

Accelerating Employee Performance through Management by Objectives: Evidence from Manufacturing Firms

Ifeanyi Emmanuel Nuel Okoli, Evelyn Ayamba Bassey Ewah, and Christian Uchenna Chukwu

ABSTRACT

This study explore ways of accelerating employee performance through management by objective among workers in manufacturing firms in Anambra State Nigeria. Three specific objectives research questions and hypotheses were formulated with the decomposed variables of the study. This study used a survey research design. The study population was three hundred and thirty-three (333) workers whereas the sample size was one hundred and eight two (182) arrived at using Taro Yamane formula. Data were composed using a self-administered questionnaire from the sample size of workers. The simple random sampling system was applied for the study. Pearson correlation coefficient and simple linear regression were applied for hypotheses testing. In the first hypothesis, the study found that participation exerts moderate influence on employee retention among workers in manufacturing firms ($\beta=0.65$, $t=10.36$, $r^2=0.424$, $F=107.272$, $p<0.01$). Secondly, the test hypothesis found that there is a significant positive correlation connecting goal setting as well as employee job satisfaction among workers in manufacturing firms ($r=0.859$, $n=148$, $p<0.01$). In the third hypothesis, the study found that feedback exerts moderate statistical influence on employee commitment among workers in manufacturing firms ($\beta=0.76$, $t=14.24$, $r^2=0.581$, $F=202.815$, $p<0.01$). The study concludes that for manufacturing firms to increase employee performance, setting and managing objectives is imperative. The research recommended that management needs to slot in employees in its actions so as to dissuade them from leaving the firm. The study also advocated that management needs to incorporate employee contributions when setting the firm's goals to boost employee confidence and achieve job satisfaction.

Keywords: Employee Commitment, Employee Performance, Employee Retention, Feedback, Goal Setting, Job Satisfaction, Management by Objective, Participation.

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I. E. N. Okoli*

Department of Entrepreneurship Studies,
Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Nigeria
(e-mail: ie.okoli@unizik.edu.ng)

E. A. B. Ewah

Department of Accounting & Finance,
Godfrey Okoye University, Nigeria
(e-mail: evelynbassey@gmail.com)

C. U. Chukwu

Centre for Entrepreneurship &
Development Research, University of
Nigeria, Nigeria
(e-mail: uchennachrist.chukwu@unn.edu.ng)

**Corresponding Author*

I. INTRODUCTION

For a better performance of any firm, there is need for decisive well thinking out plan for achieving present in addition to future objectives with goals, in which the firm must be fully involved, if not it would manipulate the firm at the long run. Employee performance in all circumstances is essential for firms as it proves their role as well as their accomplishment toward profit attainment and the achievement of the company's objectives. Furthermore, the prerequisite of reaching employee overall improved dreams is a key observable fact in modern-day employer organization (Oshogbun *et al.*, 2022). Employee concert is the capability of a worker to reap a designated challenge measured aligned with prearranged standards of accurateness, totality, and cost, in addition to speed (Sendawula *et al.*, 2018). Employee performance can be viewed as an individual capability to attain both organizational goals with satisfying customers by converting accessible resources into precious as well as enviable output. It is on this note that several attempts are made towards the improvement of a worker's performance by way of organizational managers and scholars by the use of

one-of-a-kind techniques. Obiajulu and Obi (2004) affirmed that a few students have articulated many exceptional management strategies that would help to enhance the overall recital of the personnel and one of these strategies is management by goals.

MBO is one of the techniques accessible to managers who crave to promote firms' competitiveness and enhance employee overall performance. Management by objective is now used all around the international sphere. In spite of its extensive use, it is not continually glaring what administration by objective entails. Some scholars recognize it as an assessment tool at the same time as others see it as a motivational method along with still others see it as a planning and manipulation tool. Management by objective is a management mode wherein superiors and subordinate delegate critical area of duty in the company, set some guidelines for exceptional or best performance and then measure results in opposition to those norms. As a consequence, it is a modus operandi of management framework or strategy wherein an organization's managers and subordinates agree on the business's huge intention, translate that goal into a sequence of specific short-term

goals, define every people huge area of duty as far as predicted results and constantly overview the accomplishment as the only basis of assessing and worthwhile them. Sadiya (2019) affirmed that managers and employees concur on organizational goals with stay alert and devoted to accomplishing them.

