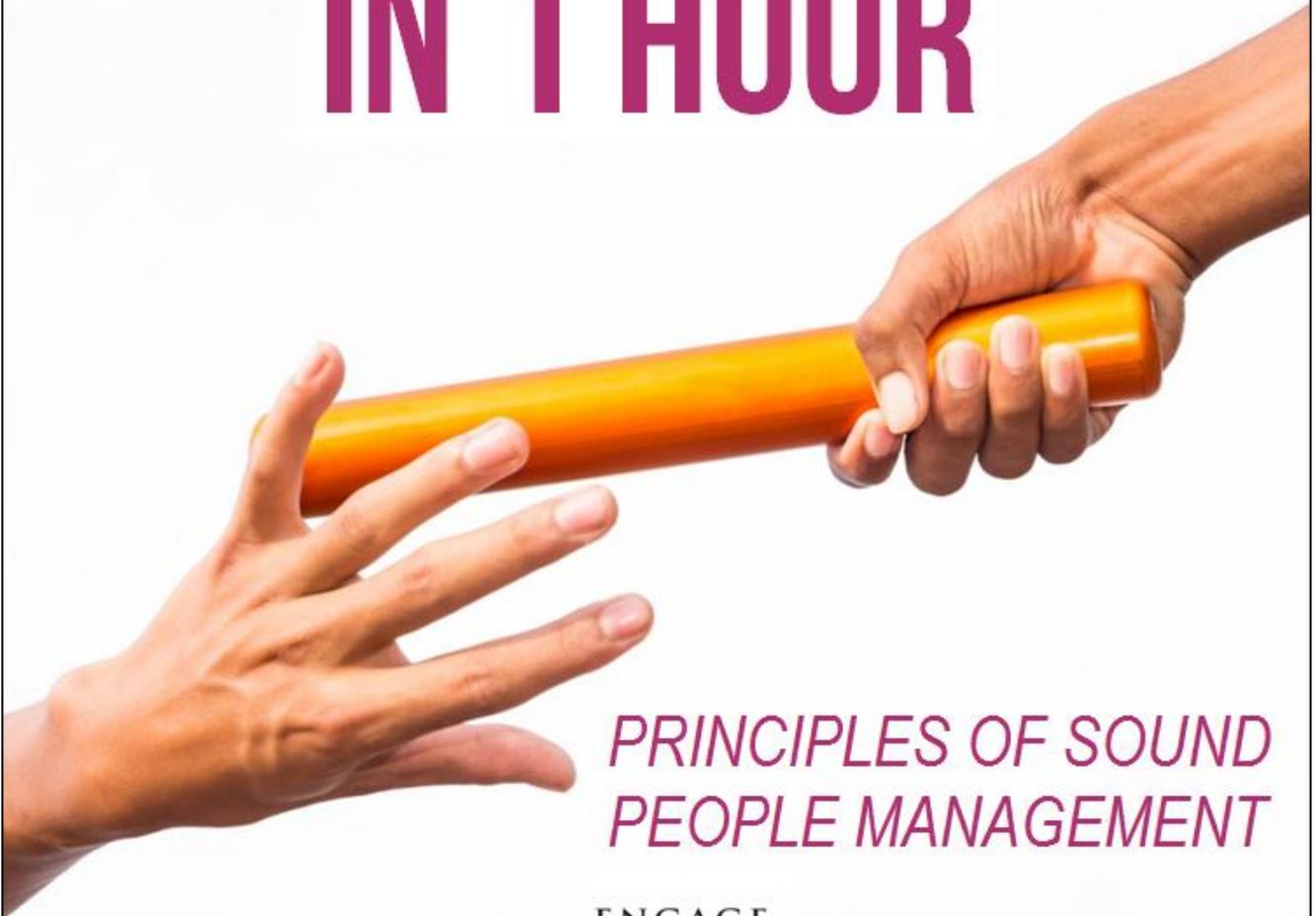


LEARN TO DELEGATE IN 1 HOUR



*PRINCIPLES OF SOUND
PEOPLE MANAGEMENT*

ENGAGE

PAOLO A. RUGGERI

LEARN TO DELEGATE IN 1 HOUR

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I recently attended a special edition of the Open Source Management MBS Business School www.osmconsultgroup.com where several speakers shared their best practices in this important activity. I found the speeches quite useful and I decided to gather the information shared along with my own speeches into this report.

