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ALGORITHM FOR RESOLVING CONFLICTS WITH CLIENTS BY MANAGERS OF ARCHITECTURAL AND CONSTRUCTION COMPANIES

The study is devoted to the development of an effective algorithm for resolving conflicts with clients for managers of architectural and construction companies. The relevance of the topic is that the ability to manage conflict situations is a key success factor in the construction industry, where disputes between contractors and clients are common. The authors identify the main types of conflict that managers of architectural and construction companies may face, including conflicts over changes to project documentation, delays in completing work, problems with the quality of materials or workmanship, misunderstandings about the budget, communication barriers and differing expectations. These situations can significantly affect the financial performance of the organisation, the project schedule and the internal atmosphere within the team. The authors propose a structured algorithm consisting of six stages to resolve such conflicts: 1) Conflict identification – assessment of the situation, identification of the causes of the conflict and gathering of information from all parties. 2) Situation analysis – identification of the main interests and needs of the client, assessment of the possible consequences of the conflict. 3) Communication – organisation of a meeting with the client, use of active listening to identify emotions and needs. 4) Finding and choosing optimal solutions – generating problem-solving options with the client, assessing opportunities and compromise solutions. 5) Solution implementation – development of an action plan for the implementation of the agreed solution, identification of responsible people and deadlines. 6) Monitoring, evaluation and documentation – systematic monitoring of the

implementation of the solution, assessing customer satisfaction, recording all discussions and decisions. The authors emphasise that the application of this algorithm can lead to an increase in customer satisfaction, a guarantee of timely project implementation and an improvement in the financial performance of the company. Furthermore, effective conflict management helps build positive internal team communication. The study also highlights the importance of developing the competencies and applied skills needed for conflict resolution, such as active listening, negotiation, emotional intelligence and stress management. These are critical to making the proposed algorithm work. Overall, this study offers a comprehensive approach to client conflict management that can be used by architectural and construction managers to improve their efficiency and competitive position in the marketplace.

Keywords: conflicts, clients, architectural and construction managers, conflict resolution algorithm, stress management, active listening, negotiating, emotional intelligence.

Problem statement. There are several key factors that directly affect the efficiency of project management and the overall competitiveness of the company that make it relevant for the manager of an architectural and construction company to study the algorithm for resolving conflicts with clients.

Firstly, the construction industry is characterised by a high level of uncertainty and risk, which often leads to conflicts between the contractor and the client. This can be due to various factors, such as changes in project documentation, delays in work schedules, problems with material quality or work performance. The ability to resolve conflicts effectively becomes an important aspect of maintaining long-term client relationships and ensuring successful project delivery in an environment of fierce competition and high client expectations.

Secondly, conflicts with clients can have a significant impact on the financial performance of a company. Significant financial losses can result from delays in project delivery, penalties for breach of contract and the potential loss of customers due to dissatisfaction. Developing and implementing clear algorithms for effective conflict resolution is therefore a prerequisite for ensuring the financial stability and development of the company.

Thirdly, team communication and morale can be improved through effective conflict management. Conflicts, if unresolved, can have a negative impact on work productivity and therefore on project delivery. An algorithm that includes the stages of identifying, analysing, communicating and monitoring will help managers not only to respond quickly to problems, but also to create a positive team atmosphere.

Therefore, in order to improve the efficiency of project management in an architecture and construction company, ensure customer satisfaction, maintain financial stability and improve internal communication, the study of conflict resolution algorithms is relevant and important. The development of effective conflict management strategies is becoming increasingly important in today's market, where responsiveness and quality of customer service are critical success factors.

Analysis of recent research and publications. In the works of Ukrainian and foreign scientists various aspects of this problem have been studied and presented, e.g: O. Danchenko, V. Zanora [1]; N. Skopenko, O. Dragan [2]; I. Oliynyk [3]; O. Khilukha [4]; O. Garafonova, D. Kozlovsky, V. Sharov [5]; O. Soroka, O. Bliznyuk [6]; O. Karmaza, T. Fedorenko, D. Pozov [7]; Z. Ohorodniychuk, E. Vybornova [8]; N. Hrytsenko [9]; V. Rovenska, I. Smyrnova, O. Latysheva [10]; V. Rozheluk [11]; Y. Gerasymenko, V. Mazur [12]; P. Voloshchuk, I. Bashynskyi [13]; N. Yurchuk [14].

