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ORGANISING EFFECTIVE INTERACTION OF MANAGERS OF ARCHITECTURAL AND CONSTRUCTION COMPANIES WITH CLIENTS BASED ON THE THEORY OF NON-VIOLENT COMMUNICATION

ОРГАНІЗАЦІЯ ЕФЕКТИВНОЇ ВЗАЄМОДІЇ МЕНЕДЖЕРІВ АРХІТЕКТУРНО-БУДІВЕЛЬНИХ КОМПАНІЙ З КЛІЄНТАМИ НА ЗАСАДАХ ТЕОРІЇ НЕНАСИЛЬНИЦЬКОГО СПІЛКУВАННЯ

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Based on the theory of non-violent communication, the article deals with the problem of organising effective interaction of managers of architectural and construction companies with clients. The authors emphasise that since clients have high demands and expectations that need to be skilfully taken into account, ensuring quality communication with clients is a key task for modern managers in this field. The article examines the current trends and problems that the managers of architectural and construction companies have to face in the process of interaction with their clients. Key issues include ineffective management of client requirements, failure to meet agreements and deadlines, inadequate communication support and inadequate response to changing client needs. It is noted that an important role in solving these problems is played by the ability of managers to organise high quality communication that gives customers a sense of attention, understanding and trust. The theory of non-violent communication, developed by the psychologist Marshall Rosenberg, is described in some detail. It is a universal model for building effective relationships in many areas of life, based on empathy, acceptance of the other person and compassion. The key components of non-violent communication are analysed, such as non-judgmental observation, distinction between feelings and thoughts, understanding of the client's wishes and the ability to formulate constructive requests.

Examples are given of how to apply these principles in practice when dealing with architectural and construction managers and clients. The importance of using the theory of non-violent communication to build trust, avoid conflict, enhance reputation and achieve positive business results is demonstrated. Specific recommendations, including conducting training, creating internal communication standards, implementing a customer feedback system, and developing active listening and empathy skills, are provided to improve managers' communication practices. An algorithm for effective problem solving is presented, with special attention to the specifics of using non-violent communication when working with clients in conflict.

Key words: non-violent communication, architectural and construction company managers, communication with clients, empathy, mutual understanding, conflicts, business efficiency.

У статті розглядається проблема організації ефективної взаємодії менеджерів архітектурно-будівельних компаній з клієнтами на основі теорії ненасильницького спілкування. Автори наголошують, що забезпечення якісної комунікації з клієнтами є ключовим завданням для сучасних менеджерів у цій галузі, адже клієнти мають високі вимоги та очікування, які необхідно вміло враховувати. Досліджуються сучасні тенденції та проблеми, з якими стикаються менеджери архітектурно-будівельних компаній у процесі взаємодії з клієнтами. Серед основних проблем визначено неефективне управління вимогами клієнтів, недотримання угод та термінів, недостатню підтримку комунікації, а також відсутність адекватного реагування на зміни в потребах клієнтів. Зазначається, що вміння менеджерів організувати якісну комунікацію, забезпечуючи клієнтам відчуття уваги, розуміння та довіри, відіграє важливу роль у вирішенні цих проблем. Детально розкривається теорія ненасильницького спілкування, розроблена психологом Маршаллом Розенбергом. Ця модель базується на емпатії, прийнятті співрозмовника та співчутті, та є універсальною для побудови ефективних стосунків у різних сферах життя. Аналізуються ключові компоненти ненасильницького спілкування, такі як спостереження без оцінювання, розрізнення почуттів та думок, усвідомлення бажань клієнта і вміння формулювати конструктивні прохання. Розглядаються приклади застосування цих принципів у практиці взаємодії менеджерів архітектурно-будівельних компаній з клієнтами. Обґрунтовується важливість використання теорії ненасильницького спілкування для побудови довірливих відносин, уникнення конфліктів, підвищення репутації компанії та досягнення позитивних результатів у бізнесі. Наводяться конкретні рекомендації щодо вдосконалення комунікаційних практик менеджерів, зокрема проведення тренінгів, створення внутрішніх комунікаційних стандартів, впровадження системи зворотного зв'язку з клієнтами, розвиток навичок активного слухання та емпатії. Особливу увагу приділено специфіці застосування ненасильницького спілкування при роботі з конфліктними клієнтами, наведено алгоритм дій для ефективного вирішення проблемних ситуацій.

