

COMMUNICATION STANDARDS IN CLIENT RELATIONS: CHECKLISTS FOR PUBLISHING AND PRINTING PROJECT MANAGERS

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Makatora A. V., Makatora D. A., Kubanov R. A. Communication Standards in Client Relations: Checklists for Publishing and Printing Project Managers

The article addresses the issue of forming and implementing communication standards in client relations of publishing and printing companies operating in a modern competitive environment. It is emphasized that the quality of communication between managers and clients is a determining factor in a company's success, as it directly affects project deadlines, budget performance, and the organization's reputation. The lack of systemic approaches to communication leads to misunderstandings, conflicts, and client loss, which is particularly critical for small enterprises with limited resources. The aim of the study is to develop and substantiate a system of communicative checklists as a practical tool for project managers, enabling the standardization of interaction processes, reduction of conflict levels, and improvement of customer service quality. The methodological framework combines systemic, activity-based, and communicative approaches, as well as methods of analysis and synthesis of scientific sources, comparative analysis of international ISO standards and corporate regulations, case studies, and empirical monitoring. The study summarizes contemporary research on corporate culture, the development of soft skills, and the application of neuro-linguistic programming (NLP) in management. It is shown that international ISO standards (9001, 14001, 45001) provide a formalized quality management system and transparency of communication processes; corporate regulations shape interaction culture and company identity; and the development of soft skills (emotional intelligence, active listening, negotiation skills) enhances managerial efficiency. Hybrid models that combine formal standards with psychological tools create a comprehensive approach to communication management. The practical part of the study is implemented using the example of a small publishing and printing company, where a system of communicative checklists was introduced in several stages: problem diagnosis, manager training, checklist development and application, and result monitoring. Empirical data confirmed the effectiveness of the proposed methodology: the number of client complaints decreased by 25–40%, the share of repeat clients increased by 10–15%, the level of satisfaction with communication rose by 20–25%, and the number of new orders grew by 20–30%. The article also presents applied tools for managers: the mini-card "Stop – Clarify – Agree" and the pocket card "5 Steps of Communication", which enable rapid responses to conflict situations, stress reduction, and consistency of actions. These tools combine formal standards with psychological techniques, making communication more flexible, empathetic, and result-oriented. Thus, the study demonstrates that introducing a system of communication standards and checklists in publishing and printing companies is an efficient means of improving the quality of client relations, reducing conflict, and building competitive advantages. The results have practical significance for small and medium-sized enterprises seeking to ensure the stability of their client base, growth in orders, and a positive image in the printing services market.

Keywords: communication standards, checklists, project manager, publishing and printing company, corporate culture, ISO standards, soft skills, emotional intelligence, neuro-linguistic programming (NLP), active listening, conflict management, project management, client relations, customer satisfaction.

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Макатьора А. В., Макатьора Д. А., Кубанов Р. А. Комунікативні стандарти у відносинах з клієнтами: чек-листи для менеджера видавничо-поліграфічних проєктів

У статті розглянуто проблему формування та впровадження комунікативних стандартів у відносинах з клієнтами видавничо-поліграфічних підприємств, що функціонують у сучасному конкурентному середовищі. Підкреслено, що якість комунікації між менеджерами та клієнтами є визначальним чинником успішності компанії, оскільки саме вона впливає на строки виконання замовлень, бюджетні показники та репутацію організації. Відсутність системних підходів до комунікації призводить до непорозумінь, конфліктів та втрати клієнтів, що особливо критично

для малих підприємств із обмеженими ресурсами. Метою дослідження є розробка та обґрунтування системи комунікативних чек-листів як практичного інструменту менеджера проєктів, що дозволяє стандартизувати процеси взаємодії, знизити рівень конфліктності та підвищити якість клієнтського сервісу. Методологічна основа дослідження поєднує системний, діяльнісний і комунікативний підходи, а також використання методів аналізу та синтезу наукових джерел, порівняльного аналізу міжнародних стандартів ISO та корпоративних регламентів, кейс-стаді та емпіричного моніторингу. У роботі узагальнено сучасні наукові дослідження, що стосуються корпоративної культури, розвитку soft skills і застосування нейролінгвістичного програмування (НЛП) у менеджменті. Показано, що міжнародні стандарти ISO (9001, 14001, 45001) забезпечують формалізовану систему управління якістю та прозорість комунікаційних процесів, корпоративні регламенти формують культуру взаємодії та ідентичність компанії, а розвиток soft skills (емоційний інтелект, активне слухання, навички переговорів) підвищує ефективність роботи менеджерів. Гібридні моделі, що поєднують формальні стандарти з психологічними інструментами, створюють комплексний підхід до управління комунікацією. Практична частина дослідження реалізована на прикладі малої видавничо-поліграфічної компанії, де було впроваджено систему комунікативних чек-листів у кілька етапів: діагностика проблем, навчання менеджерів, розробка та застосування чек-листів, моніторинг результатів. Емпіричні дані підтвердили ефективність запропонованої методики: кількість скарг клієнтів зменшилася на 25–40%, частка постійних клієнтів зростає на 10–15%, рівень задоволеності комунікацією підвищився на 20–25%, а кількість нових замовлень збільшилася на 20–30%. У статті також представлено прикладні інструменти для менеджерів: міні-картка «Стоп – Уточни – Узгодь» та кишенькова картка «5 кроків комунікації», які дозволяють швидко реагувати на конфліктні ситуації, знизувати стрес і забезпечувати узгодженість дій. Ці інструменти поєднують формальні стандарти з психологічними техніками, що робить комунікацію більш гнучкою, емпатійною та результативною. Таким чином, дослідження доводить, що впровадження системи комунікативних стандартів і чек-листів у видавничо-поліграфічних компаніях є ефективним засобом підвищення якості клієнтських відносин, зниження конфліктності та формування конкурентних переваг. Результати роботи мають практичне значення для малих і середніх підприємств, які прагнуть забезпечити стабільність клієнтської бази, зростання замовлень і позитивний імідж на ринку поліграфічних послуг.