The purpose of the research is to develop an effective algorithm for solving conflicts with clients for managers of architectural and construction companies. The algorithm will help to improve the quality of customer service, ensure timely implementation of projects and maintain positive business relations.

Presentation of the main research material. During the implementation of a project, managers of architectural and construction companies can be confronted with various types of conflicts [1]. Here are a few examples of the most common conflicts:

1. Conflicts caused by changes in the project. Example: The client decides to make changes to the project during the construction phase, for example by changing the layout of the rooms or the material requirements. This can delay the work, increase costs and require re-approval by the contractors.

2. Deadline related problems. Example: A manager receives a complaint from a client that the work is taking too long to be completed. Delays in the supply of materials or weather conditions may be the cause. The client may be dissatisfied and be in need of an explanation or compensation.

3. Conflicts over quality. Example: The client discovers defects in the quality of the work (e.g. uneven walls or problems with the electrical wiring) after the construction phase has been completed. The client may demand, causing additional cost and delay, that the defects be corrected.

4. Budget misunderstandings. Example: The client believes that the total cost of the project should not exceed a certain amount. However, during the course of the project, additional costs are discovered of which the client was not informed. This can cause a conflict over payment.

5. Communication conflicts. Example: A manager fails to keep the client informed of project progress, causing the client to become concerned and suspicious. The client may have doubts about the company's professionalism and request a meeting to discuss the situation.

6. Differing expectations. Example: The client has certain expectations regarding the design or functionality of the facility. These were not clearly articulated at the time the contract was signed. This can be a source of conflict if the actual result is not in line with the client's expectations.

7. Interaction with contractors. Example: A client may be dissatisfied with a contractor's performance on a project. If the manager is unable or unwilling to change the contractor, this may lead to a conflict between the manager and the client.

These examples illustrate the wide variety of conflicts that a manager of an architectural and construction company may be faced with. In order to maintain long-term relationships with clients and successfully deliver projects, the use of effective conflict resolution strategies is essential.

The algorithm for solving conflicts with clients for the manager of an architectural and construction company may include the following stages [1–4]:

1. Conflict identification:
– assess the situation and identify the reasons for the conflict;
– gather information from all parties to understand what is at stake.

2. Situation analysis:
– identify the client's main interests and needs;
– assess the conflict's potential impact on the project and business.

3. Communication:
– arrange a meeting with the client to discuss the situation;
– use active listening to identify how the client feels and needs.

4. Finding and choosing optimal solutions:
– generate options for the solution of the problem together with the client;
– evaluate options and trade-offs;
– choose the most acceptable alternative;
– clarify the details and terms of implementation.

5. Solution implementation:
– develop the agreed solution action plan;
– identify responsible parties and deadlines.

6. Monitoring, evaluation and documentation:
– systematically monitor the solution implementation;
– assess customer satisfaction and make adjustments if necessary;
– keep a record of all discussions, decisions and changes in the documentation;
– produce a conflict resolution report for future analysis.

This algorithm will help the manager to resolve conflicts in an effective way, to maintain good relations with the client and to ensure the successful completion of the projects.

Let us take a closer look at each of these stages.

Conflict identification is the first stage. Identifying that a conflict exists is key to managing a successful project. In order to identify conflict situations in time, a manager needs to pay close attention to various signs, such as emotional reactions from participants, changes in communication or delays in completing tasks. In addition, it is important to do a context analysis in order to understand the conditions under which the conflict arose. For example, whether it was about deadlines, work quality or project changes. The manager should carefully analyse all aspects of the parties' interaction, such as unspoken words, unfulfilled promises, lack of communication, etc., in order to identify the key issues that may have caused the conflict. One of the most important steps in successful project management is the prevention and early identification of conflicts [5].

The identification of the causes of conflict is an important step in the resolution of disputes and the improvement of the interaction between the parties. In order to do this, the manager needs to carry out a thorough analysis and identify the root causes of the conflict [6]. First, it is important to have interaction with the client and have an open discussion where the parties can express their views and feelings. You can get more information from the client and better understand the situation from their point of view by asking open-ended questions. Next, it is important to identify the client's needs and expectations. Make sure that these are in line with reality and the terms of the agreement. For example, the customer may have expectations of a more rapid completion of the project or a higher quality of work than previously agreed. In addition, studying the history of interaction with the client can help to identify previous situations of conflict or misunderstanding. This can help to avoid them in the future and strengthen the cooperation between the parties. In order to improve interaction and achieve successful project outcomes, careful analysis and identification of the causes of conflict is an important step.

