, plays a central role in cognitive development and is used to teach higher psychological functions.
4. Learning surfaces in two stages: 1) inter-psychologically, or *between* people; and 2) intra-psychologically, *within* the child.
5. Development is inextricable from its social context. This includes the learning environment and the type of people who would use similar concepts, language, and symbols as the learner.

And Now a Word About Critical Theories...

Praxis-based theories challenge “banking” models of instruction and knowledge building.

Culturally Relevant Pedagogy

- Student-centered approach to teaching
- Focuses on cultural strengths to promote student achievement and a sense of well-being about the student's cultural place in the world
- Developed by G. Ladson-Billings (1970)
- Seeks to eliminate bias and stereotyping
- Inclusive



Critical Race Theory

- Analytical Framework for Jurisprudence
- Assumes the presence and seeks to eliminate structural and institutional racism
- Created by legal scholars Derrick Bell, Kimberlé Crenshaw, and Richard Delgado, (1970s) among others
- Seeks to dismantle racist institutions and systems
- Targeted

CULTURE IN ADVERTISING & MARKETING





Culture in Advertising & Marketing

- Arguably, advertisers, and marketers are primary “keepers of culture.”
- This is because at its core, advertising and marketing is a form of cultural storytelling.
- So, it’s appropriate that the advertising, marketing, and media space is fertile ground for multi-modal literacy tactical practice and application.
- For this reason, there has been a call for more culturally responsive advertising and marketing.

Culture Impacting Advertising & Marketing

- Increasingly, consumers are demanding accountability, accuracy, and diversity in representation in advertising
- And, following the social-media-televised murder of George Floyd, and record-setting increases in hate crimes against Asians, immigrants and members of the LGBTQ+ community, the public is looking for accountability from companies and their advertising
- The following ads are exemplary samples of companies' evolving cultural sensitivity, and of them putting their ad dollars into play to better reflect their customers



“Widen the Screen”



“Home Sweet Home”



Cultural Intelligence & Relevance

Ads are projects; and I am a project manager, a PMP. In my work, I engage across functions and disciplines to ensure that strategies and outcomes are culturally conscious, relevant, and have considered:

- Age
- Culture
- Gender
- Language
- Narrative Accuracy
- Religion
- Representation
- Social Issues

Because now, more than ever, these things matter and impact our work and our world.

“Open”



CULTURE IN PROJECT MANAGEMENT



Culture in the Project Management Space

Working internationally and/or domestically, Project Managers (PMs) regardless of their industry often find themselves working with multicultural companies, teams, and stakeholders with diverse perspectives, opinions, world views and cultural beliefs. Culture and cultural influences in project management matters and can surface in:

- Communications
- Relationships (*with all stakeholders*)
- Motivation
- Identities of self and others
- Time
- Risk
- Control
- Context
- Environment

How Can PMs Approach Such Diversity?

To ensure that cultural diversity is effectively harnessed to achieve successful project outcomes, PMs can strive to create bridges that draw stakeholders together by developing:

1. **Emotional Intelligence** – To better understanding and become more sensitivity to what others feel
2. **Open Mindedness** – To increase their capacity to collect as much information as possible about a situation without passing judgment
3. **Cultural Awareness and Fluency** – To acknowledge different cultures and to be aware of several dimensions of culture

NOTE: PMs don't always have to agree with everyone and everything; however, they should strive to have an awareness of the many cultures, ideas, and points of view as possible that they may encounter in their work and that may impact their projects.

Emotional Intelligence

- This is defined as “the ability to recognize the different beliefs, values, and customs that someone has based on that person's origins, and it allows a person to build more successful personal and professional relationships in a diverse environment.”

