



## **Competence model for SMEs** required in the transformation to a **Circular Economy**

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#### Introduction

This publication elucidates the Competence Model for new jobs required by SME waste free economy model transformation. The competence model, as presented through so called competence framework, is created to help companies in becoming more "sustainable" and competitive in the labour market. Through the developed competence framework in 2Good2Go project, we want to encourage SMEs leaders to consider competencies needed for the transformation to waste free economy model as something viable for their business operational performance.

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The project aims to introduce waste free economy models into SMEs through:

- encouraging SME leaders to start the transformation process by developing Waste Free Economy Policies and Implementation Action Plans for their organisations, and setting examples for other SMEs;
- cataloguing and developing competencies, necessary for a successful transition to the Waste Free Economy, and encourage their development as sustainability change agents;
- equipping VET providers with suitable training materials, best practice examples and tools to support the adaptation of their training offers to SMEs.

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### 1. Competence Framework

Competences are understood as an integrated set of knowledge, skills, and attitudes (European Commission, 2019). Knowledge consists of established theories, concepts, facts and figures that contribute to an understanding of a given subject; skills comprise manual and cognitive abilities to put acquired knowledge into practice and attitudes represent a mindset or tendency to behave or react in a particular way in a particular context.

A competence (or competency) framework defines the knowledge, skills, and attributes that employees need to have if they are to perform successfully; it defines the skills, behaviours, and attitudes that workers need to perform their roles effectively. Moreover, it also defines the parameters for assessment whether someone is qualified for the job and defines what needs to be measured.

How can one assess competences? One school of thought will say that things like formal education, on-the-job training, or the number of years of experience make for reliable measures of performance. While others may prefer to assess performance based on personal characteristics, values, and behaviours.

All of these are important, but none seem sufficient to describe an ideal set of behaviours and traits needed to measure success in a particular role. Nor do they guarantee that individuals will perform to the standards and levels required by the organization. This is where elucidation and elaboration upon Competence Frameworks can be particularly useful. It allows for clear communication of performance expectations, as well as linking of individual performance to organizational success.

Having a defined set of competencies for each role in business shows people the kind of behaviours the organization values which are required to help achieve its' objectives.

Depending on business or organization, competence framework might include the following elements:

- Core values: Core values are principles that influence decisions, actions and behaviours of employees in a particular organization. An organization often includes them in order to set ethical standards and codes of conduct with respect to a specific position or role.
- Core competencies: Core competencies often act as a foundation of the framework and apply to all roles performed by members of staff.
- Functional competencies: Functional competencies constitute the responsibilities and tasks related to a particular job position, title or role and the tools and abilities necessary to complete them.
- Leadership competencies: Leadership competencies are general traits and "hard skills" that might identify an employee with the potential to guide, manage or motivate others.
- Meta competencies: Meta competencies are traits that are less relevant to an individual's current role but might be beneficial in the future, especially if they want to advance further in their career.

The benefits of a competence framework are the following:

- Clarified expectations Competence framework serves as objective way of defining expectations for employees. It offers a clear and accessible outline of how all employee roles relate to the business, its' goals and success. It provides reference point to employees with respect to their job duties, skills required and a vision and clarity as to how to perform job well.
- Simplified human resource activities An effective competence framework helps companies to better manage and develop their team members. Because a competence framework clearly reveals what's needed for each position, it can make the job of a talent management officers or HR teams easier. It allows for actual comparison of employees performance against the established competence framework parameters, to recognize those who exceed in their position and those who need to improve. Moreover, established competence frameworks helps organizations in better and efficient integration of human resource management tasks like staff planning, recruitment, professional development, performance management and compensation reviews.
- Promotes career advancement An effective competence framework allows for planning of staff mobility and organizational change while promoting company's culture. It can address skills gaps; help you invest in employees and outline career progression requirements. Having high retention rates creates cost savings and an increased company reputation.

Defining which competencies are necessary for success in organization can be helpful to:

- Ensure that people demonstrate sufficient expertise.
- Recruit and select new staff more effectively.
- Evaluate performance more effectively.
- Identify skills and competencies gaps more efficiently.
- Provide more customized training and professional development.
- Plan sufficiently for succession.
- Make change management processes work more efficiently.