An important step in conflict resolution and effective project management is to gather information from all parties. In order to gather comprehensive information, the project manager should consult with those members of the team who have direct experience of the project. They can provide valuable insight into technical issues, potential delays or other problems encountered during the work. In addition, it is important to have a collection of all relevant documents such as contracts, correspondence, progress reports, etc. This will help you to understand exactly where the misunderstandings have arisen and what steps are necessary for their resolution. It is also important to monitor how the customer reacts throughout the whole process of communicating. This will help to identify which aspects are most sensitive to the client and will help to determine the right course of action for conflict resolution. Gathering information from all those involved is a key element of successful project management and resolving conflict [7].

The formulation of preliminary conclusions is an important step in the process of conflict resolution and in the preparation of further action. The manager should formulate detailed preliminary conclusions about the causes of the conflict, its scope and important aspects to be considered in further resolving the situation, after analysing all the information gathered. In addition, it is necessary to prepare for the next stage of the process by identifying the key issues that need to be discussed with the client at the next meeting. This approach will enable you to draw up a plan of action for the establishment of a constructive dialogue and the achievement of mutual understanding between the parties. The correct

formulation of the preliminary conclusions will be of great assistance in the further course of the negotiations and in the successful resolution of the conflict situation.

The second phase is situation analysis. The manager's main objective is to identify the client's main interests and needs in connection with further analysis of the situation. At this stage, there is a need for careful consideration of what the client's top priority is in a given situation. Issues such as deadlines, quality of work, financial issues and specific project requirements need to be considered. For example, the client may be in a cost-cutting mode or may have a requirement for the project to be completed as quickly as possible.

In addition, actively listening to the client, asking reasonable questions and clarifying information are all part of a successful needs assessment. The result is a clear understanding of the customer's expectations and needs. The manager can then tailor his proposals and decisions to these specific aspects once he has information about the client's main interests.

At the same time, it is equally important to understand the client's emotions. The emotional background can also influence the conflict situation [8]. Conflicts often arise not only for practical reasons, but also because of parties' emotional reactions. It can be useful in further conflict resolution to identify the client's feelings.

The possible consequences of the conflict for the project and the organisation should be assessed in the second stage of the analysis. First of all, the manager should identify the potential risks that could arise if the conflict were to escalate any further. These could include delaying the project, increasing costs, damaging the company's reputation or even losing customers.

The next step is a detailed analysis of the impact that the conflict may have on the different phases of the project. For example, there may be a delay in the completion of the project and a possible audit of the work if the client is not satisfied with the quality of the work performed.

The far-reaching effects of the conflict can also affect the company as a whole. It can have a serious impact on team morale, relationships with partners and the company's financial results [9]. For example, the company's financial position may be affected by the termination of a contract with a client. In order to minimise the negative consequences of the conflict, the manager should develop response strategies. These may include proposals for compromises, adjustments to the project plan, or additional meetings with the client to discuss the situation.

The third step is communication. An important role in resolving the situation is played by successful communication with the client at key moments in the conflict [10]. Before meeting, the manager should carefully consider the format of the meeting, taking into account the circumstances involved. It is important to create a comfortable atmosphere for a positive discussion, whether it is a face-to-face meeting, a video conference or a telephone call. Preparing for the meeting plays a key role in resolving the conflict. The manager should gather all the necessary documents, reports and previous communications with the customer or client. This will help to present the information in a meaningful way and to feel comfortable answering any questions raised. Setting an agenda that clearly defines the purpose of the meeting and the key issues to be discussed is important. This will help to avoid unnecessary topics and will keep the focus on the resolution of the specific conflict. It plays an important role in the client's perception to create a positive atmosphere at the beginning of the meeting. It is important that the customer has a sense of importance and a sense of the manager's willingness to listen and understand their point of view.