However, (Oshogbunu *et al.*, 2022) reiterated that employees are the essential gizmo a manager has in locale and achieving futuristic goals, also in order to realize results by this means, the manager must: first, be competent to instill in the workers a sense of accountability and want to add to organizational goals; second, have the choice to embed in the workers a sense of vital liability and want to add to organizational goals; and third, have the alternative to inform on the specialists a sensation of indispensable task and covet to add to organizational goals. Also, managers must express and manage the activities of the specialists in the direction of the accomplishment of the aim, as well as a must aid their subordinate in budding their abilities so they may make better assistance. Nevertheless, the problems with Management by Objective (MBO) include but not limited to the inability to set specific goals, the breakdown of joint control, the lack of support from top management, the resentful attitude of subordinates, the difficulty of quantifying goals and objectives, the lengthy and expensive process, the emphasis on short-term goals, and the lack of adequate skills and training that would improve employee's performance.

Many manufacturing firms are seeing the company's goals as challenging as a result of increased employee mobility. Some manufacturing firms have put their awareness on top management, ignoring or fading to include lower-level personnel in business strategies and goals. Because of the absence of information, interpretation, and development of such goals and plans, low company productivity and low work efficiency have resulted. The lack of correct use of management strategies, as well as the failure to include lower-level staff in goal development, is a challenge that most manufacturing firms face. Additionally, some manufacturing firms are also finding it difficult to meet their corporate objectives due to their inability to fully employ their people resources. More regrettably, most works fail to meet expectations in their task because they are kept in the dark. The workers are unsure of what their employers expect of them; at the end of the day, they are unaware of the expected modifications in their attitude and actions that are required to match their superiors' expectations. The outcome is undeniably the issue of low workers efficiency and company productivity and most firms have been found not to adopt the concept under study.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

A. Concept of Management by Objectives

Submit your manuscript electronically for review. Sadiya (2019) opines that Management by objective (MBO) is a tool where the directors of an association concertedly agree with their inferiors on the pretensions of the association; set targets, follow the targets, examiner and also estimate the targets. Maiti (2020) defines MBO as an operation practice which aims to increase organizational overall performance by

means of clearly defining the dreams and inferior targets of the association, which might be agreed by both managers and employees. Management by objective is a cooperative approach in which the administrator and each inferior set the inferiors objects together (Oshogbunu *et al.*, 2022). Akrani (2010) observed that the MBO gospel is veritably much like the planning conception, since both suppose that objects have been connected, and set out to attain them by planned action.

MBO is a cooperative process whereby the director and every inferior together determine targets for that inferior to achieve success. MBO programs should include fidelity and participation inside the MBO process in any respect, from top operation to the smallest position in the association (Okolocha, 2020). MBO begins when the administrator explains the pretensions for the department in a meeting (Felix, 2018). The inferior takes the pretensions and proposes objects for his or her particular job. The administrator meets with the inferior to authorize and, if necessary, modify the separate objects. Revision of the existent's objects is fulfilled through concession since the administrator has coffers to help the inferior commit to the achievement of the ideal. Therefore, a set of empirical pretensions for each person is concertedly determined, prioritized, and homogenized (Okolocha, 2020).

B. Participation and Employee Retention

Employee participation is the process whereby workers are involved in decision timber procedures, preferably than simply acting on orders. Participation is the act of one taking part in commodity that affects him her in one way or the other. Therefore, participation is the process whereby workers are involved in decision- making processes (Okolocha, 2020). Employee participation entails a cooperative trouble between the operation and the inferior in terms of creating pretensions, determining how to achieve them, and determining how to estimate performance and results (Dubrin, 2010). Employee participation in decisions varies from one business enterprise to another because of either is high position, moderate position or low position. Participation does not stop when directors have established the pretensions, acting along with their inferiors; rather, it extends further to the participated task of specifying liabilities, assigning authority for negotiating the objects, and constantly covering performance. Al- Noah (2011) posits that participation is a special form of delegation in which the inferior gain less control, freedom of choice with respect to bridging the communication gap between the association and workers.