DELEGATION



Almost all the functions in small and medium enterprises, with the exception of certain traditional functions that tend to be nearly identical for all companies (i.e. accounting, warehouse, etc.), can be considered a kind of "puzzle": in order to grow a business, the owner must confront and "decode" this puzzle. That's to say, they must find a solution to the puzzle, a method of carrying out all functions, that allows them to bring good results to the company.

They must, for example, be able to sell the products or services of their company, which is not simply limited to negotiating a sale, but also includes the resolution of dozens of small problems:

- Where can I find potential customers for my business?
- How do I get in touch with them?
- How can I share and convey the value of my product or service?
- How will I overcome objections made by customers or potential customers?
- How can I be sure that they will pay me?

Generally the entrepreneur of SMEs personally addresses these kinds of issues and, once resolved, delegates them so that someone else takes care of that function from then on. This way they can devote themselves to the management of other complex "puzzles" that, once solved, will further grow the company ("How do I build a sales network throughout the national territory?"; "How do I produce with lower costs to stay competitive and earn more? ", " How do I develop a franchise system? "and so on).

There is the other, rarer, option of finding someone else, a specialist, who solves these problems for us. This second option usually requires that SMEs hire a person of a certain value that can provide certain knowledge that the company is currently missing. So this option is a bit more expensive and also requires the skill of recognizing a candidate's true productivity during the interview, avoiding the costly mistake of paying a lot of money to a someone who turns out to be nothing but a larger company's "reject".

Whichever way you decide to go (personally taking care of issues yourself, or finding someone else to deal with it) the business owner must aim to solve and then delegate each "puzzle" so that they themselves can move on to solve the next problem, and thus be able to make the company grow or be more profitable.

If analyzed from this point of view, we can see the entrepreneur as someone who takes a difficult problem and solves it, developing a technology or technique that makes it solvable for other people of average to low quality. The real strength of Mc Donald is in the fact that it does not require expert chefs to cook in its restaurants: after a week of training, even a university student who has never been in a kitchen before is able to churn out good quality burgers. Similarly, the ability of other companies has been to making the sale of their products and services so simple that even a novice salesperson can sell with a profit.

If, however, only Superman is able to get results in your company, then you know that the entrepreneur's job isn't yet complete: indeed, they must still develop a technology that allows even average people to perform the work of the company.

SUCCESS



Success in the professional field could be defined as "Having more customers than you are able to serve".

As long as you haven't reached this point, then you can still make things work even if you're not great at delegation. Of course, by not delegating, your business will remain small and stunted. However, as we said, it might not be that big of a problem for you.

But when you have reached a certain level of success because you have worked well and start receiving more requests than you can handle, then you have no choice: you have to get help. That's where you need to learn to delegate.

DEFINITION OF DELEGATION



Delegation: to authorize someone else to act in your place.

From the Latin "de-" down, and "-legare" to depute or assign, so literally a "downward assignment".

So when we delegate we are "assigning" a task to someone "below" us with regard to a specific area, authorizing them to act in our place, and thus liberating us to address issues of higher importance.

WHAT TO DELEGATE AND WHAT NOT TO DELEGATE



Once we realize we have reached the point at which we need to start delegating, we must understand that some tasks can be easily delegated whereas others may be a bit more complicated.

We must also understand that while some activities should absolutely be delegated, there are other activities THAT SHOULD NEVER be passed off to someone else.

You should never delegate, for example, the care of yourself, your loved ones, or your personal life, nor your goals or your dreams. Indeed, if you find yourself unable to personally make time for these activities, then it is a clear indicator that something is seriously wrong with your delegation system.

Let's take a look at what we should and shouldn't delegate.

ACTIVITIES TO DELEGATE 100%

You should delegate all manufacturing, operations, and service delivery. If you think about it a moment, when you go to an important doctor who is a leader in his or her field for a visit, it is often their staff that takes care of everything. In some cases you won't even meet the doctor, but instead deal with one of their assistants. Their fame and the stringent quality standards that they built over time take care of everything.

It should work the same way in your company: you have to build a rigorous and effective system that is able to take care of customers or manufacturing.