It should be noted that active listening is a key element in successfully communicating with a client during a conflict. In order to identify the client's feelings and needs, a manager should use a variety of techniques. For example, attentive and interested listening will show the client that he or she is important, and paraphrasing the client's words will confirm your understanding of his or her position. Asking clarifying questions is also a way of gaining a more in-depth understanding of the client's needs and concerns.

It is also important to be sensitive to the client's emotions. This means paying attention to non-verbal cues and acknowledging the client's feelings. This creates an atmosphere of trust and confidence and is part of the process of building a positive relationship with the client. The manager can find more effective solutions by understanding the client's hidden needs as well as the obvious ones. An important element of successful conflict resolution is establishing trust and empathy when communicating with a client.

This stage of communication plays a crucial role in establishing a positive relationship with the client, in understanding the client's needs and in resolving the conflict in a constructive manner. Effective communication is the basis for co-operation and successful conflict resolution.

Finding and selecting optimal solutions is the fourth stage. To find solutions to the problem together with the client, the manager can use a variety of methods. One of these is a brainstorming session where the focus is on active idea generation and identification of new innovative approaches [11]. It is important to create an open environment. The client should feel comfortable expressing his or her thoughts.

The manager should also consider different strategies for solving the problem and suggest possible options, which may include changes in timing, budget or approach to tasks. It is important to have a detailed discussion with the client about the advantages and disadvantages of each option. The manager should listen carefully to the client and take their suggestions and concerns into account when generating solution options. This will help to produce more relevant options that meet the needs and reflect where both parties stand.

Once the options have been generated, the manager should analyse each of them in terms of feasibility, cost and time. The most effective and feasible solu-

tions should be identified together with the client. It is also important to have in mind possible compromise solutions that are in the best interests of both parties. This may involve adapting the idea or changing how the project gets implemented. During this process, it is necessary to have a discussion with the client about all the possible risks and consequences of the choice of solutions.

The manager should be an active promoter of consensus with the client [12]. This means trying to find a solution that is acceptable to both of them, taking into account the priorities they share. To ensure that the new terms are followed, it is important to put the solution in writing.

Going one step further, the manager should develop a detailed action plan. This should include specific steps to implement the decision. It is important to have a clear understanding of the terms and conditions of implementation, including financial aspects, deadlines and quality control mechanisms. Regular review and flexible adaptation of the action plan will help to ensure that the solution is implemented successfully and that the shared goals and objectives are met.

This stage is important for the development of a partnership with the client and for the achievement of a successful solution.

Implementing the solution is the fifth stage. The manager should develop a detailed action plan with structured stages, specific tasks, resource allocation, risk assessment and progress monitoring to implement the agreed solution. It is necessary to clearly assign those responsible for carrying out the tasks, set deadlines, coordinate with the client and establish a system for monitoring progress. Flexibility in implementing the action plan will allow you to adjust the strategy as circumstances change. Implementing the solution effectively will enable you to work with the client to achieve your objectives and ensure successful project outcomes.

The manager should establish a detailed and structured action plan, with clearly defined milestones, specific tasks, resource analysis, risk assessment and a system for monitoring progress, to implement the agreed solution. Ensuring effective implementation of the solution and achieving successful results is the main objective of this phase.

Careful attention should be paid to assigning responsibility for tasks when developing an action plan. To ensure synchronised action and avoid delays in the implementation of work, each team member should clearly understand their responsibilities and interact with others. To ensure that the project is completed on time, it is also necessary to set specific deadlines for each task and to establish a system for monitoring and tracking progress. In addition, you need to actively engage with the client, agreeing deadlines and requirements and providing regular feedback, as the client is a key participant in the implementation process. Flexibility in implementing the action plan is key. As circumstances change, the strategy and timeline may need to be adjusted.

When implementing the solution, it is also important to analyse the risks and develop an action plan to manage them. In this way, potential problems can be avoided and the smooth running of the project can be ensured. Monitoring task execution, identifying problems and resolving them in a timely manner are important components of successful solution deployment.

An evaluation of the results and possible adjustments to the strategy will accompany the completion of the solution implementation [13]. This stage allows you to summarise the results of the project, highlight the successes and therefore plan future projects more effectively. In general, the effective implementation of a solution requires careful planning, clarity of action and a willingness to adapt. This will help to achieve successful results in collaboration with the client and satisfy all project participants.

