

Original article

Factors affecting the effectiveness of the manager's work

Marian Kopczewski^{1*} , Marcin Plucienniczak² 

¹ Faculty of Security Studies,

General Tadeusz Kosciuszko Military University of Land Forces, Wrocław, Poland,

e-mail: marian.kopczewski@awl.edu.pl

² Faculty of Management,

General Tadeusz Kosciuszko Military University of Land Forces, Wrocław, Poland,

e-mail: marcin.plucienniczak@awl.edu.pl

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ABSTRACT

The requirements placed on modern entrepreneurs – managers – leaders of organisations – are extremely high, and their fulfilment does not guarantee exclusively successes. They guide people who need to be taught and prepared above all: to work in their occupied positions, to live in society, as well as to bring people closer together and to focus on each other. Employees can be different, strong and weak, proud and humble, curious about the world and despite their different ages, apathetic. All of them, due to the work of managers and their competences, knowledge and skills become good employees at different levels of the organisation and then managers. However, the basis of the manager's work is also, or maybe above all, communication skills, which are based on negotiations.

KEYWORDS

competences, manager, company, efficiency, negotiations

* Corresponding author



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Introduction

The article is an attempt to show the conditions of manager's functioning – in various social situations, their role, tasks and qualifications, ensuring efficient management of the organisation, such as: priorities in the execution of tasks, skills, creative attitude and preparation for negotiations. The definitions of the word "management" are probably as numerous as the books on the subject. Some of them are relatively concise and simplified. An example is one of the older definitions in which the author describes management as "knowing exactly what is expected of people and then making sure they perform it in the best and cheapest way". However, management is a complex process, much more complex than it is suggested by this simple definition. It is therefore necessary to develop a definition of management that better captures the essence of this complexity and its challenges. In this interpretation, it is a set of activities (including planning and

decision making, organising, leading, i.e. managing and controlling people) directed at the organisation's resources (human, financial, material and informational) and performed with the aim of achieving the organisation's objectives in an efficient (using resources wisely and without unnecessary waste) and effective (working successfully) manner.

An organisation is defined as a group of people who work together in an orderly and coordinated manner to achieve a certain set of objectives. The objectives can include matters like profit (Southwest Airlines), scientific discovery (university), national defence (army), coordination of various local charities (United Way of America) or social satisfaction (women's club). Due to their important role in our lives, understanding how organisations work and how they are managed is of great importance [1].

1. Social competences

In each profession, competences have their own specific level and scope reflected in the quality of tasks performed. They are visible and measurable as a result of general knowledge and skills acquired, mastered and confirmed in practice (Fig. 1).