Ключові слова: ненасильницьке спілкування, менеджери архітектурно-будівельних компаній, комунікація з клієнтами, емпатія, взаєморозуміння, конфлікти, ефективність бізнесу.

Problem statement. Modern managers of architectural and construction companies face a number of challenges and tasks, not the least of which is ensuring effective communication with clients. Clients often have high demands and expectations, which need to be skilfully taken into account and interacted with appropriately. Therefore, in order to achieve mutual understanding and successful outcomes with your clients, it is important to develop non-violent communication skills.

Non-violent communication theory emphasises the importance of empathising, listening and expressing one's own feelings and needs without becoming violent or aggressive. These principles can help build trusting relationships with clients and ensure fruitful and positive communication. The improvement of these skills will help managers of architecture and construction companies to better understand the needs and expectations of their clients and to provide them with a high level of service and satisfaction. This approach can have positive results in terms of an increase in the number

of clients, an improvement in the company's reputation and an increase in revenue.

Therefore, in order to improve relationships with clients and achieve the desired results in their professional activities, non-violent communication skills are becoming critical to the successful performance of architectural and construction company managers.

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: M. Rosenberg [1]; N. Basyuk [2]; O. Selezneva [3]; V. Savchenko, E. Gura [4]; M. Didenko [5]; O. Bryukhovetska [6]; O. Kokun [7]; O. Naboka [8]; V. Pylypchuk, O. Dannikov, O. Savich [9]; A. Yakovlev, L. Lavrentieva [10]; L. Petushkova [11].

For the practice of management of architectural and construction companies this field of research is relevant and important. However, so far, we are not aware of any studies that consider the organisation of communication with clients by managers of these companies based on the theory of non-violent communication.

In order to improve the understanding of communication processes in architectural and construction companies and to develop effective strategies for interacting with clients, it is important to systematise and analyse existing research in this area. In addition, in order to generate new ideas and practical recommendations for improving the quality of communication in this field, it is important to conduct further research based on non-violent communication approaches.

The purpose of the research is to identify and analyse effective ways for managers of architectural and construction companies to organise communication with clients based on the theory of non-violent communication.

The objectives of the study include the following:

- to analyse current trends and problems that arise in the process of interaction between managers of architectural and construction companies and clients;
- to study the theoretical aspects of non-violent communication and how to apply it in professional communication;
- to identify the key principles and strategies for successful communication with clients on the basis of the theory of non-violent communication;
- to develop recommendations for improving client collaboration and achieving positive business outcomes by improving the communication practices of managers in architectural and construction companies.

Presentation of the main research material.

In today's world, managers of architecture and construction companies are confronted with a number of trends that have an impact on their interaction with clients. Increasing competition in the construction services market, which places higher demands on the quality of service and the effectiveness of communication with clients, is one of the most important trends. Ineffective management of client requirements, failure to meet agreements or deadlines, and inadequate support for communication with clients at various stages of the project are among the problems that can arise in the process of interaction between managers and clients. Another problem, which can lead to conflict and dissatisfaction between the parties, is the failure to respond adequately to changes in the client's needs and to problems encountered during project implementation. An important role in this process is also played by the ability of the managers to communicate well with the clients and to ensure that they feel

that they are listened to, understood and trusted. In addition, problems in resolving conflicts and achieving common outcomes can be caused by a lack of competence in negotiating with customers and unprofessionalism. Transparency in the company's operations and mutual openness in communication with customers are also important, as they contribute to the building of long-term relationships and the development of a positive image. Nowadays, taking into account the individual needs and expectations of customers, which allows us to create specialised and personalised solutions for each customer, is a key aspect of successful communication with customers. In the context of sustainable development, it is also important to consider corporate social responsibility and occupational health and safety. This can also be a factor in customer relations. Uncertainty about a company's policy or strategy can also be a source of conflict with clients and damage relationships with them [3; 10]. Therefore, careful analysis of current trends and issues, openness to change and continuous improvement of skills and approaches to communication with clients are needed to improve the interaction of architectural and construction company managers with clients.

Among psychological techniques, the theory of non-violent communication (NVC) occupies a special place. NVC is a communication model developed by the psychologist and inspirational speaker Marshall Rosenberg. This model is based on empathy, acceptance and compassion. It is universal because it can be used successfully to build relationships in different areas of life, including family, friendships, work and political relationships [1].