Open Mindedness

The open-mindedness and genuine interest we bring as PMs can make or break our efforts, teams, and projects. To best position ourselves for success, in this regard:

- We all have to acknowledge that there are basic cultural differences between us. Different isn't always deficient.
- We must acknowledge and admit that we each have our own cultural "home base" And we should be prepared to look at other's own cultural "home bases" to learn what is adaptable to our own experience. This acknowledgement alone can help us to harness the benefits that are possible from cultural diversity.
- Next, we need to understand that our respective cultural backgrounds are what form and inform the ways in which we as individuals communicate, express and see ourselves. With this positionality, we are best able to present our viewpoint.

Cultural Awareness

- This is “the ability to recognize the different beliefs, values, and customs that someone has based on that person's origins, and it allows a person to build more successful personal and professional relationships in a diverse environment.”

Cultural Fluency

- Cultural fluency means that one has a familiarity with cultures, their natures, how they work, and the ways they intertwine with our relationships in times of conflict and harmony.



Developing Cultural Awareness: The Four Stages

The Parochial Stage - This stage is also known as the state of blissful ignorance. At this stage, you are aware of your own way of doing things. You ignore the impact of cultural differences. You are not aware that you might be stepping on other people's toes and you are likely to be in this stage if you have not had much interaction with people of a different culture. The motto is: "*My way is the only way.*"

Ethnocentric Stage - At this second stage, you are aware of other ways of doing things but still consider your way to be the best. You ignore the significance of other people's culture and place a higher level of importance and credibility on your own. The motto is: "*I know their way, but mine is better.*"



The Four Stages (continued)

Synergistic Stage - At this stage, you are aware of your own way of doing things and the ways of others. You choose the best approach depending on the peculiarities of the situation. Cultural diversity is harnessed here to create new solutions. You are ready to make adjustments that indicate you are considering others' opinions. The motto is: *“There are benefits to my way and other ways.”*

Participatory Third Culture Stage - At this stage, you can work with people of different cultures to create a culture of shared meanings. You work with others to create new rules to meet the demands of any situation in which you may find yourself.

Project management success occurs when PMs evolve and use the four steps to produce strong teams where members feel respected and appreciated.

Conclusion

Project Management, at every level and every turn, can be improved and succeed through culturally aware leadership, effective cross-cultural communications, mutual respect, and reconciliation.



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THANK YOU!

Resources

- <https://www.ingentaconnect.com/content/hsp/jcms/2021/00000006/00000001/art00008>
- <https://goodprojectmanagement.com/diversity-in-project-management>
- <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Multiculturalism>
- <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4266561/>
- <https://www.pmi.org/learning/library/project-management-communication-multicultural-dimension-7915>
- <https://www.businessanalystlearnings.com/project-matters/2015/1/25/the-importance-stages-of-cultural-awareness-in-project-managers>
- <https://www.brookings.edu/research/new-census-data-shows-the-nation-is-diversifying-even-faster-than-predicted/>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PUHop5i8-f4>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6-qpHKOGEhA>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cvb49-Csq1o>
- <https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fpsyg.2019.01335/full>
- <https://www.pmi.org/learning/library/project-management-communication-multicultural-dimension-7915>
- https://d1wqtxts1xzle7.cloudfront.net/55113273/Cultural_Differences_in_Projects-with-cover-page-v2.pdf?Expires=1649952760&Signature=aDGAY58eILxoCv7g1TUs7vrIVwaixv-YXVeSb2trZiTc4iazBMEjVv8Or63ntyA4c79AKEgHcLnP4GDSdDKspx6kqwhrrBYDHo3z7ehdo5pzDcUQYIXfqPoAIYnN-BZ2XyztoINrrxCg3YebILpwK8gZOChA-IvyHYeiLbzajFAt8pHCDqDUsrAFcb1dCfCx8LUM0k7PExyt~V6FvRqf80vEJ~Vw~1gBkuYG7faRkKsIZI1nJ1rOw-6IS0bKKseywnOzWlUpAwGnuz9LCfRj-CI9L92KVnGhdD~LsUdmNvIA0xQv0Xntxut2QmVGPsEijCLOuSiBn-Vy3LI9EjOrSQ_&Key-Pair-Id=APKAJLOHF5GGSLRBV4ZA