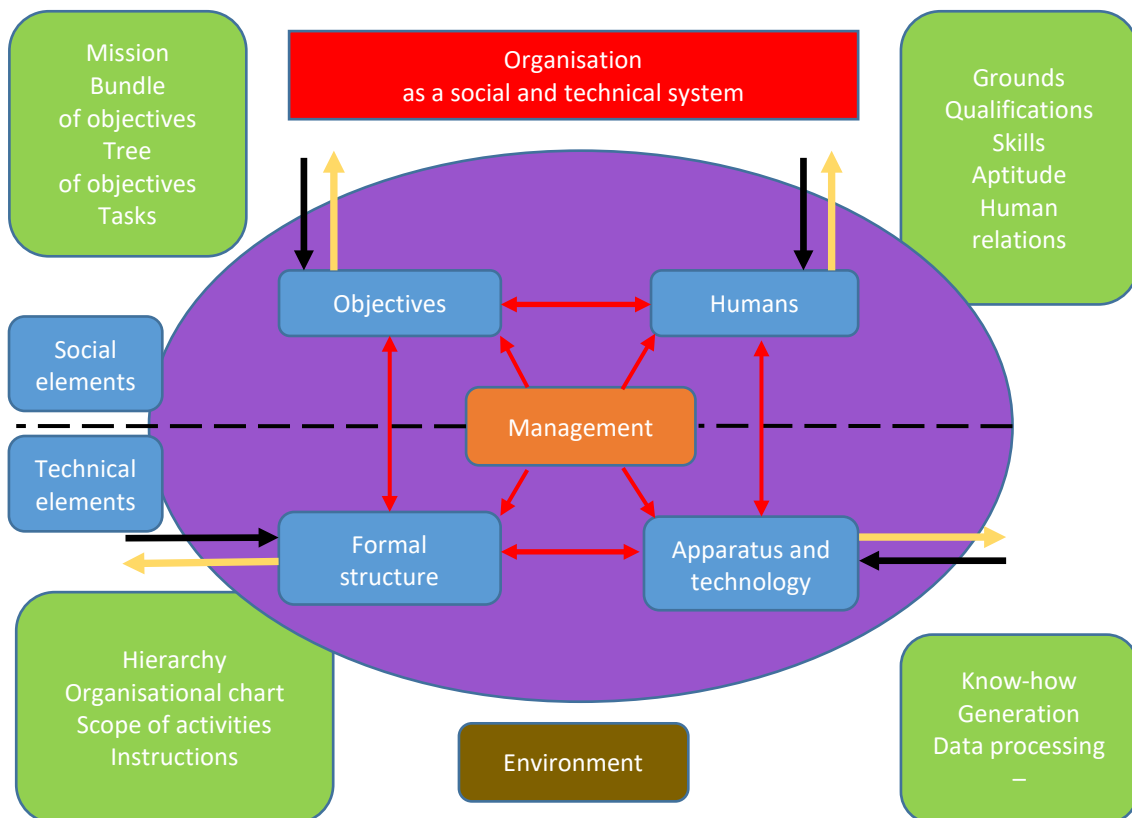


Fig. 1. A scheme of a modern organisation in the systemic perspective

Source: Own study based on [2].

Continuous development of knowledge and experience enables us to carry out business tasks and own objectives in the ever-changing environment. Their characteristics are, among other things:

- the ability to cooperate with superiors, colleagues and, in particular, employees,
- the possibility of achieving professional and personal goals,
- the acceptance and adapting to changes, and affecting their development,
- the desire for continuous development.

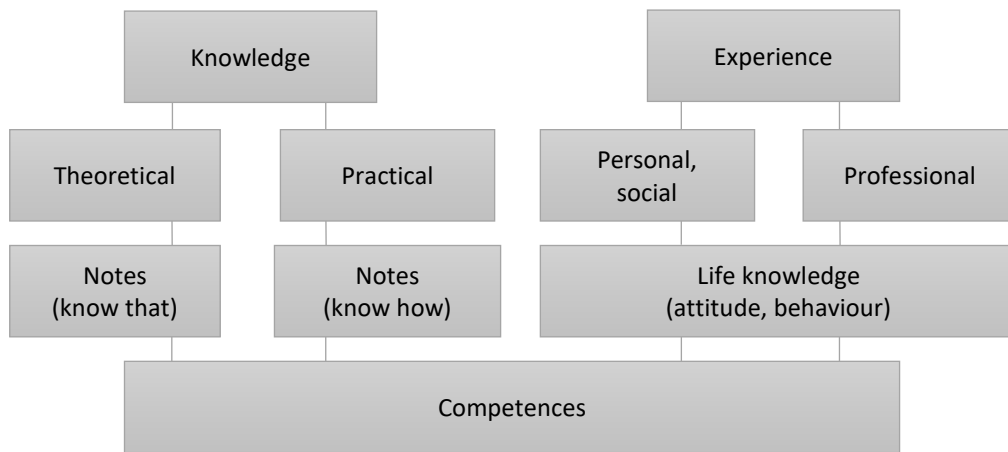


Fig. 2. Scope of competences
 Source: Own study based on [3].

Social skills include:

- leadership (an ability to exert influence, an ability to convince, motivate, establish and maintain contacts),
- abilities to diagnose and predict a social situation (reading emotional states, understanding and predicting behaviours),
- an ability to communicate effectively,
- an ability to help and think constructively, create a climate of trust and security,
- an ability to resolve conflicts and conduct negotiations,
- an ability to find oneself in various social situations,
- logistical abilities.