Understanding and accepting other people, regardless of their behaviour or views, is an important aspect of the theory of non-violent communication. This is supported by empathy, which involves understanding, recognising and accepting the emotional states of another person. Empathy contributes to the development of compassionate and productive relationships, a reduction in conflict and an increase in understanding [4]. The ability to express one's feelings and needs openly and honestly is a central aspect of Rosenberg's theory. Honesty and openness help to build trust with the other person and facilitate effective communication. At the same time, it is important to remember that honesty should not be aggressive, but should have as its goal the building of dialogue and cooperation.

It should be noted that empathy, according to the concept of non-violent communication, is not sympathy or agreement, but one of the main processes of the method, which depends on a skilful internal dialogue or on someone who really knows how to listen with empathy and without judgement. Experts believe that only when a person is open to listening with mind and heart can he or she hear the other side. In other words, he or she has had as much empathy as is necessary for the expression of pain. This is the only way to make an emotional connection [11].

To illustrate the differences between aggressive and compassionate communication, Marshall Rosenberg often used the metaphor of jackal and giraffe puppets in his lectures. The giraffe and the jackal symbolise two opposing ways of communicating and interacting with others. On the one hand, the giraffe embodies the principles of peace, kindness and empathy, which help to build relationships based on universal values. Its behaviour is free of subjective value judgements and is aimed at developing mutual understanding and cooperation. The jackal, on the other hand, is a small animal that is characterised by an egoistic approach to communication. This type of behaviour is based on criticising, judging and blackmailing, leading to conflict and a breakdown in mutual understanding. However, it is important to note that everyone has both Giraffe and Jackal aspects and it is important to recognise and balance them when interacting with others [2]. Learning how to identify and resolve conflicts that may arise from different communication styles is important for successful communication and mutual understanding. Using the principles of non-violent communication, it is important to develop the skills to listen and understand the other party and to respond appropriately to conflict situations.

The quality of service and mutual understanding can be greatly improved by applying the theory of non-violent communication to customer communication. It is important to be empathetic to customers, their needs and feelings, and to be open and honest in your interactions. The result will be an increase in customer satisfaction, as well as the development of long-term, mutually beneficial relationships. Non-violent communication can be an effective tool for conflict resolution and the development of constructive solutions in customer interactions. It promotes the development of skills to take into account the interests of all parties, to cooperate, to listen, and to express one's own feelings and

needs. This helps to professionalise and improve the effectiveness of dealing with customers. The ability to apply the principles of non-violent communication is particularly important for managers of architectural and construction companies in today's world, where interaction with clients plays a crucial role in the success of any business. Only respectful, compassionate and honest communication can build mutual trust and positive relationships with clients, contributing to successful collaboration and the achievement of common goals [12].

Non-violent communication, developed by Marshall Rosenberg, has four main components that contribute to the building of effective and deep relationships with others [1–2].

The first component is non-judgmental observation. This is important to distinguish facts from judgements and prejudices. This means that, without making a judgement about the situation, one talks about an observation that can be concretely recorded. This approach is a way of avoiding conflicts as a result of differences in perception.

In architecture and construction, for example, this principle can be useful when discussing projects with clients. In particular, when analysing the appearance of a building, a manager can point out details and shapes that he or she observes without making any judgements. This can help to avoid conflict and can contribute to a stronger working relationship.

The second component, distinguishing between feeling and thinking, is about being aware of and distinguishing between feeling and rational thinking. This helps to control emotions and avoid behaviours where emotions are already beginning to influence rational thinking. In the context of architectural and construction projects, it is important for managers to understand how their clients feel and think. For example, if a client raises concerns about a particular architectural element, the manager must be able to distinguish between these feelings and opinions to find the best solution to meet the wishes of the client and the architectural and construction standards.

The third component, client awareness, is the understanding and careful consideration of the client's needs, values and expectations. This is important for maintaining mutual understanding and building a working relationship based on mutual interest. Of course, when planning and implementing construction projects, it is important for managers to listen to the wishes and values of clients. An understanding of

the customer's expectations and needs will contribute to the development of projects that are in line with the customer's needs, requirements and preferences.

The fourth component – asking – is the key to building relationships with customers and to solving problems. This includes the ability to clearly articulate and express your intentions, as well as asking what the other person needs and wants. This makes communicating more effective and helps achieve a common goal. In practice, when working with clients of architecture and construction companies, it is important to be clear and concrete in the formulation of action plans and questions in order to achieve common goals. It helps to avoid misunderstandings and ensure a successful collaboration to ask the client for a concrete statement of their wishes and expectations.