In many areas, such as in the medical sector or professional service area, the inability to delegate service delivery is the main limitation to the growth of the business.

Which production activities should you personally deal with then? Strategy and decision-making meetings, human relations with your key employees and strategic customers.

ACTIVITIES TO DELEGATE 50%

You should delegate all accounting and administration except, again, for human relations and financial or tax decisions that contain strategic aspects, as we will see shortly.

You should delegate all sales and marketing activities with a few exceptions: once again the important meetings, human relations, direct human relationships with leading commercial agents or salespeople (which may be managed by a Sales Manager, but with whom you also, occasionally, maintain a relationship even if more casual – how are you, how are things, I'm happy we're helping you accomplish your goals, is there anything I can help with –) or, in the case of smaller companies, relationships with the larger customers.

As for Marketing, you should delegate all the operational aspects, but be present to give your important contributions to strategic decisions such as, for example, how to position the company and what are the principles on which to focus. Usually you do these things through mutual agreement and advice from your managers, but to completely delegate it would be a mistake.

The internal manuals, which include protocols and job descriptions, in a small business is something you should take care of yourself, then with growth over time you should have a staff that takes care of everything. The same applies to personnel training: if the company is small, or even medium-small, you have to be part of it. But, as your business grows, you should aim to have other people manage it.

As the company begins to grow, delegate Human Resources. However, 1) you must be present when the choice is being made about people who could make a big difference to your business and, 2) you should always be personally active in searching for new talent that could give your company a great leap forward.

ACTIVITIES YOU SHOULD NOT DELEGATE

You should never delegate strategic activities: the mission cannot be delegated, marketing strategy and positioning in the marketplace should be personally decided by you, just as with the company's values.

Human relationships with key people in the company cannot be delegated.

Financial decisions are yours, as well as any decisions to take on key human resources.

In the legal area you are the one who must decide strategy, after listening to the advice of others, and then you must rely on good advisers or consultants to carry it out.

"Delegate everything except command" as an entrepreneur friend of mine once said.

You should always know how much your company is earning, where it's working at a loss, and why. You must make important financial decisions and approve the budget of the company. Things that don't make sense from an administrative or financial perspective must be investigated and clarified. If you try to delegate these activities, you may end up with some really nasty surprises.

As for strategy, even if you involve your team members in decision-making, listen to their information and opinions, change your mind, etc., at the end of the day you are the one who must decide which direction your company takes. When you delegate the company's strategy to someone else – like to a COO – you're running a huge risk: you are an entrepreneur and they are not. You had the ambition to open a company, while they merely work for you. Even if they are very good, all in all, they just don't have the same instinct you do. Having them decide company strategy could even end up irreparably damaging the relationship when you realize that their strategy isn't working and you have to invalidate them. It is a delicate situation: by letting your COO (even a good one!) decide company strategy on their own, you risk either burning out a capable person, or find yourself in a company that you no longer identify with.

Similarly, you have to be the one to entertain relationships with key people of the company, to see how things are with them and their growth plans. If you delegate the care of relationships with key people in the company to someone else, someday they might steal away your business and your best people.

WHERE TO START

Start to delegate with the easiest activity or function. That's to say, the activity or function you yourself have already learned to do really well. Now that it's clear how to do it successfully, it's time to delegate it.

CONDITIONS NECESSARY FOR SUCCESSFUL DELEGATION



Once we have established what to delegate, we must know that there are three necessary conditions for delegation to take place:

1) REMOVAL OF LIMITING BELIEFS ABOUT DELEGATION

If you have any of the following beliefs, you will need to change your point of view before any attempt to delegate:

"No one can do it as well as I can" → Successful business owners say that in the end they were forced to rethink this belief. Over time, people who were better than they are showed up, and ended up doing the work much better than the owner had anticipated.

"They'll steal my job" → This is another misconception. Indeed, the more knowledge we share, the stronger the company becomes.

"Value is the real capital, not people" → Value in a small company is created by passing knowledge on to people.

"I have to be the first to get to the office and the last one to leave" → Although there is a bit of truth in this statement, especially when it comes to setting a good example, it is not true that you must be the one who works the hardest just to motivate your people. Very often, people bring out their best when we're not around. Also, if we are always overworked, we leave the company without strategic guidance.