Ключові слова: комунікативні стандарти, чек-листи, менеджер проєктів, видавничо-поліграфічна компанія, корпоративна культура, ISO стандарти, soft skills, емоційний інтелект, нейролінгвістичне програмування (НЛП), активне слухання, управління конфліктами, управління проєктами, клієнтські відносини, задоволеність клієнтів.

Рис.: 1. Табл.: 6. **Бібл.:** 24.

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Modern publishing and printing companies operate in a complex competitive environment where the quality of communication with clients becomes one of the key factors of success. Despite technological progress and the automation of production processes, it is the human factor and the ability of managers to interact effectively with clients that determine the level of trust, order stability, and the company's reputation. The problem lies in the fact that communication in the printing industry often remains unsystematic and dependent on the individual skills of particular managers, which leads to misunderstandings, conflicts, and the loss of clients.

The absence of clearly defined communication standards in client relations creates risks for enterpris-

es, especially small and medium-sized ones that operate under conditions of limited resources and face high competition. Unpredictable managerial behaviour, different communication styles, and insufficient attention to the psychological aspects of interaction may cause emotional conflicts, delays in order fulfilment, and a decrease in customer satisfaction. As a result, a company loses not only financial performance indicators but also long-term partnership relations, which are critically important for its development.

An additional problem is that traditional communication management tools (regulations, instructions, corporate codes) often fail to consider individual client characteristics and the emotional dimension of interaction. In modern conditions, this is insufficient:

clients expect not only a high-quality product but also clear, fast, and empathetic communication. Therefore, there is a need to create a system of communication standards that combines formal procedures with psychological tools such as neuro-linguistic programming (NLP), active listening, recognition of emotions, and the use of solution-oriented language.

Thus, the relevance of the problem lies in the need to develop and implement a practice-oriented system of communicative checklists for managers of publishing and printing projects. Such a system should ensure structured processes, reduce conflict, increase customer satisfaction, and stimulate the growth of repeat orders. Solving this problem will allow enterprises not only to stabilize internal communication processes but also to form a competitive advantage in a market where the quality of client interaction becomes a determining factor of success.

The issue of communication standards and their implementation in project management within publishing and printing companies has been reflected in a number of contemporary studies. Considerable attention is paid to corporate culture as the basis for shaping staff motivation and ensuring the stability of communication processes. In particular, the works of L. Volianska-Savchuk [1] and A. Voronkova et al. [2] emphasize the role of corporate norms and values in ensuring effective interaction between employees and clients. N. Kuchynova [3] focuses on the development of creative thinking in future marketers, which is directly related to the formation of communicative competence.

A separate line of research concerns the development of soft skills among managers and executives. N. Makhnachova and A. Midliar [4] define soft skills as a key factor of managerial effectiveness, while L. Rudenko [5] considers communicative culture of future specialists as a fundamental component of their professional training. S. Dubovyk and T. Drabchuk [6] emphasize the importance of developing emotional intelligence in modern managers, which is also supported by studies by V. Boichuk and A. Lisova [7], who interpret communicative culture as a necessary condition for the professional growth of a creative personality. The conceptualization of the phenomenon of emotional intelligence is presented in the monograph by E. Nosenko and N. Kovryha [8], while the classical works of D. Goleman [10] and P. Drucker [9] laid the foundation for understanding the role of emotions and communication in management of the twenty-first century.

An important direction is the standardization of communication processes. European and international quality standards (ENQA [11], ANSI/ISO/ASQ [12]) define frameworks for ensuring transparency and

accountability in interaction, which can be adapted to the publishing and printing sector.