Employee retention is an attempt by an association to make sure that its workers stay in their use posts, for a good period of time indeed upon the end of the employment contract or upon employee's retirement (Budu, 2016). Retention of workers is still one most essential concern for a company's moment and despite the fact that hiring professed workers for the job is pivotal for employers, retention is more imperative (Nyanjom, 2013). Management by objective points not only to attract workers but also to retain them in the company. Korir and Kipkebut (2016) posit that the management by objective system of a company is designed to attract and retain the right workers to ensure that there's an immediate courting between objects and sweats by way of taking

visionary approach to broaden an effective hand retention program, the anxiety of high development can be reduced. True employee retention takes time, effort and resources (Nyanjom, 2013). Empirical substantiation suggests that the terrain of a well- defined organizational goals and objectives influence employee retention (Budu, 2016). Grounded on these conversations, the following hypothesis has been developed:

Ho1: Participation has no significant influence on employee retention among manufacturing firms in Anambra State.

C. Goal Setting and Employee Job Satisfaction

Sides & Cuevas (2020) sees goal setting as a process by which pretensions are achieved, a process of relating specific accomplishment to be made in a specific area with measurable issues, similar to conduct and timelines for achievement. Goal setting is the process of planning and setting parameters for the accomplishment of clear, rational, and grueling outgrowth statements that are specific, measurable, attainable, applicable, and time-bound to the overall charge or objects of associations, groups or individualities. Ogbeiwi (2018) averred that numerous types of goals are discerned independently according to their different parcels of dimension, thing-setting approach, cognition, localization, target, and clarity, and also according to their purpose. The benefits of goal setting have been stressed by numerous researchers (George, 2015) who agree that goal setting help define the purpose for which associations are established; as similar it leads to increased productivity, ensures clarity in decision-making, provides motivation, sparks planning, grows associations, encourages study, has an energizing and a continuity effect on those for whom the goals are set, and helps to control the future direction or activities of an organization.

Job satisfaction plays a pivotal part in determining workers' effectiveness and always, organizational overall performance. It's the degree to which a worker acts appreciatively or negatively in his or her plant (Reddy & Madhav, 2018). It also encompasses several factors similar as the nature of the job, payment or payment, position of stress, working terrain, platoon members, elders and workload (Madanat & Khasawneh, 2018). Job satisfaction can be affected by a person's capability to perform the needed tasks, the position of communication within the company, as well as the operation of workers. Job satisfaction improves workers effectiveness as well as promotes workshop productivity in achieving organizational objectives that ameliorate organizational effectiveness (Mamdani & Minhaj, 2016). Decreasingly, associations are realizing that to take advantage of hand satisfaction, they must establish a fair balance between the hand's donation to the company and the company's donation to the hand (Turinawe, 2011). Pratheepkanth (2011) explains that workers cannot be satisfied with their jobs unless they're motivated by the effective operation of objects. Linz & Semykina (2012) stated that job satisfaction is told by the significance of the work objects and the adequacy of supervision. Based on these discussions, the following hypothesis has been developed:

Ho2: There is no significant relationship between goal setting and employee job satisfaction among manufacturing

firms in Anambra State.

D. Feedback and Employee Commitment

Goal setting and performance feedback go hand in hand. Without feedback, goal setting is not effective (Latham and Locke, 2006). Therefore, in addition to opting for the right goals, managers should also hear feedback, so that they can gauge how well the team is progressing. Feedback provides an opportunity to clarify people's prospects and acclimate the difficulty of their goals. Keep in mind that feedback does not have to come from other people. Furnishing feedback on the effectiveness of task strategies can overcome this effect (Brimah, Bamidele, Rabi, John, 2020). Reliable and quantifiable feedback are critical factors of an effective worker evaluation process. Workers seek information not only on the design given but also on their cooperative sweats in completing colorful liabilities managed by several associations. This would give a comprehensive picture of employee performance, challenging the use of 360- degree feedback. Workers should admit dependable performance feedback on all aspects of their tasks and benefactions to the association from their managers, associates, and workers, among others (Vuong, & Nguyen, 2022).