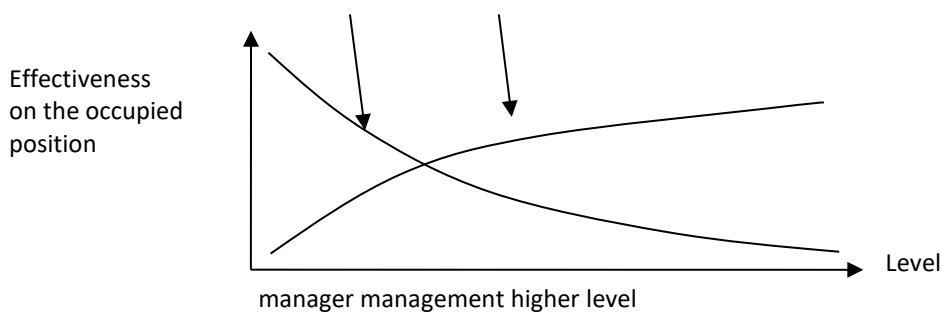


Fig. 3. Manager social skills
 Source: Own study based on [4].

These and other abilities complement and permeate each other, creating the basis for the development of an individual management set in each manager that favours:

- an independent, active search for better ways of proceeding, thinking,
- seeing and judging,
- making choices and decisions about one's own conduct,
- analysing their successes and failures,
- seeking feedback on the real impact of our actions.

However, it is incompetent to claim that the manager:

- pretends to know,
- does not know what they do not know,
- does not ask, although they know who knows,
- is convinced that he knows everything and has no doubts,
- is not willing to develop their knowledge.

2. Changes are the key to success

A characteristic feature of the 21st century is the constant changes accompanied by the slogan of creating an information society, and in terms of organisation: modernisation, restructuring, reorganisation, reconstruction, liquidation and construction of new structures. These and other changes force changes of consciousness resulting from changes of thinking. However, it is always important to be able to adapt to changes in order to be able to control them and influence them. Remembering that it is also necessary to change oneself, improve one's skills, learn languages and so on. Starting for example with an attempt to answer a few questions [5]:

- what do I want to achieve (work, personal life)?
- how (in what way) do I want to achieve this?
- when do I want to achieve it?
- why actually this?
- etc.?

Common thinking about being successful in personal life is also a sign of the times in which we live, it is not always possible to predict and control everything.

Success is a process of management, i.e. systematic planning and making decisions, organising, managing and controlling. Every manager who wants to be successful must think realistically, take up new challenges, set priorities, and their measure is the ability to influence their own and subordinates' development. It is favoured, among other things, by: defining its roles and tasks (current and future), selection of goals, planning, the ability to concentrate, rational use of time.

2.1. Priorities in work

Prioritisation of the manager's work is an individual matter and is related to the specific scope of responsibilities, competences and the situation in which they act. The PARETO principle is the most useful tool for setting priorities in the individual life not only of the teacher, but also of the collective organised activities. This principle, commonly referred

to as the “20/80 principle”, developed by an Italian economist Vilfredo Pareto, indicates an important correlation both in production and in any deliberate human activity. It assumes that 20% of the total time, energy, money and human effort provides them with 80% of the effect.

The most important thing should therefore be that the manager sets 20% of the priorities and devotes as much attention to them as possible. These assumptions may be flawed, but they do indicate certain harmful and educational priorities, establish needs, are planning guidelines etc. Therefore, proper use of 20% of the mental work time can generate 80% of the results, provided that the manager knows which elements of the work should be given the greatest attention and knows how to set priorities.

2.2. Time management and efficiency

Managers should be able to manage their time in such a way that, when performing many functions, activities and tasks, they can skilfully reconcile important professional and personal matters. This is possible due to optimal use and continuous control of working time to achieve professional and life goals. A manager, like any other person, must have time professional work, family life, leisure, entertainment and, above all, continuous learning (further education). In order to achieve it, it is necessary to establish and plan [6]:

1. What and when do we intend to do in our lives? What are the professional objectives and how long does it take to achieve them? What are the personal objectives and the perspective of their realisation?
2. What projects will serve to achieve the objectives? What do we intend to do to achieve the objectives?
3. Where to start and what can be done today?
4. What is done today, tomorrow and the day after tomorrow? What is the plan of the day, week, month, year, etc.?