## 2.Methodology for Developing a Competence Framework

Before we start developing a competence framework, we'll need to gain an in-depth understanding of the different roles within our business. To do this, we can take a few different approaches:

- Use a pre-set list of common, standard competencies, and then customize it to the specific needs of organization.
- Use outside consultants to develop the framework.
- Create a general organizational framework and use it as the basis for other frameworks as needed.

Through the project 2Good2Go, we have decided on the approach to: "Use a pre-set list of common, standard competencies, and then customize it to the specific needs of organization".

This approach has a few steps:

Step One: preparation, defining the purpose, creating a competence framework team and establishing clear communication between the team's members.

Step Two: Collecting Information

Step Three: Analysing the Work

Step Four: Building the Framework

Step Five: Validating and Revising Framework

Step Six: Implementing Framework

## 3.2Good2Go Methodologies

Within the scope of the 2Good2Go project the methodology layout was defined in the following steps:

- Identification of jobs and occupations that the waste free economy model in small and medium size enterprises requires.
  - Method: an online survey of employers to identify current and potential jobs in the
    waste free or circular economy. In addition, the occupations within which these jobs
    are performed in small and medium-sized enterprises will be identified.
    - It is to be expected that small and medium sized enterprises will not always have designated job positions related particularly with the waste free or circular economy, but that this will be additionally done within existing various management positions.
- Conducting structured interviews with employees in jobs related to waste free economy and managers to define the key tasks and competencies needed to perform the work.
- Development and testing of the initial competency model.
- Deducing necessary competences based on the results of structured interviews.
- Testing the model with experts in the field through focus groups and structured interviews.
- Defining the final competence framework.

# 4. Competence framework for waste free economy transition in SMEs

#### COMPETENCE FRAMEWORK - EMPLOYERS / MANAGEMENT

#### COMPETENCE

#### HAVE STRATEGIC APPROACH TO CIRCULAR ECONOMY

Ability to design and implement interventions and management strategies towards sustainability. It is realized through analyzing the company's business system and identifying the possibility of applying the principles of the circular economy, designing production and service systems that are set up in such a way that they have more than one cycle of use while retaining value, choosing a business model in order to reduce the impact on the environment, health and society taking into account the entire life cycle of a product or service and designing procedures for more advanced circular economy programs in the organization.

KNOWLEDGE	<ul> <li>Knowing general strategies about circular economy</li> <li>Knowing the models to preserve the materials and resources</li> <li>Knowing legislation related to the circular economy.</li> <li>Knowing ecological strategies and policies and the ones related to the transition to circular economy</li> <li>Knowing rules and procedures related to various certification processes and certificates available in circular economy</li> <li>Knowing strategic planning to implement change, ecological transformation of the enterprise</li> </ul>
SKILLS	<ul> <li>Be able to identify company's facts and reasons to contribute to the circular economy strategy</li> <li>Be able to analyse company's facts and reasons and determinate the most relevant for circular economy</li> <li>Be able to identify possibilities of applying the principles of circular economy in company's business</li> <li>Be able to design production and service systems that are set in such a way to enable more than single use with retaining their value</li> <li>Be able to select business model with reduced impact on environment, health and society by considering the whole life cycle of products or services</li> <li>Be able to design procedures for further enhancement of circular economy related programs in the organization</li> <li>Be able to anticipate future environmental trends</li> <li>Be able to deal with the current environmental challenges</li> </ul>

	<ul> <li>Be able to rethink and redesign business processes to reduce resource consumption without compromising the quality of satisfying customer needs.</li> <li>Be able to build business models focused on non-financial returns and anticipated pro-environmental regulations and create competitive advantages based on these.</li> </ul>
ATITUDES	<ul> <li>Acting in accordance with values and principles for sustainability</li> <li>Commitment to respecting the interests of future generations</li> <li>Care for a harmonious relationship between people and nature (environment)</li> <li>Willingness to stop working with unsustainable practices and desire to try alternative solutions</li> <li>Anticipating sustainable changes and the will to influence them</li> <li>Taking an evidence-based perspective and being willing to revise as new data emerges</li> <li>Taking a long-term perspective when planning, assessing and evaluating sustainability actions</li> <li>Consideration of challenges and opportunities related to sustainability from different perspectives</li> <li>Commitment to becoming a driver of change to achieve sustainability.</li> </ul>

## PERFORM BUSINESS ACTIVITIES ACCORDING TO THE PRINCIPLES OF CIRCULAR ECONOMY

It refers to the implementation of environmental standards, principles and policies in the workplace. It includes the creation of a working environment that respects environmental policies and criteria, enables the implementation of the circular economy certificate in business, constant reflection and action in relation to the possibility of implementing circularity in the system, and reflection on the financial consequences of implementing circularity in business.