"Everything will come to a screeching halt if I leave the company to go on holiday" → Presence and absence are indispensable for delegation. Sometimes our presence inhibits employees. Try to think about the times in which, for example, you have to speak in public and you know that a much better speaker is present in the same room: that person has the power to inhibit you.

2) HAVING FAITH IN YOUR PEOPLE

Having faith that the person can do it makes a huge difference in delegation. If you don't believe in the person, even without saying anything to them, it will be impossible for them to get anything done, no matter what their skill or ability.

Delegation, in fact, is not a technical skill, but essentially a relationship.

This cannot be done by halves. Whenever we fail to believe in a person, they always end up failing.

The business owner who does not have faith, is actually locking himself in a cage. By not believing in people, they end up being a prisoner of their own company. The secret of escaping this loneliness is to believe in people.

3) THE SHARING OF INFORMATION AND DATA

Earnings materialize when people are cohesive and work in the same direction.

It is necessary for the business owner to share information, values, principles, objectives, as well as the numerical performance of the company: statistics. Indeed, how can people make better decisions if they don't know how they're currently doing?

FIRST THE PERSON THEN THE PROJECT, NOT VICE VERSA



First find the people and then plan out the project, not "develop the project, and only then start looking for the right people to run it." The latter is a great delusion, and though it seems like a good theory, in practice it just doesn't work. Without the right people, any project will forever remain pure theory.

The manager, therefore, is not a creator of brilliant strategies, but a capable hunter of people.

Sometimes, to find the right person, it will take two or three trials.

But, when you do find them, everything falls into place. Things that previously seemed impossible, now start making progress, people you formerly earned very little with are now good customers, marketing campaigns that never brought results before are now bringing in new customers, the logistical work was believed to be impossible but then one day you come into work and... oh my gosh, they managed to do it!!!

It is fascinating and magical to see the look of surprise on a business owner's face when, after a few failures, they have finally found the right person: they are REBORN.

Projects do not fail because of the idea, strategy, vision, or cost. Projects stall and fail WHEN WE ARE ENTRUSTING THEM TO THE WRONG PEOPLE.

At the end of the day, this whole part of the manual comes down to just one thing: FIND THE RIGHT PEOPLE.

If you see that a project you care about isn't working, take a hard look at what you yourself might be doing wrong, but also ask yourself this: Do I have the right people on this project? If I could go back, would I choose them again? If the answer is no, act fast.

The right people exist. One of your key tasks as a business owner or manager is finding them and attracting them to your business.

The right people.

They exist.

You just have to find them.

And build a company that helps them be successful.

ADDITIONAL TIPS REGARDING DELEGATION AND PEOPLE MANAGEMENT



- 1) Locate the primary core activity. What is your core business? What activity is responsible for your earnings? How can we multiply that activity by 1000?
- 2) You need a co-conspirator. If you think about it a moment, a great business owner is never alone. There is always someone of comparable magnitude that "conspires" with them: planning, designing, programming with them. When you have someone in the company who's ability is comparable to your own, the energy (motivational, creative, project oriented) that you invest in that person, is returned to you tenfold. This is the mechanism that initiates the creation of value. After you have given an input, the "conspirator" gives you satisfaction, ideas, and even bigger and better news. Which means that you in turn provide them with even more energy and so on ...

Without someone like this though, a sort of "entropy"¹ occurs: the energy you put into things disperses and does not return to you. Every successful business has a strong pair at the top who "conspire to succeed": Larry Page and Sergei Brin at Google; Steve Jobs and Tim Cook at Apple; Bill Gates and Paul Allen at Microsoft, are just some examples of this.

¹ Entropy: dispersion of energy

- 3) Use personality and aptitude tests, and try to replace the people that do not have good scores on them. This is not about punishing anyone, but merely about wanting to have the best and most motivated people around you. Obviously, at the beginning provide an opportunity to everyone, even to those who don't seem to have the most constructive attitude or profile. Have faith that they will grow, learn to give their best, and develop good attitudes. But if you see no change, don't.
- 4) Practice constant recruitment: the "talents" and people who can help you make a big difference don't simply show up at the moment you need them most, instead they tend to show up when you least expect them.
- 5) Instead of delegating a task, you should delegate "how to get a result." It must be clear what the result of the task should be and you should write exactly what needs to be done to achieve it: prepare job descriptions and manuals for newcomers, illustrating the actions and procedures needed to be successful in that job. When you correct people, you should refer to these job descriptions.
- 6) Make sure that the company devotes time to training staff. Successful companies ensure that its employees spend even up to 10% of their working hours in training courses. If there is no training provided in the company, the climate tends to worsen significantly after a while.
- 7) After delegating, make sure to check up on it consistently, a couple of times a week, and make sure that the person is keeping and maintaining statistical graphs showing their performance and results.