An attempt to control and manage one’s time is a properly prepared plan (OPTION below) [6]:

1. OCCUPATIONAL GOAL (how you are going to achieve it in your work?)
 - Goal timeframe (when?)
 - Actions taken to achieve the goal? (what do you have to do to achieve the goal?)
 - Create an action plan:

Date of task	Content	Requirements???	Time to complete

- Task for today, tomorrow

2. PERSONAL GOAL (what do you want to achieve in your lifetime)
 - Timeframe (when?)
 - Actions taken to achieve the goal? (What do you have to do to achieve the goal?)
 - Determining the next steps
 - Schedule course of action for today and time frames
 - Today’s task

Such a plan and the determined actions require [7]:

1. Planning realism – it is achieved with time, but its lack results from the ability to estimate one's own capabilities and overestimating one's own strength. This should be favoured by the following principle: PLAN LESS AND IN SUCH A WAY THAT THE PLAN IS POSSIBLE TO ACHIEVE.
2. Persistence and consistency – needed to achieve each of the objectives set, taking into account the principle: DO WHAT YOU HAVE PLANNED FOR A CERTAIN DAY.
3. Written form of realisation – allowing to fully embrace their size and complexity, releases the psychological effect of self-motivation to work, favours the realisation concentration, allows control of performance and possible current correction of intentions, provides documentation of the performed work.

In conclusion, skilful time management best reflects the preparation and realisation of the day's plan, including:

- a task resulting from the weekly plan,
- permanent activities – professional,
- important and urgent matters,
- matters that have not been done before,
- phone calls, correspondence to be handled,
- time reserve for unexpected, new, urgent matters.

THE PRINCIPLE OF THE PLAN: *If a person does not lose an hour of their working day, they can quietly expect the final result of their work. They can certainly hope that when waking up one morning, they will realise that they are one of the most competent people in their profession, no matter what this profession is.*

3. The creative attitude of the manager

Many skills and knowledge can be acquired on various management issues, but in practice there are situations where knowledge and skills are insufficient. The most effective skill that allows to meet the requirements is the skill to learn, i.e. acquiring new knowledge and using it in practice, which is favoured by [5, 8]:

- the ability to read the situation, i.e. to perceive changes in time,
- the ability to self-assess knowledge and skills, the possibility of their improvement and broadening,
- the ability to program one's own development.

A creative attitude means not only innovative activity, but above all strengthening others (subordinates), creating new ideas, solutions and implementing them, as well as the ability to use one's own abilities. Thus, a creative attitude in management means above all skilful management of people and motivating them to achieve more.

The behaviour of a manager in different situations is largely determined by his or her self-esteem (Fig. 4) i.e.:

- self-knowledge (recognising one’s strengths and weaknesses, preferences, passions, tendencies),
- self-confidence (confidence in one’s own capabilities, persistence, self-policing, knowledge and skills).

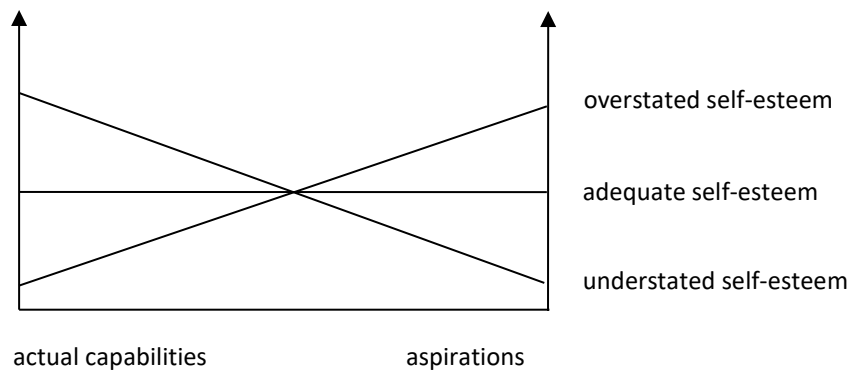


Fig. 4. Forms of self-esteem
 Source: Own study.

The self-assessment of each of us, including managers, is usually differentiated in relation to individual spheres of activity, but the self-assessment ability should be conducive to [8]:

- confirming what we already know about each other,
- remembering what we knew about each other, but what was forgotten,
- confirming or rejecting assumptions concerning oneself and one’s abilities,
- finding out what we did not know about each other.

Taking into account the above self-assessment indicators, one of the possibilities of collecting and compiling information about oneself is self-analysis (Fig. 5).