Employee commitment is a veritably important asset to the organization. Employee commitment is the loyalty and attachment that workers have to a company and is associated with their passions about the institution. It implies the dedication of workers and the willingness to make an effort on behalf of the company (Armstrong & Taylor, 2014). Ihionkhan and Aigbomian (2014) observed that organizations need committed workers effectively and efficiently so that they can achieve their objectives. Employee commitment has to do with the position of commitment, loyalty and sacrifice that workers are willing to do for the good of the organization where they work. Korir and Kipkebut (2016) refocused that the applicable timely and effective operation improves employee motivation which in turn leads to a better commitment, as well as the achievement of the firm's goals. Based on these discussions, the following hypothesis has been developed:

HO3: Feedback has no significant relationship with employee commitment among manufacturing firms in Anambra State.

E. Empirical Review

Okolocha (2020) investigates the effect of management by objective (MBO) on commercial bank productivity in Nigeria. The study adopted a survey research design. The study's population consists of seven (7) commercial banks in Onitsha, Anambra State, Nigeria. Two hypotheses were tested using the least square method. The research found that employee participation has a useful impact on organizational productivity, although it is not statistically significant for commercial banks in Nigeria at the 5% of importance additionally at the same time as worker reimbursement has a beneficial impact on organizational productiveness, it is not genuinely critical in Nigerian commercial banks at the 5% level of significance. The study advocated that management should often reward the achievements of its employees.

Islami *et al.* (2018) examined the effect of management by objective as a performance appraisal tool for employee satisfaction. This study discusses the significance of applying

management by objective (MBO) system, as a system for performance appraisal (PA) in enhancing workers effectiveness. A structured questionnaire was used for data collection. The study tried 172 workers from 13 enterprises operating in Kosovo. Tests were done using independent sample t-test, ANOVA, Pearson correlation. The study found that MBO ought to be used as a method of performance appraisal because the labour force effectiveness is enhanced. The study also set up that individual workers' performance evaluation and a clear description of results are the major parameters from all the other conditioning of MBO system.

Sadiya (2019) explored the nexus between the objectives by workers and managers on one hand and workers' productivity on the other hand in Vodafone Ghana. An aggregate of 50 workers constitutes the population of the study. 36 workers responded to the questionnaires and interviews granted, which serve as the sample size. Questionnaires were used as an instrument for data collection. The result shows that the relationship between the managers and workers in objective setting was seen to be pivotal in the results of both the workers and the company.

Felix (2018) examined management by objective (MBO) as an instrument for organizational performance of deposit money banks in Nigeria, Yola metropolis. Data for the study was sourced using structured questionnaires administered to named deposit money banks. The population for this study comprises of two hundred and five (205) permanent and contract staff of the bank and a sample size of one hundred and thirty-five (135) were determined using Taro Yamane formulae. Correlation measures were used to test the hypotheses. The study shows that involvement of workers in goal settings (GS), delegation of authority to the workers (DA), and motivation to the workers (M) were appreciatively affecting company productivity of the deposit money banks in Yola metropolis.

Brimah *et al.* (2020) conducted an exploration on the relationship between management by objective and organizational performance in Tuyil pharmaceutical company Ilorin, Nigeria. The population of the study consists of nine hundred and ten (910) respondents of Tuyil pharmaceutical limited, Ilorin. A sample of two hundred and forty-two (242) was drawn out using Guilford and Flusher (1973) formulae. The analysis of the survey was performed using descriptive statistics and analysis of variance (ANOVA). The result of the study verified that the operation of the principles of management by objective is related to the effectiveness of the company.

Nwite (2016) examined the principals' application of management by objective in the administration of schools in Ebonyi State, Nigeria. The study employed a descriptive survey research design. Two hundred and four (204) principals in the schools were sampled. Data was collected using a structured questionnaire. Data collected was presented using mean and standard deviation while a t-test was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 alpha level. The result showed that there was no significant difference in the mean ratings between the male and female principals in the application of management by objective in schools. Secondly, there was a significant difference between the mean ratings of urban and rural principals in favour of the urban principals.