Let's summarise these components of non-violent communication with a few examples.

1. Observing without judging: a manager may point out to a client specific details of an architectural project, such as the shape, colours or materials that have been chosen for the construction. For example, 'I noticed that you chose a modern design with natural materials for the project'.

2. Distinguishing between feelings and opinions: the manager can listen to the client and distinguish between their feelings and their opinions and suggestions for further consideration when dissatisfaction or concern is expressed about certain aspects of the project. For example, 'I understand that you would like to see a more dynamic design, here are my thoughts on possible ways in which this situation might be resolved'.

3. Knowing what the client wants: the manager actively listens, understands and considers the client's wishes and values in order to create a project that fully meets the client's needs. For example, the question might be something like the following: 'What is most important to you about the design?', 'What are your main expectations from this project?'

4. Asking: the manager can ask specific questions or suggest solutions to possible problems that arise when working with the client. For example, 'Can you clarify the timeframe you would like for completion of the project?' This will help us to plan our next steps in a better way.

Alternatively, there is a suggestion or an effective action plan:

– «My suggestion is that we go over the project again and clarify all the details in order

to eliminate any inconsistencies and ensure that we meet your expectations».

– «Perhaps we could have an additional project presentation or phone call so that you can have any questions or clarifications you may have?»

It should be noted that using the theory of non-violent communication is important for an architecture and construction manager for the following reasons [5–6]:

1. To build trust: effective communication and the ability to listen, understand and act on the customer's wishes are key to building a trusting relationship. Customers are more likely to cooperate and be satisfied with the company if they feel that their wishes and needs are taken into account.

2. To avoid conflict: tools for avoiding conflict and misunderstanding include observing without judgement, distinguishing between feelings and thoughts, and being aware of the customer's wishes and needs. Potential problems and negative situations can be avoided through clear communication and consideration of the customer's needs.

3. To improve reputation and referrals: if customers are satisfied with the cooperation and project results, they will be more inclined to recommend your company to others. A good reputation is a key factor in the success of a business and in the acquisition of new customers.

4. To enhance productivity and efficiency: effective communication and consideration of customer needs helps to reduce the time needed to solve problems, avoid misunderstandings and improve the quality of work performed.

Therefore, the quality of interaction with customers and end-users of a product or service can be significantly improved by an approach that applies these components of non-violent communication. Feelings of respect, attention and empathy contribute to the building of warm relationships and trust, which are important for successful co-operation [9]. Companies are more effective in resolving conflicts and ensuring satisfaction with their services and products when they use a non-violent communication approach in their interactions with customers. In particular, honesty, openness and empathy contribute to the maintenance of positive relationships and the building of customer loyalty [13].

The use of the theory of non-violent communication is particularly important in the case of customers who are in conflict. Here are a couple of examples.

The 'pessimistic client': the manager has received numerous comments and critical feedback from the client about the architectural project. It is important to listen to his outrage, understand his questions and explain the details of the project in a clear and detailed way. The next step is to support the client by making positive arguments and offering to change the project.

The 'unreliable client': the client may change his requirements and decisions on a frequent basis, which makes the manager's job more difficult. It is important to have a written contract that clearly defines the terms of cooperation, deadlines and responsibilities of each party. To ensure the reliability of the cooperation, you can also offer an advance payment or other guarantees.

The 'greedy client': the client is in search of the cheapest options and may not have an appreciation of the quality of the work. The manager can focus on the benefits of providing high quality services, offer discounted packages or offer additional services as a bonus for cooperating.

The 'narcissist client': the client may be a narcissist and may demand special treatment. The manager can emphasise his specialness and uniqueness in the context of the cooperation and offer exclusive services at a higher price.

Clearly, it is important to be able to find constructive ways to solve the problem through non-violent communication, taking into account the client's needs and feelings [7], regardless of the type of client in conflict. It is important to effectively manage conflict and ensure quality communication to achieve mutual understanding and problem solving [8], as well as to identify the specifics of each client and understand their needs in depth.

If you encounter difficulties with a client who is in conflict, it is important to act in an effective way using the principles of non-violent communication. The following is an algorithm that can be used to try to resolve a situation that may be in conflict [14]:

- 1) Listen to the client and allow them to continue speaking without interrupting them. Show empathy and an interest in trying to understand their situation.

- 2) Using sincere words and tone of voice, respond to the client's outrage with apology and understanding.