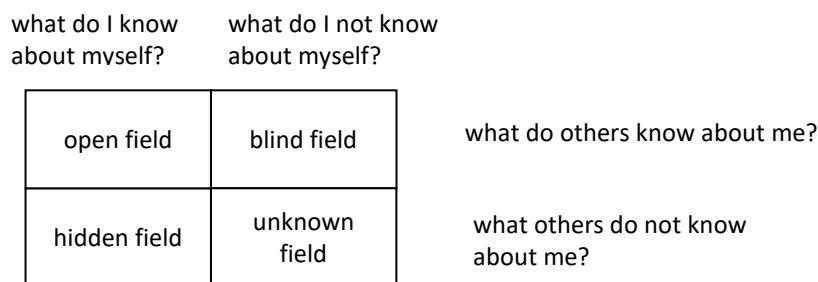


Fig. 5. Auto-analysis method using the “Johari window”
 Source: Own study.

The collected information is entered into the prepared rectangle fields:

OPEN FIELD – we include everything we know about ourselves and think that others know about us.

BLIND FIELD – we include everything we are not aware of, what others inform us about (positive and negative information).

HIDDEN FIELD – we include what we know about ourselves, what others do know about.

UNKNOWN FIELD – we include our potential capabilities which have not been revealed so far.

The next step is to analyse the collected information and to look for answers to the following questions:

- Which part of the rectangle contains the most information and which the least?
- What is the reason for such an imbalance and what is the result?
- What is worth changing and why?

Such an attempt to look at oneself should be conducive to reflection of every manager and not only – also of virtually every person with their own social competences, and also influence further improvement of communication with other people. It can make us aware of something we have not thought about before.

4. Negotiations as a method of management

Every conversation is a form of communication which aims at agreeing a position, i.e. communicating and obtaining everything we want from other people. The aim of negotiations is to reach an agreement and thus to find a common solution, which is also known as a consensus. Even in the event of a conflict of interest, the parties achieve a convenient solution through negotiations. The current article is directed not at the emotions resulting from their expression, but at the dilemmas that both sides (people) face in the widely understood process of communication. Due to the fact that emotions usually play a negative role in negotiations, people look at a problem and its solution from a convenient point of view. This results in factually incorrect interpretations, misinterpretations, etc., resulting in a tense atmosphere that is not conducive to understanding. People start arguing instead of negotiating. Participants of negotiations become enemies, foes, so they are not able to communicate, thus one should not associate people with a specific problem, because it causes complications. In order to consider a problem in an objective way, it is necessary to commence a substantive discussion, a neutral discussion of the problem, not to follow people behind one solution or another, and therefore also to be able to communicate.

Focusing on tasks rather than on the views expressed is based on the objective of negotiations, as well as on the methods of communication, which is to reach an agreement that ensures that certain tasks are carried out. Meanwhile, negotiations often take the form of exchanges of views and focus on conflicts. The expression of views sets aside the tasks and does not lead to any agreement. There are many views, and the tasks are defined. Focusing on the tasks is the shortest way to reach our destination, i.e. an agreement.

4.1. Negotiation tactics

In order to achieve the objective pursued in a conflict situation, it is very important to be able to skilfully deploy, manoeuvre and use the forces and resources at one's disposal. This skill is known as the tactic of searching for understanding. There are many valuable

rules and tactical skills known. First, it is necessary to establish precisely who is talking to whom, when the talks begin and end, how they make a contact and what is the course of negotiations. If we wish to be a skilful negotiator, the following tactics must be applied: demand cooperation, go step-by-step, set limits, indicate possible benefits, invoke authorities, indicate suspicious connections and methods, be patient and determined, do not rest before the finish line.

In addition, it is reasonable to consider the possibility of applying other friendly tactics of reaching an agreement: express appreciation, help to keep a face, create a pleasant atmosphere – put your opponent's shoes on, be an optimist, ignore the attack, treat it with sympathy [6].

Sometimes we will be forced to apply tactics that are violent, hard or even unfair. Depending on the opponent's behaviour, the situation and the aim, I propose to refer to the following tactics: play for time, simulate an attack, present an ultimatum, change methods, dates, places, negotiators, inundate the other side with information, use one-sided examples, distort the sense of the opponent's utterance, present excessive demands, pretend to be an ignorant, simulate anger, violence, infuriation, fear, promise a lot and then call it off. Each of these principles can be used as a structure that serves as a response to the immoral action of the other party.

4.2. Deceitful ways of negotiating

Talking about difficult problems, with difficult opponents does not always take place in accordance with the principles of decency, honesty and fairness. In practice, there are various unethical ways of achieving a result that is beneficial for only one side.