Idoko *et al.* (2022) evaluated the effect of management by

objectives (MBO) on the employee performance of Union Bank Plc. in Enugu metropolis. One hundred and sixty-five (165) senior and junior staff of the Union banks in Enugu metropolis constitutes the studied population. The study employed descriptive survey design. A structured questionnaire was administered and a total of one hundred and fifty-three (153) staff returned the questionnaire. The validity of the instrument was tested using content analysis. The reliability of the instrument was tested with a coefficient of 0.78. Data were presented and analyzed by mean score and Z – the test was used to test the hypotheses respectively. Joint control had a positive effect on the employee commitment of Union Bank Plc in Enugu metropolis (Z-value ranges from 3.961<6.932). Setting specific goals had a positive effect on the employee punctuality to work of Union Bank Plc in Enugu metropolis (Z-value ranges from 3.961<6.932). The study concluded that joint control and setting specific goals had a positive effect on employee commitment and punctuality of workers.

Oshogbunu *et al.* (2022) examined management by objective as an instrument for perfecting organizational productivity. The study used participation, goal setting, and performance appraisal to putrefy the construct management by objective and the dependent variable organizational productivity was proxy using market share and profitability. This study was conducted using the qualitative approach frame which includes the review of affiliated literatures in respect to the content using journals, handbooks, and other affiliated documents. From the discussion of findings, it was concluded that for any firm to be productive and achieve sustained success, it must continuously encourage management by objective since it's veritably essential in attaining and sustaining organizational productivity. The study recommended among others that directors should involve workers in setting and relating short and long- term departmental goals.

Management by objective as a tool for organizational performance was delved by Shonubi and Sodipo (2019). A descriptive check exploration design was used. An aggregate of eleven thousand, two hundred and twenty- six (11,226) formed the population of the study. The sample size of 388 was determined using Taro Yamane's formula. Cronbach's alpha measure was used to confirm the reliability of the instrument. An aggregate of 388 questionnaires were distributed with a response rate of 79.6%. The data formulated were tested using regression analysis. The findings revealed that there is a significant impact of management by objective on organizational performance. The study recommended that managers should encourage employee participation in the setting of organizational goal to encourage workers' commitment, satisfaction and performance and regular performance appraisal and feedback should be put in place which in turn leads to lesser organizational performance.

III. METHODS

The survey research design was used to conduct the research. This design is convenient and cost-effective compared to other designs. The population of the study consists of manufacturing firms in Anambra State. The

population of the research stood at three hundred and thirty three (333) workers. A sample size of one hundred and eighty two (182) workers arrived at using Taro Yamane formula. The researcher used structured questionnaire as method of data collection. The instrument applied to collect data for the study was subjected to content and face validity by the researcher. The reliability of the instrument was tested using Cronbach Alpha. The table 1 below indicated alpha coefficients for participation, goal setting, employee feedback, employee retention, employee satisfaction, and employee commitment as 0.824, 0.777, 0.780, 0.867, 0.879, and 0.880, respectively. A coefficient of 0.7 and above means that the instrument is reliable and is consistent enough to be used for the study.

Data analysis was through the use of Pearson's product moment correlation coefficient and linear regression. This is because the objective was to determine the type of relationship and also the magnitude of relationship existing between studied variables. Pearson correlation was used to test hypothesis two while linear regression was used to test hypotheses one and three.

TABLE I: RELIABILITY ANALYSIS

Variable	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Participation	4	0.824
Goals setting	4	0.777
Feedback	5	0.780
Employee Retention	5	0.867
Employee Job Satisfaction	5	0.879
Employee Commitment	5	0.880

IV. STATISTICAL ANALYSIS, RESULTS, AND INTERPRETATION

A. Hypothesis One

Ho1: Participation has no significant influence on employee retention among manufacturing firms in Anambra State.

TABLE II: THE EXTENT TO WHICH PARTICIPATION INFLUENCE EMPLOYEE RETENTION

Variable	Beta	t-value	R square	F-value	Sig
(Constant)		5.263			0.000
Participation	0.651	10.357	0.424	107.272	0.000

Dependent Variable: Employee Retention.

The influence of employee participation on employee retention was tested using linear regression. The result established that participation of workers exerts moderate influence on employee retention among manufacturing enterprises in Anambra State, Nigeria ($\beta=0.65$, $t=10.36$, $r^2=.424$, $F=107.272$, $p<.01$). Therefore, the null thesis was rejected. The research established that employee participation was an important predictor of retention of employees among manufacturing firms in Anambra State. The result suggested that 42% change in employee retention was associated with proportionate change in the employee participation in decision making. This explains that employees who make remarkable contributions to manufacturing firms in Anambra State tend to remain in the company for a relatively long time.