It is important to ensure systematic control over the implementation of the solution and to assess customer satisfaction in order to make further adjustments if necessary in the sixth stage of project management – monitoring, evaluation and documentation [14]. In order to carry out this stage effectively, the manager should set up regular task reviews, use project management software and monitor key performance indicators (KPIs) to assess performance.

An important part of the solution implementation process is assessing customer satisfaction. The manager can identify areas for improvement and take the necessary action by conducting surveys and analysing the data. Adjustments to the implementation process should be based on this information.

Documentation is a vital part of project management. It helps to preserve important information and ensure future accessibility by recording all discussions, decisions and changes. It will also help the team avoid similar situations in the future and improve project management approaches by producing a conflict resolution report and analysing the results.

Generally, this stage allows you to maintain process transparency, improve client communication, and identify opportunities for continuous improvement. Proper monitoring, evaluation and documentation will help the team resolve problems successfully. It will also improve the quality of project management.

It should be noted that effective conflict management is a critical skill for managers of architectural and construction companies. It requires a combination of skills and techniques that will not only help in the identification and resolution of conflicts, but also in the maintenance of positive relationships with clients. One of the most important skills is active listening, so that you have a better understanding of the client's point of view and emotions. Active listening involves concentrating on what the client is saying, avoiding distraction and showing interest. Paraphrasing is also important. This involves repeating the client's ideas in their own words to confirm understanding, and asking clarifying questions to help clarify the situation and identify hidden needs [15].

Knowing how to negotiate is also important in reaching a compromise. To find mutually beneficial solutions, managers must be able to identify common

interests and focus on shared goals rather than disagreements. They should strategically formulate proposals that take into account the interests of both parties to encourage cooperation. They should use the window of opportunity to determine when to offer a compromise to reduce tension and reach agreement.

Another important element of conflict resolution is compromise strategies. Managers must build trust by creating an atmosphere in which the parties are more open to compromise, and in which there is a willingness to make concessions on the issues at stake. Being willing to concede on non-critical issues helps achieve a shared solution, and prioritising helps you understand which aspects are critical to the client and which can change without significant loss.

In conflict management, emotional intelligence also plays an important role. Managers should have a high level of emotional intelligence. This includes the ability to understand their own emotions, which allows them to control their own reactions to conflict, and to recognise the emotions of others, which helps them adapt their communication style and problem-solving approaches.

Furthermore, stress management is an important aspect of this area. Conflicts can be stressful situations. Managers need to be able to stay calm and control their emotions in stressful situations, which helps them make informed decisions. Stress levels can be reduced by using relaxation techniques such as breathing exercises or taking short breaks.

Combining these skills and techniques enables architectural and construction managers to manage conflict effectively, maintain healthy communication with clients and ensure successful project delivery. Developing these skills is an important aspect of professional growth and ensures that the company remains competitive [16].

The proposed conflict resolution algorithm has a significant impact on the level of client satisfaction, the time taken to complete projects and the financial results of architectural and construction companies. Firstly, by providing a systematic approach to identifying and solving problems that arise during project implementation, the algorithm helps to increase the level of customer satisfaction. Through active listening, negotiation and the development of compromise solutions, managers can respond effectively to client needs and expectations, leading to increased trust and improved relationships.

Secondly, the algorithm has an impact on the timing of projects. A clear structure allows early identification of potential delays and a prompt response to them, including monitoring and control phases. This in turn reduces the risk of delaying work, which has a positive impact on the overall time taken to complete the project. Implementing the algorithm ensures timely execution, which is critical to satisfying customers and meeting contractual obligations.

The third aspect is the impact on the financial results of the company. The costs associated with correcting mistakes and project delays are reduced through high quality conflict management. There is less likelihood of additional costs, such as late fees or rework, when conflicts are resolved quickly and efficiently. In addition, satisfied customers are more likely to become repeat customers, which in turn ensures a steady stream of revenue for the company.

The company's competitiveness can also be improved by implementing the algorithm. High levels of customer satisfaction, positive feedback and referrals will enable the company to attract new customers, which in turn will have an impact on profit growth.

Thus, the impact of the proposed algorithm on the level of customer satisfaction, the time of project implementation and the financial results of the company is complex and interrelated. Effective conflict resolution not only improves the quality of customer service, but also ensures the stable implementation of projects on time. This ultimately leads to an improvement in the financial performance of an architectural and construction company. The results of applying the algorithm can become the basis for developing the company and strengthening its position in the market.