Clever players and supporters of clever confrontation use specific methods of negotiation. Conflict resolutions are the most frequently used in this area [9]:

1. Deliberate fraud:
 - conscious falsifying of facts combined with appearance of truth,
 - unclear, questionable rights to seek an agreement,
 - suspicious intentions,
 - an incomplete statement of position.
2. Psychological warfare:
 - deliberate creation of stressful situations and conditions,
 - unpleasant personal attacks,
 - alternate bad and good treatment,
 - scaring, threatening, warning,
 - a deliberate disgrace,
 - manipulating of time and place of conversation,
 - continuous extension of unjustified claims.
3. Positional pressure tactics:
 - exorbitant preconditions,
 - refusal to negotiate,

- escalation of demands,
- rigid closing up, digging up in one's own position,
- calculated delay,
- if you do not agree, then...

The aim of the sneaky game is to intimidate, discourage, impatience, accelerate victory, maximize profits. Rapid recognition of malicious tactics will help to reduce its destructive effects.

The question is how to fight against tricks, sneaking around? The following suggestions seem to be worth analysing [9]:

- ensure that the rules of communication are clearly defined,
- demand their observance,
- ensure that information and rights are credible,
- provide yourself with a guarantee,
- offer the help of a mediator,
- harden your condition and psychophysical immunity,
- be tough on your opponent and your problem,
- do not be a victim.

An efficient struggle with a clever, sophisticated, ruthless interlocutor requires not only knowledge, life experience, but also wisdom and prudence.

4.3. How to make concessions and yield

Insufficient will to make concessions, rejection of such a possibility is a proof of exceptional rigidity, tenacity and may be a sign of striving for confrontation and obtaining maximum personal benefits at the expense of the other person [10].

Without concessions, it is difficult to imagine any kind of agreement. Mutual flexibility of compliant behaviour allows a mutually satisfactory resolution to be negotiated, even in exceptional conflict situations. However, excessive yielding is sometimes used as a very effective means of winning and having one's way. The logic of obtaining concessions includes, in particular, the following regularities [10]:

- Make your opponent yield first. This way, you will achieve a psychological advantage.
- Create an atmosphere that will make your counter-partner yield easier. Prepare arguments, evidence (real and irrational) that a particular concession does not cause significant losses.
- You should ensure that your interlocutor that made a concession can save their face, that they feel effective.
- Repeat your understanding of the concession proposal, what could be perceived as dissatisfaction, make it broader, clearer and more specific. This information is valuable from the point of view of anticipating the possibility of the further resignation steps.

- Ensure that the concession offered is irrevocable and definitive.
- Note carefully the order, type and scope of the offered concessions. In this way, it is possible to thoroughly analyse and follow the logic of the interlocutor's reasoning, as well as to check the accuracy, effectiveness of the adopted tactics and strategies. Any changes in the logic of thinking and actions of a counter-partner are a valuable source of information. What I mean is changing goals, style, climate, negotiation tactics, perception of hardships and you.
- Try to persuade your counter-partner to make concessions on the essentials for they are your primary objective.

Making concessions is really difficult since it does not involve randomness, mediocrity, chaos etc. A discerning negotiator makes concessions according to the following procedure [1]:

- Make concessions according to a previously established plan, which should include the order, type and scope of concessions.
- Do not yield first. If you think it is worth making the first step, next time make sure that your counter-partner returns your move.
- Learn the art of making concessions in time, delaying accordingly, make concessions without haste.
- Proposals for concessions should be presented in the hypothetical form, as further assumptions, predictions.
- Yield only at the price of the other side's concessions.
- Initiate the abandonment of secondary values in order to achieve the primary goals.
- In extreme situations, it is desirable to announce concessions in a friendly and simultaneous way.
- Try to consider and predict all the consequences of your own concessions.
- Force your counter-partner to make an exhausting effort, and then propose a minor concession, which will be perceived as a reward.
- The scope of mutual concessions does not have to be balanced.
- Less significant losses result in concessions in the initial stages of conflict resolution. It is not advisable to increase the number of concessions in the final phase of talks.
- Define the limits of your own concessions.
- Make sure you possess the conditions to accomplish the final manoeuvre freely.
- Wait two steps out to make three.