PROCEDURE FOR DELEGATION



The purpose of delegation is to have other people do things you already do well, so that you can then be free to focus on other activities and areas where your business needs to grow. Thus, you should only be delegating functions that are already going well, and not the functions that are still giving you problems. The first rule of delegation is that FIRST YOU MUST WIN, and then you can help others to win.

If you don't at least partially follow the steps below, the function that you wish to delegate will just end up right back on your desk of things to manage, such as in the form of poor results obtained by the person to whom you originally delegated.

A general outline for the procedure of delegation is as follows:

1. First You Must Win, do not try to delegate something that even you can't do yet. If you win first, you build a winning system. Now you can delegate.
2. Clearly identify what it is you want to delegate.
3. Look for a person to delegate this activity to. If you are using the I-Profile Analysis², try to identify people with a good Self-Discipline (conscientiousness). These people will take responsibility for their tasks and won't try to pass them off. Of course this isn't the only characteristic to take into consideration, but it is still very important.
4. Write a detailed job description of what you want to delegate. This job description should also be understandable to a new person who is starting their very first day with your company. After writing, have someone who knows nothing about your business read it to make sure it is complete. How do you solve problems? What do you do on Monday just after arriving in the company? When do you hold meetings and how do you set them up? What is the goal of this function? Although this step is particularly recommended for highly technical roles, you will

² I-Profile Analysis: A recruitment analysis provided by OSM International Group.

find that insufficiently detailed job descriptions that haven't been fool-proofed for even the most simple tasks, can make delegation very difficult. You will find that all the activities for which you have not written a proper manual will tend to end up back on your plate. On the other hand, if you do write a manual, you might make mistakes with the person (the first time), but then you'll make it work.

5. Establish realistic goals for the person you are delegating to, which must be achieved in this activity.
6. Make sure that they have the resources needed to do the job, or the authority to obtain them. For example, do they have the spending autonomy to perform that particular task, or will they need to come to you every time they have to spend \$100? Have you provided them with the necessary human resources or given them the authority to find it themselves?
7. Give the person a daily or weekly work plan according to the complexity of the work and their experience, and get them started. Let them know that they can come to you with any problems.
8. Fix regular check-up meetings, at least weekly, to see how they are progressing and guide them when needed. Verify how the work is going at least twice a week with a visit or a call.
9. Whenever they hit a rough patch or encounter difficulties, don't complain but instead provide them with reassurance and encouragement.
10. If possible, identify an index or a statistic that you can use to monitor their work.
11. Help them to win.

HOW TO GET STARTED WITH SOMEONE WHO HAS NO EXPERIENCE



Sometimes you'll have to start someone on the job who basically doesn't know how to do anything yet. In that case, you should write a very detailed list of things to do for the person, and set them to work. Sometimes writing this list of explanations takes even more time than the activity itself, but proceeding as we have indicated gets the person moving, gets them achieving results or further developing their ability to work independently.

Then you can move on to points 1 through 11.

SIGNS THAT SOMETHING ISN'T WORKING WITH THE DELEGATION



Aside from obvious indicators such as tasks that constantly need to be redone, angry customers, or a clear lack of results, there are also a few more "subtle indicators" that, when they occur, make you realize that something in the delegation process simply isn't working properly:

- The person isn't calling you or pushing you, rather you have to do the pushing or chasing to make sure things are getting done. This indicates that they lack a sense of responsibility.
- The person disappears on weekends = they do not like the job. We're certainly not saying that they absolutely must work after hours, doing unpaid overtime, or stealing time away from their family. We're just saying that if a person is attracted to or passionate about what they do, they will find it difficult to break away for two days in a row.