# KNOWLEDGE Knowing the environmental value of resources and material preservation Knowing the tools to identify the available resources.

- Knowing methods to analyse and assess existing resources and make a critical analysis.
- Knowing the methodologies to evaluate and define the availability of the resources to optimate their use.

Knowing the different environmental programmes and regulations in the work environment • Knowing the policies about circular economy (resources management, recycling and waste disposal) Knowing the methodologies to analyse from an environmental approach the working and living environments. • Knowing how to implement in business various certificates related to environment and circular economy. Knowing the models of preservation of materials and resources in business Knowing of product life cycle and zero waste principles Knowing procedures of green certification of enterprises Knowing green solutions for manufacturing companies (new technologies, solutions) SKILLS Be able to create working environment which considers ecological policies and criteria. Be able to research the current systems of production / provision of service and assessing possible implementation of circularity. • Be able to identify waste in the system and possibilities to reuse it. Be able to Identify and recommend application of various circular economy elements in company's business processes. • Be able to plan the measures of efficient usage, recycling and re-usage with the aim of ensuring sustainable development and reduction of costs in companies' economic activities. • Be able to identify what value is created during multiple usage cycle (of materials, raw materials, residues in production ...) Be able to identify strategies of energy savings to achieve energy efficiency at work. • Be able to monito the progress of implementation of programs related to circular economy in the company. • Be able to assess financial consequences of implementation of circularity in business.

- Be able to integrate the facts and reasons in the regular business activity to act towards circular economy.
- Be able to identify tangible and intangible resources needed to transform a linear idea into circular action.
- Be able to determine realistic needs of additional resources to advance a mission.
- Be able to distinguish the resources needed at every stage of the life cycle of product or services.
- Be able to applicate environmental workplace regulation.
- Be able to create working guidelines balanced with sustainability criteria and ensure long-term objectives.
- Be able to identify the challenges in the field of work and collaboration with other environmental challenges and for the circular economy, to answer them within sustainability criteria.
- Be able to create a work environment that takes into account environmental policies and criteria for the transition to the circular economy.

#### **ATITUDES**

- Awareness that the predicted consequences for the business may influence preferability of some scenarios to the others.
- Willingness to stop working with unsustainable practices and desire to try alternative solutions.
- Commitment to considering challenges and opportunities related to sustainability from different perspectives.
- Willingness to cooperate with others in order to question the status quo regarding circularity in the organization.
- Anticipating sustainable changes and the will to influence them.
- Commitment to reducing material consumption.
- Successfully dealing with compromises in sustainability decisions within and between different areas (environment, society, economy) and in space and time
- Consideration of challenges and opportunities related to sustainability from different perspectives.
- Commitment to becoming a driver of change to achieve sustainability.

#### COMPETENCE CONSISTENTLY APPLY VALUES OF CIRCULAR ECONOMY It refers to the ability to apply the values, principles and goals of sustainability in everyday life and business. It includes the application of environmental standards and rules in everyday activities and in the workplace. **KNOWLEDGE** Knowing methods and tools to support the building of constructive choices integrating elements of circular economy. Knowing the pathways to apply environmental criteria in the personal and professional life **SKILLS** Be able to make constructive choices about personal behaviour and social interactions based on environmental standards. Be able to select local suppliers for personal needs. • Be able to select local suppliers for business needs. Be able to demonstrate ecological standards in everyday activities. Be able to show initiative in dealing with the problems of environment that have the impact on community. • Be able to apply ecological regulations in working place. • Be able to execute working guidelines in line with the criteria of sustainability **ATITUDES** • Acting in accordance with values and principles for sustainability • Commitment to respecting the interests of future generations. • Care for a harmonious relationship between people and nature (environment) • Concern about the short-term and long-term effects of personal actions on others and on the environment Anticipating sustainable changes and the will to influence them. A sense of belonging to humanity and solidarity with future generations • Curiosity and interest in the connections between the environment, human action, and sustainability • Commitment to becoming a driver of change to achieve sustainability. Giving priority to the values and interests of sustainability when acting in the community and in the workplace