- 3) Offer a number of solutions to the problem that will meet the needs of the customer.

This could be replacing, refunding or providing additional service.

- 4) Together with the customer, decide on the best way to solve the problem, acting as a partner to the customer. Try to focus on the positive and try to find a positive solution.

- 5) Thank the customer for their frankness and cooperation and emphasise the importance of their opinion. It is important to show that what they say is interesting and important to you.

Once the conflict has been resolved, it is important to offer the customer support, a discount or a thank you for their confidence. For example, you might consider offering a discount on their next order or enrolling them in a loyalty programme. This will be a sign to the customer that your company and their satisfaction are genuinely important to them.

We can therefore summarise the theoretical developments and applied practices used in working as a modern architectural and construction manager. Non-violent communication is an approach to communication that places the emphasis on empathy, openness and mutual respect. Adherence to key principles and the use of strategies aimed at building mutual understanding and cooperation are required for successful communication with clients based on this theory.

One of the most important principles of non-violent communication is that of active listening. This means not only to listen, but also to understand the position, the needs and the expectations of the client. Another important principle is to give priority to the positive aspects of communication. The focus of managers should not be on problems, but on opportunities and ways of solving customer problems. Avoiding aggressive or abusive language and instead using calm and professional language is another important aspect of non-violent communication.

Maintaining an exploratory style of communication, where both parties consider the other's position in order to reach mutual understanding, is a strategy for successful communication with customers based on a non-violent approach. Another strategy is empathy and the ability to put oneself in the customer's shoes through an understanding of their feelings and motivations. Empathy is the building of trust and positive communication. Clarity and openness in expressing ideas and agreements, which avoids misunderstandings and conflicts, is an important element of successful communication. Avoiding criticism and judgement and focusing on the positive aspects and common goals is also

part of non-violent communication. Successful communication can also be achieved by being flexible and open to change when communicating with clients, and by being willing to learn and develop.

In general, managers of architectural and construction companies can build trust, foster positive relationships with clients, and achieve common goals in the process of working together by applying the principles of non-violent communication and using appropriate strategies.

To improve architectural and construction company managers' communication practices and achieve positive business results, it is recommended to:

1. Organise professional communication training for managers to study the key principles of successful non-violent communication.

2. Establish internal communication standards and procedures that promote mutual understanding and effective interaction with clients.

3. Ensure that all parties feel important and valued by maintaining an open communication environment.

4. Implement a customer feedback system to assist in understanding the needs and expectations of the customer.

5. Build respect and trust, actively use empathy and try to see things from the customer's perspective.

6. Interact more effectively with customers and meet their needs by improving active listening skills.

7. Encourage interaction and cooperation between all parts of the company to avoid conflict and ensure consistency in customer communications.

8. Use technology and communication tools to help you interact and communicate with customers in an effective way.

9. Improve the process of communicating with customers by continuously analysing the effectiveness of communication strategies and techniques.

10. Involve customers in the decision-making process and consider their opinions and suggestions to improve cooperation and achieve mutually beneficial business results.

Conclusions. The key to effective interaction between managers of architectural and construction companies and their clients is the application of the theory of non-violent communication. This approach will contribute to the development of trust and confidence, the avoidance of conflict and the enhancement of the company's reputation. Mutual understanding and successful collaboration can be achieved by applying the principles of non-judgmental observation, distinguishing between feelings and thoughts, and understanding the client's wishes and constructive requests.

When working with clients in conflict, it is particularly important to use non-violent communication. Even in difficult situations, the ability to listen, show empathy and offer solutions to problems helps to find constructive solutions. This approach is conducive to the maintenance of positive relationships and the continuation of effective co-operation.

Introducing training in non-violent communication, establishing communication standards, and maintaining openness and feedback from clients are recommended to improve the communication practices of architectural and construction company managers. Ongoing analysis of the effectiveness of communication strategies and the involvement of clients in decision-making are also important.

In general, managers of architecture and construction companies can build trust, foster positive relationships with clients, and achieve common goals in the process of working together by using the principles and strategies of non-violent communication. In today's market conditions, this is an important key to success and sustainable business development.

To sum up, the application of the theory of non-violent communication to the interaction of architectural and construction companies with their clients is an effective tool to ensure effective communication, conflict resolution and the achievement of mutually beneficial outcomes of cooperation. The level of customer service and successful business development can be significantly improved by developing relevant skills and implementing this approach in the practice of managers.

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