4.4. How to deal with difficult partners

The greatest challenge, the test of problem solving and conflict solving in management is the art of communication with difficult people. The "villain" expects similar behaviour from us, which would be a serious mistake. Therefore, you should avoid provocation. It

is worth astonishing the partner through friendly, tactful, gentle and non-confrontational behaviour. A more "severe" action is only taken when our peaceful attitude turns out to be unreliable [11].

1. Behaviour towards the person disturbing the atmosphere of cooperation:
 - let them fully express their position,
 - ask for answers to a few specific questions,
 - confirm that you understand the demands,
 - emphasise the need to adhere to the established principles of order, speaking time and mutual respect,
 - consistently pay attention to acts of violation of these principles,
 - look carefully at this person,
 - stand up and get close to this person,
 - ask directly why they hamper cooperation and whether it is important for them to reach an agreement,
 - indicate that the aim is to establish a compromise, not a full victory or total defeat,
 - ask for a break and talk to them in private,
 - if the situation does not change, ask others, preferably in public, in a group situation, to discuss their behavior,
 - positively demand mutual respect and goodwill,
 - ask for an appointment of another representative to present the difficult matter in a calm way,
 - if all the efforts fail, threaten to terminate the talks.
2. Talks with dissatisfied persons:
 - be patient, calm, relaxed,
 - express openness, kindness and friendship,
 - listen to all the accusations and wishes, do not interrupt,
 - check whether the claims and demands are true and real,
 - if you were not right, apologise,
 - do not excuse too much,
 - always keep your word, do not daydream,
 - do not increase the number of hardships, do not respond to a demand with a demand, do not intensify the accusations,
 - think positively, define the benefits and the chance for agreement.
3. Negotiations with violent persons:
 - be calm, balanced, confident,
 - breathe rhythmically, deeply, calmly,
 - speak softly, fearlessly, calmly, even quietly,
 - control your drives, emotions, temper,
 - do not respond to aggression with anger, attack, solecism,

- ask for clarification of facts, ask what, where, when?,
- ensure that you understand, confirm that you understand,
- offer help,
- create an atmosphere of free conversation, expression, understanding,
- let the aggressive person save their face, do not irritate or judge them,
- pay attention to the further consequences of the escalation of aggression,
- try to calm the aggressive person by all possible means (break, meal, change of subject),
- in a situation of excessive, uncontrolled verbal aggression in a certain moment, further conversation does not make any sense.

4. Attention to persons susceptible to manipulation.

In everyday life and service you can meet people who follow a very reprehensible motto – the end justifies the means. Such people ruthlessly exploit certain weaknesses of others (credulity, openness, fallibility, timidity, etc.) with the intention to achieve maximum personal benefits.

A manipulator treats others as instruments, tools facilitating the achievement of egoistic goals. A Machiavellian is a “master” of manipulating people and situations, and is also difficult to recognise. What kind of behaviour is worth paying attention to in order not to become a “trophy” of the manipulator? They are presented here [12]:

- the exclusive focus on personal aspirations,
- treating others as objects, things, resources,
- full control of your own emotions, emotional coldness,
- high resilience to social influence, external pressures,
- the advantage of cognitive orientation towards people and situations over the tendency to take into account others’ emotions,
- strong control over others and the situation,
- the pursuit of full domination,
- ignoring generally accepted moral principles and simultaneously maintaining the appearance of honesty,
- high effectiveness of action, especially in difficult, unclear, complex, extreme and non-schematic situations.

4.5. Major negotiating skills that a manager should possess

Communication in daily situations that involve different opinions does not require specific qualifications and skills. It is sufficient to show willingness of cooperation, honesty and a pragmatic approach to the subject. In this sense, everyone can be a teacher and a negotiator. However, when dealing with more complex hardships, it is people who possess certain traits that achieve better negotiation results.

If you wish to be a good teacher, an effective expert in terms of agreeing a common position, you should: have high aspirations, strive for the best results, be able to efficiently influence the interlocutor’s beliefs and possess the following skills [13; 14, p. 101-5]:

- openness to new and various proposals,
- insightful mind, innovative thinking,
- resistance to stress,
- ease, clarity of expressing thoughts,
- the ability to listen carefully,
- patience, prudence, self-control,
- be gentle towards people, firm towards problems,
- acquiring, analysing and producing a large amount of information,
- open, firm and tactful expression of disagreement,
- self-confidence, consistency and objectivity,
- avoid intensifying and complicating conflicts.