## IMPLEMENT PROCEDURES AND USAGE OF MATERIALS WHICH PROMOTE CIRCULARITY WITHIN ORGANIZATION

It includes the activities of identifying, selecting, and using materials, resources and products for the needs of the organization that contribute to the reduction of negative impacts on the environment, health and society, taking into account the entire life cycle of the product or service.

KNOWLEDGE	<ul> <li>Knowing materials and production procedures that are in accordance with the circular economy.</li> <li>Knowing the models to preserve the materials and resources.</li> <li>Knowing the programmes to promote the preservation in the framework of circular economy.</li> <li>Knowing local initiatives and tools towards circular economy.</li> </ul>
SKILLS	<ul> <li>Be able to create working guidelines balanced with sustainability criteria and ensure long-term objectives.</li> <li>Be able to select and use materials in order to reduce its influence on environment, health and society, taking into account entire products or services' life cycle</li> <li>Be able to select suitable materials and processes of production and/ or processes of provision of services that fit into the concept of circular economy.</li> <li>Be able to select necessary business resources from local sources</li> </ul>
ATITUDES	<ul> <li>Acting in accordance with values and principles for sustainability</li> <li>Willingness to stop working with unsustainable practices and desire to try alternative solutions.</li> <li>Commitment to considering challenges and opportunities related to sustainability from different perspectives.</li> <li>Anticipating sustainable changes and the will to influence them.</li> <li>Commitment to reducing material consumption.</li> <li>Successfully dealing with compromises in sustainability decisions within and between different areas (environment, society, economy) and in space and time</li> </ul>

#### COMPETENCE

#### ANALYZE CIRCULARITY WITHIN THE ORGANIZATION

It refers to the ability to analyse different business segments in relation to circularity. It includes the analysis of the current situation in the business, identifying opportunities for implementing circularity and assessing the consequences of circularity interventions on the wider system during and beyond the life cycle of a product or service.

KNOWLEDGE	<ul> <li>Knowing the basic principles of circular economy theory</li> <li>Knowing the information sources about circular economy</li> <li>Knowing the methodologies to analyse the working environments from environmental point of view.</li> <li>Knowing the pathways to apply environmental criteria in the professional life.</li> <li>Knowing the methods and tools to do a critical analysis regarding to circularity.</li> <li>Knowing the methodologies to identify the opportunities and risks of circular economy issues.</li> <li>Knowing the environmental plan and facts on circular economy in the community</li> </ul>
SKILLS	<ul> <li>Be able to identify tangible and intangible resources necessary for transformation of business from linear to circular.</li> <li>Be able to use methods of sustainability assessments such as life cycle assessment (LCA), risks analysis etc.</li> <li>Be able to analyse systems which are necessary for development and operationalization of circularity.</li> <li>Be able to assess consequences of circular interventions on wider system during and after the life cycle of products or services</li> </ul>
ATITUDES	<ul> <li>Acting in accordance with values and principles for sustainability</li> <li>Commitment to respecting the interests of future generations.</li> <li>Care for a harmonious relationship between people and nature (environment)</li> <li>Commitment to considering challenges and opportunities related to sustainability from different perspectives.</li> <li>Anticipating sustainable changes and the will to influence them.</li> <li>Curiosity and interest in the connections between the environment, human action, and sustainability</li> <li>Taking an evidence-based perspective and being willing to revise as new data emerges.</li> <li>Taking a long-term perspective when planning, assessing and evaluating sustainability actions</li> <li>Consideration of challenges and opportunities related to sustainability from different perspectives</li> </ul>