The result is in line with previous studies (Okolocha, 2020; Shonubi & Sodipo, 2019; Felix, 2018). The scholars' findings according to Okolocha (2020) revealed that employee

participation has a significant effect on the productivity of commercial banks in Onitsha, Anambra State. Shonubi & Sodipo (2019) ascertained that employee participation influenced organizational performance. Felix (2018) found that delegation of authority to the employees positively influenced the organizational performance of the deposit money banks in Yola metropolis.

B. Hypothesis Two

HO2: There is no significant relationship between goal setting and employee job satisfaction among manufacturing firms in Anambra State.

TABLE III: RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN GOAL SETTING AND EMPLOYEE JOB SATISFACTION CORRELATIONS

		Correlations	
		Goal Setting	Employee Satisfaction
Goal Setting	Pearson Correlation	1	0.859**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.000
	N	182	182
Employee Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	0.859**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	
	N	182	182

The relationship between goal setting and employee job satisfaction was examined using Pearson product moment correlation coefficient. The result established a positive, statistical correlation between goal setting and employee job satisfaction, $r=0.859$, $n=148$, $p<0.01$. Consequently, the null hypothesis was rejected. The result suggested that the higher management of manufacturing firms involve employees in goal setting, the more likely they show high level of job satisfaction. This implies that goal setting contributes to employee job satisfaction.

This result agrees with those of Idoko *et al.* (2022), Oshogbunu *et al.* (2022), Brimah *et al.* (2020), Shonubi and Sodipo (2019), Sadiya (2019), and Felix (2018). Idoko *et al.* (2022) established that setting specific goals had positive effect on the employee's punctuality to work among union bank staff in Enugu metropolis. Oshogbunu, et al. (2022) ascertained that goal setting influenced organizational productivity. Brimah *et al.* (2020) also found that management of objectives improves performance of Tuyil pharmaceutical company Ilorin, Nigeria. Shonubi and Sodipo (2019) findings also revealed that goal setting influenced employee job satisfaction in Guaranty Trust Bank Plc.

C. Hypothesis Three

Ho3: Feedback has no significant relationship with employee commitment among manufacturing firms in Anambra State.

TABLE IV: THE EXTENT TO WHICH FEEDBACK INFLUENCE EMPLOYEE COMMITMENT

Variable	Beta	t value	R square	F value	Sig
(Constant)		6.888			0.000
Feedback	0.763	14.241	0.581	202.815	0.000

Dependent Variable: Employee Retention.

The influence of employee feedback on employee commitment was studied using linear regression. The result

indicated that employee feedback exerts moderate statistical influence on employee commitment in manufacturing firms in Anambra State. ($\beta=0.76$, $t=14.24$, $r^2=.581$, $F=202.815$, $p<.01$). Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected. This research showed that employee feedback was a key predictor of their commitment to manufacturing firms. The result suggested that 58% change in employee commitment was related to a proportionate change in employee feedback. This means that feedback from employees enhances their commitment to the company. This result was similar to some previous studies (for example, Islami, et al. 2018). Islami *et al.* (2018) found that there is a relationship between employees' commitment and employees' performance in Kosovo.

V. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Every organization aims at achieving its stated objectives. This is usually accomplished through increasing employee performance. The plentiful administrative lapses create positive results or work on the valuable result of relations, there has been a need to foster a secure administrative instrument that will not just improve employee performance, but also increase organizational productivity. Therefore, this study concluded that there is a significant positive relationship between management by objective and employee performance among manufacturing firms in Anambra State.

On the basis of the research findings, the following recommendations were made:

1. Management of manufacturing firms needs to engage employees more in its activities so as to dissuade them from leaving the company.
2. The management needs to incorporate employee contributions when setting the firm's goals to boost employee confidence and to achieve job satisfaction.
3. Management needs to increase feedback mechanism in order to ensure more commitment from employees.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Authors declare that they do not have any conflict of interest.

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