Whether a person masters these skills depends on many factors, including education, experience, intelligence, professional knowledge of the field, which is the subject of conflict, this should be the actions of a manager.

Summary

Improvement of social skills of every person, especially of a manager (people responsible for managing others) should be never limited. New challenges and problems are constantly appearing, and superiors set increasingly higher and more difficult requirements while subordinates expect constant assistance resulting from various threats. How should it be dealt with? Just be effective in your every action and be able to negotiate. The negotiations have been and are based on communication between the parties involved. Skills and traits that are useful during negotiations and ensuring effective and understandable communication are [3]:

1. Careful preparation – selection of a negotiation group: setting negotiation goals, analysing the situation of both parties, developing a potential strategy of the other party, knowledge of the problems to be discussed, checking the facts and clarifying doubts, analysing strengths and weaknesses, determining the negotiation form.
2. Brilliance: precise problem analysing and rapid developing of an optimal solution, quick and precise answering.
3. Precision of expression – gathering information about our position: setting the order of issues, taking notes with the keywords that will be used. easy-to-understand explanation of all the issues in order.
4. Careful listening – showing interest in what the other party is saying and asking questions for more information.
5. Correct evaluation – continuous analysing of the course of negotiations – determining the most important negotiation issues.
6. Honesty – we assume that during negotiations both parties will act honestly, nobody wants to negotiate with a dishonest company.

7. Persuasion – the right choice of arguments – precise, coherent and objective presentation of arguments.
8. Patience – avoiding making quick decisions and not persuading the other side to do so – hiding haste.

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Conflict of interests

All authors declared no conflict of interests.


Author contributions


All authors contributed to the interpretation of results and writing of the paper. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

Ethical statement

The research complies with all national and international ethical requirements.

ORCID

Marian Kopczewski  <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0402-0477>

Marcin Plucienniczak  <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4722-0428>

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Biographical note

Marian Kopczewski – Professor at the Military University of Land Forces in Wrocław – Faculty of Security Studies, where he lectures, popularising modern teaching techniques and leads the process of awarding of degrees in the field of security, emergency management and MA seminars. In the study he focuses on the analysis and evaluation of the possibilities of using information systems in management and teaching, as well as in national and internal security systems, including European and Euro-Atlantic political and military integration processes. He is an author and co-author of over 600 various domestic and foreign publications, including several monographic publications on national security. He manages scientific and research works of national and international range, as part of this study he has promoted 7 PhDs and is a supervisor of a few. He is a member of Polskie Towarzystwo Nauk o Bezpieczeństwie (Polish Society of Security Sciences) and Polskie Towarzystwo Nauk o Obronności (Polish Society of Defence Sciences).

Marcin Plucienniczak – MAJ, MSc, lecturer – doctoral student at the Military University of Land Forces in Wrocław – Faculty of Management, where he conducts lectures and classes. He is an author and co-author of several various national and international publications on management and national security. Member of the Scientific Council of the Command Institute. Areas of scientific interest: management, air defence and anti-aircraft system of the army, national security.

Czynniki wpływające na efektywność pracy menadżera

STRESZCZENIE

Wymagania stawiane współczesnym przedsiębiorcom – menadżerom – liderom organizacji – są niezwykle wysokie, a ich spełnienie nie gwarantuje wyłącznie sukcesów. Kierują oni bowiem ludźmi, których trzeba przede wszystkim nauczyć oraz przygotować: do pracy na zajmowanym stanowisku, życia w społeczeństwie, jak również zbliżyć wzajemnie i skupić wokół siebie. Pracownicy bywają różni, są silni i słabi, pełni pychy i całkiem pokorni, ciekawi świata i mimo różnego wieku, pogrążeni w apatii. Wszyscy oni, dzięki pracy menadżerów i ich kompetencji, wiedzy i umiejętności stają się dobrymi pracownikami na różnych poziomach organizacji, a następnie menadżerami. Jednak podstawą pracy menadżera jest również, a może przede wszystkim umiejętności komunikacyjne, których podstawą są negocjacje.

SŁOWA KLUCZOWE

kompetencje, menadżer, przedsiębiorstwo, efektywność, negocjacje

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