Conclusions. The effective management of conflicts with clients is a key competence for the managers of architectural and construction companies, which has a significant impact on the successful implementation of projects and on the overall performance of the company.

A structured approach to managing conflict situations is provided by the proposed conflict resolution algorithm, which includes the stages of identification, analysis, communication, solution seeking, implementation and monitoring. This algorithm enables managers to interact effectively with clients, to understand their needs and interests, to find solutions that are mutually beneficial and to implement them.

Applying this algorithm has a comprehensive positive impact on an architecture and construction company's activities. Firstly, by systematically solving problems and building trust, it helps to increase client satisfaction. Secondly, by responding promptly to conflict situations, the algorithm helps to ensure timely project delivery. Thirdly, it contributes to the growth of repeat orders from customers by reducing financial losses associated with additional costs and fines.

In general, the implementation of the proposed algorithm for resolving conflicts with clients is an important strategic step for architectural and construction companies, allowing them to increase their competitiveness in the market, strengthen their business reputation and ensure stable financial development. In today's fierce market competition, developing managers' conflict management skills is becoming a key success factor.

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АЛГОРИТМ ВІРІШЕННЯ КОНФЛІКТІВ ЗІ КЛІЄНТАМИ МЕНЕДЖЕРОМ АРХІТЕКТУРНО-БУДІВЕЛЬНОГО ПІДПРИЄМСТВА

Анотація. Дослідження присвячене розробці ефективного алгоритму вирішення конфліктів зі клієнтами для менеджерів архітектурно-будівельних підприємств. Актуальність теми зумовлена тим, що здатність управляти конфліктними ситуаціями є ключовим чинником успіху в галузі будівництва, де часто виникають суперечки між підрядниками та замовниками. Автори визначають основні типи конфліктів, з якими можуть стикатися менеджери архітектурно-будівельних підприємств, зокрема, конфлікти через зміни в проектній документації, затримки у виконанні робіт, проблеми з якістю матеріалів або виконання, непорозуміння щодо бюджету, комунікативні бар'єри та розбіжності в очікуваннях. Ці ситуації можуть суттєво впливати на фінансові результати компанії, терміни реалізації проектів, а також на внутрішній клімат в команді. Для вирішення таких конфліктів автори пропонують структурований алгоритм, що складається з шести етапів: 1) Виявлення конфлікту – оцінка ситуації, визначення причин конфлікту та збір інформації від усіх сторін. 2) Аналіз ситуації – визначення основних інтересів та потреб клієнта, оцінка можливих наслідків конфлікту. 3) Комунікація – організація зустрічі з клієнтом, використання активного слухання для виявлення емоцій та потреб. 4) Пошук і вибір оптимальних рішень – генерація варіантів вирішення проблеми спільно з клієнтом, оцінка можливостей та компромісних рішень. 5) Впровадження рішення – розробка плану дій для реалізації узгодженого рішення, визначення відповідальних осіб та термінів. 6) Моніторинг, оцінка та документування – систематичний контроль за виконанням рішення, оцінка задоволеності клієнта, фіксація всіх обговорень та рішень. Автори наголошують, що застосування цього алгоритму дозволяє підвищити рівень задоволеності клієнтів, забезпечити своєчасне виконання проектів та покращити фінансові результати підприємства. Крім того, ефективне управління конфліктами сприяє налагодженню позитивних внутрішніх комунікацій в команді. Дослідження також акцентує увагу на важливості розвитку у менеджерів компетенцій і прикладних навичок, необхідних для вирішення конфліктів, таких як активне слухання, ведення переговорів, емоційний інтелект та управління стресом. Ці навички є критичними для успішної реалізації запропонованого алгоритму. Загалом, дане дослідження пропонує комплексний підхід до управління конфліктами зі клієнтами, який може бути використаний менеджерами архітектурно-будівельних підприємств для підвищення ефективності своєї діяльності та зміцнення конкурентних позицій на ринку.

Ключові слова: конфлікти, клієнти, менеджер архітектурно-будівельного підприємства, алгоритм вирішення конфліктів, управління стресом, активне слухання, ведення переговорів, емоційний інтелект.