#### COMPETENCE COLLABORATE WITH OTHERS ON ISSUES RELATED TO CIRCULAR ECONOMY It refers to showing initiative and encouraging others to engage in environmental behaviours to promote circular economy principles. KNOWLEDGE • Knowing techniques and tools to effectively communicate environmental values to others. Knowing methods to face challenges and define actions to create environmental awareness in the area of circular economy. Knowing tools to involve community in the preservation of resources and materials. Knowing the theories to communicate with the stakeholders and involve them in the process for circular economy. **SKILLS** • Be able to encourage others to take responsibility in environmental value- creating activities. • Be able to show initiative in dealing with environmental issues that affect the community. • Be able to value and encourage others taking the initiative in solving environmental problems and creating value. Be able to use the vocabulary of circular economy. Be able to encourage clients and associates to share and take care of products (shared or owned) and to try and return them to use at the end of their useful life. Be able to communicate with stakeholders with the aim of involving them in the processes of circular economy within organization. Be able to build business processes based on extensive collaborations with other market actors to jointly implement circular models. Be able to act in raising awareness of service providers with which we cooperate ATITUDES Active listening and empathy in collaboration with others to assess the scope of current and potential sustainability challenges. Willingness to cooperate with others in order to question the status quo regarding circularity in the organization.

- Commitment to becoming a driver of change to achieve sustainability.
- Giving priority to the values and interests of sustainability when acting in the community and in the workplace

#### **USE COMMUNICATION SKILLS IN PROMOTION OF CIRCULARITY**

It refers to the knowledge of techniques and tools for effectively communicating ecologically worthy ideas to others and influencing the perception of associates and clients in taking responsibility for environmental activities and accepting recovered or recycled products.

recycled products.	
KNOWLEDGE	<ul> <li>Knowing techniques and tools for effective transfer of ecologically valuable idea to others</li> </ul>
	Knowing methods to active listening
	<ul> <li>Knowing method sand tools to promote the continuous collaboration in optimization of the resources</li> </ul>
SKILLS	<ul> <li>Be able to show empathy towards others; listen actively; recognise the role of emotions, attitudes and behaviours in shaping other people's attitudes and behaviours.</li> </ul>
	<ul> <li>Be able to show respect for people's differences, their background and situations, value diversity as a possible source of ideas and opportunities.</li> </ul>
	<ul> <li>Be able to affect the perception of associates and clients in accepting the recovered or recycled products.</li> </ul>
	<ul> <li>Be able to encourage others to take over responsibility in environmental activities.</li> </ul>
	<ul> <li>Be able to communication with all employees about circular economy/educating them.</li> </ul>
	<ul> <li>Be able to effectively communicate the implemented changes and their benefits to all stakeholder</li> </ul>
ATITUDES	<ul> <li>Acting in accordance with values and principles for sustainability</li> </ul>
	<ul> <li>Active listening and empathy in collaboration with others to scope current and potential sustainability challenges</li> </ul>

## PERFORM BUSINESS ACTIVITIES ACCORDING TO THE PRINCIPLES OF CIRCULAR ECONOMY

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#### KNOWLEDGE Knowing the environmental value of resources and material preservation Knowing the tools to identify the available resources. Knowing the methodologies to evaluate and define the availability of the resources to optimate their use. Knowing the policies about circular economy (resources management, recycling, and waste disposal) Knowing the methodologies to analyse from an environmental approach the working and living environments. Knowing how to implement in business various certificates related to environment and circular economy. Knowing the models of preservation of materials and resources in business Knowing product life cycle and zero waste principles SKILLS • Be able to create working environment which considers ecological policies and criteria. • Be able to identify waste in the system and possibilities to reuse it. Be able to plan the measures of efficient usage, recycling, and re-usage with the aim of ensuring sustainable development and reduction of costs in companies' economic activities. Be able to identify strategies of energy savings to achieve energy efficiency at work. • Be able to determine realistic needs of additional resources to advance a mission. Be able to distinguish the resources needed at every stage of the life cycle of product or services. Be able to applicate environmental workplace regulation. Be able to create working guidelines balanced with sustainability criteria and ensure long-term objectives.