If you never hear from them on weekends, then you should know just that: the work, for them, is just a job. Unless they have a very simple function (clerk, cashier, secretary, etc.) it is unlikely that they will help you to make a difference.

If you have any doubts about a person who is missing punches and aren't sure if they can do it, ask yourself this question: "If I could go back and decide to hire this person again, with what I know about them now, would I still hire them?"

If the answer is "no", act quickly. Time, in this situation, does not heal anything.

If, after two months of patient work with a person, you still don't see any results, and things keep ending up back on your desk, you have to start wondering if the person is the right one for the task.

WHEN AN EMPLOYEE, WHO WAS PREVIOUSLY DOING WELL, GOES INTO CRISIS



When an employee who was previously working well goes into crisis, it is usually due to one of the following reasons:

- a) The person has reached their limit: you're squeezing blood from stones and it's useless to go any further.
- b) You've fallen into dysfunctional thinking. For example:
 - Every time you start to think that you're the only one keeping the company running and no one else matters, that they are worth little or nothing, you lose the ability to delegate.
 - When you walk away from your values, that is, stop being the person you were at the beginning of your business: if you abandon your initial values, if you lose your sense of ethics, people simply don't recognize you anymore and delegation falls into crisis.
 - When you give in to excessive compromises. For example, if you accept a very negative or totally unproductive person at the top of the company.
 - When you simply sit back and settle for whatever you can get.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU REDUCE DELEGATION TO A PERSON



Reducing delegation to an important person in the company, meaning that you take away the tasks that you had previously entrusted them with, is a rather delicate moment. The person usually becomes discontented and leaves (if this is an option) or stays and becomes someone who works against the company.

WHY WE FAIL IN PEOPLE MANAGEMENT



The main cause of failures in the management of staff is as follows:

WE FAIL IN PEOPLE MANAGEMENT BECAUSE WE CHOOSE THE PATH OF LEAST RESISTANCE.

Which is also a path that leads nowhere.

SUMMARY



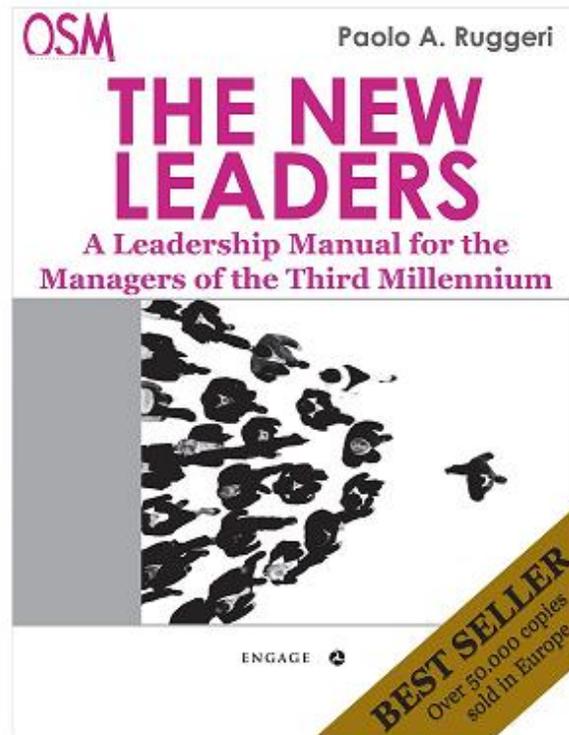
In summary:

1. First you must win in the function. In this way you build a winning system. You must make the job feasible for people of average quality.
2. Decide what you want to delegate.
3. Write a detailed job description manual for the job in question.
4. Make sure you have managed any self-limiting ideas about delegation. Thoughts like "It's better if I just do it myself"; "No one will ever be able to do this job" and a general distrust in people (not believing in others) will only lead you to become a prisoner of your own company.
5. Make sure that the person studies the job description manual. Meet with them and explain it.
6. Get them started and verify how it's going at least twice a week.
7. Encourage and train them.
8. Help them to achieve success.

And remember: a successful manager is not a creator of brilliant strategies, but a capable hunter of people.

FOR FURTHER STUDY...

The New Leaders
by Paolo Ruggeri



EBOOK AVAILABLE AT ALL ONLINE STORES
PAPER COPY AVAILABLE AT WWW.PAOLORUGGERI.NET



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