	Be able to identify the challenges in the field of work and collaboration with other environmental challenges and for the circular economy, to answer them within sustainability criteria.
ATITUDES	<ul> <li>Awareness that the predicted consequences for the business may influence that some scenarios are preferable to others.</li> <li>Willingness to stop working with unsustainable practices and desire to try alternative solutions.</li> <li>Willingness to cooperate with others in order to question the status quo regarding circularity in the organization.</li> <li>Anticipating sustainable changes and the will to influence them.</li> <li>Commitment to reducing material consumption</li> </ul>

## IMPLEMENT PROCEDURES AND USAGE OF MATERIALS WHICH PROMOTE CIRCULARITY WITHIN ORGANIZATION

It includes the activities of identifying, selecting, and using materials, resources, and products for the needs of the organization that contribute to the reduction of negative impacts on the environment, health and society, taking into account the entire life cycle of the product or service.

KNOWLEDGE	<ul> <li>Knowing the models to preserve the materials and resources.</li> <li>Knowing the programmes to promote the preservation in the framework of circular economy</li> </ul>
SKILLS	<ul> <li>Be able to select and use materials in order to reduce its influence on environment, health and society, taking into account entire products or services' life cycle</li> <li>Be able to select suitable materials and processes of production and/ or processes of provision of services that fit into the concept of circular economy.</li> <li>Be able to select necessary business resources from local sources</li> </ul>
ATITUDES	<ul> <li>Acting in accordance with values and principles for sustainability</li> <li>Willingness to stop working with unsustainable practices and desire to try alternative solutions.</li> <li>Commitment to reducing material consumption</li> </ul>

#### COMPETENCE

#### COLLABORATE WITH OTHERS ON ISSUES RELATED TO CIRCULAR ECONOMY

It refers to showing initiative and encouraging others to engage in environmental behaviours to promote circular economy principles.

KNOWLEDGE	<ul> <li>Knowing techniques and tools to effectively communicate environmentally value ideas to others.</li> <li>Knowing methods to face challenges and define actions to create environmental awareness in the area of circular economy.</li> <li>Knowing tools to involve community in the preservation of resources and materials.</li> <li>Knowing the theories to communicate with the stakeholders and involve them in the process for circular economy.</li> </ul>
SKILLS	<ul> <li>Be able to encourage others to take responsibility in environmental value- creating activities.</li> <li>Be able to show i initiative in dealing with environmental issues that affect the community.</li> <li>Be able to value and encourage others taking the initiative in solving environmental problems and creating value.</li> <li>Be able to use the vocabulary of circular economy.</li> <li>Be able to encourage clients and associates to share and take care of products (shared or owned) and to try and return them to use at the end of their useful life.</li> <li>Be able to communicate with stakeholders with the aim of involving them in the processes of circular economy within organization.</li> <li>Be able to build business processes based on extensive collaborations with other market actors to jointly implement circular models.</li> <li>Be able to act in raising awareness of service providers with which we cooperate</li> </ul>
ATITUDES	<ul> <li>Active listening and empathy in collaboration with others to scope current and potential sustainability challenges.</li> <li>Willingness to cooperate with others to question the status quo regarding circularity in the organization.</li> <li>Commitment to becoming a driver of change to achieve sustainability.</li> <li>Giving priority to the values and interests of sustainability when acting in the community and in the workplace</li> </ul>

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It refers to the knowledge of techniques and tools for effectively communicating ecologically worthy ideas to others and influencing the perception of associates and clients in taking responsibility for environmental activities and accepting recovered or recycled products.

KNOWLEDGE	<ul> <li>Knowing techniques and tools for effective transfer of ecologically valuable idea to others</li> <li>Knowing methods to active listening</li> <li>Knowing method sand tools to promote the continuous collaboration in optimization of the resources</li> </ul>
SKILLS	<ul> <li>Be able to show empathy towards others; listen actively; recognise the role of emotions, attitudes and behaviours in shaping other people's attitudes and behaviours.</li> <li>Be able to show respect for people's differences, their background and situations, value diversity as a possible source of ideas and opportunities.</li> <li>Be able to affect the perception of associates and clients in accepting the recovered or recycled products.</li> <li>Be able to encourage others to take over responsibility in environmental activities.</li> <li>Be able to communication with all employees about circular economy/educating them.</li> <li>Be able to effectively communicate the implemented changes and their benefits to all stakeholder</li> </ul>
ATITUDES	<ul> <li>Acting in accordance with values and principles for sustainability</li> <li>Active listening and empathy in collaboration with others to scope current and potential sustainability challenges</li> </ul>

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