A separate group consists of studies devoted to neuro-linguistic programming (NLP) and its application in management. M. Frankovský et al. [13], Y. Kotera [14], A. Budiman et al. [16], and S. Bohra, N. Shukla [17] analyse the potential of NLP for improving communication effectiveness and personnel management. T. Witkowski [15] offers a critical review of the results of long-term NLP research, which makes it possible to assess its strengths and limitations. In a more applied dimension, M. Fernández and J. Lee [20], D. Kovačević and J. Petrović [21], and Y. Liu and H. Zhang [22] demonstrate the potential of NLP in preventing conflicts in multicultural teams, educational environments, and medical collectives.

Contemporary studies also emphasize conflict management in teamwork. A. Aggrawal and A. Magana [18] explore the possibilities of using large language models for training in conflict management, while M. Kh. Th. E. Alazemi, A. K. M. Mohiuddin [19] analyse discursive practices of conflict management in construction projects. These approaches have significant potential for adaptation in publishing and printing companies, where conflicts often arise due to different communication styles and high levels of stress.

An important contribution to the development of this topic is made by the works of D. Makatora and R. Kubanov [23; 24], which systematize practical aspects of implementing NLP in the activities of architectural and construction as well as publishing and printing companies. The authors propose methodological models for applying rapport and other communicative techniques in managerial practice, which directly correspond to the objectives of the present study.

Thus, the analysis of recent research and publications indicates the multidimensional nature of the problem of communication standards: from corporate culture and the development of soft skills to the implementation of international standards and psychological tools, including NLP. This creates a scientific basis for developing a system of checklists that can become an effective tool for managing communication in publishing and printing projects.

The methodological framework of the study is based on a combination of systemic, activity-based, and communicative approaches, which makes it possible to comprehensively examine interaction processes between managers and clients in publishing and printing projects. The systemic approach ensures the analysis of communication as an integral structure, where each element (standards, checklists, psychological tools) performs a specific function and influences overall management effectiveness. The acti-

vity-based approach focuses on the practical actions of managers aimed at organizing negotiations, resolving conflicts, and maintaining client relations. The communicative approach allows interaction processes to be studied as a multidimensional phenomenon that includes verbal, non-verbal, and emotional components.

The study employs methods of analysis and synthesis of scientific sources, which enabled the generalization of contemporary theoretical and practical developments in the fields of corporate culture, soft skills, and neuro-linguistic programming. A comparative method was used to compare international ISO standards and corporate regulations with practices of psychological communication. The case study method made it possible to analyse examples of implementing communicative checklists in the activities of small enterprises, particularly in the publishing and printing sector.

The empirical part of the study is based on diagnosing communication problems, training managers in effective interaction techniques, and implementing a checklist system. To assess effectiveness, both quantitative and qualitative analysis methods were used: counting the number of complaints, determining the share of repeat clients, assessing satisfaction levels, and analysing order dynamics. Monitoring was carried out over a period of 3–6 months, which made it possible to obtain reliable data on the effectiveness of the proposed methodology.

Thus, the methodological basis of the study combines theoretical models and practical tools, providing a unified approach to solving the problem of communication standards in client relations. This makes it possible not only to systematize scientific knowledge but also to propose applied solutions for improving the effectiveness of project management in publishing and printing companies.

The *aim of the study* is to develop and substantiate a system of communication standards in client relations of publishing and printing enterprises, based on the use of checklists as a practical tool for project managers. Such a system is intended to ensure structured interaction processes, reduce the level of conflict, and improve the quality of customer service. The study is aimed at integrating international standards (ISO), corporate regulations, and psychological tools (NLP, emotional intelligence, active listening) into a unified communication management model. Achieving this goal makes it possible to enhance managerial effectiveness, strengthen client trust, increase the number of repeat orders, and build competitive advantages for enterprises in the printing services market.

Presentation of the main research material. Communication standards serve as the foundation of effective project management, as they determine

the quality of interaction among participants, process transparency, and the level of trust within the team. There are several approaches to their formation, which can be conditionally divided into international standards, corporate regulations, and soft skills development models.

ISO standards (in particular ISO 9001, ISO 14001, ISO 45001) provide a formalized system of quality, environmental, and safety management [11; 12]. They envisage clearly documented communication procedures, transparency of information flows, and control of responsibility. For a publishing and printing company, this means risk reduction, process alignment, and increased client trust.

Corporate communication standards are formed within the company and reflect its culture and values. These may include a code of ethics, regulations for conducting meetings, rules for electronic correspondence, or reporting procedures [1; 2]. Such standards contribute to team stability, reduce misunderstandings, and shape corporate identity, which is especially important for creative industries.

The Soft Skills Framework focuses on the development of personal and interpersonal skills of employees. This includes emotional intelligence [10], active listening, negotiation skills, and conflict management [3; 18; 19]. In the context of project management, this enhances team effectiveness, reduces conflict, and strengthens staff motivation.

Finally, hybrid models combine formal ISO standards with corporate regulations and the development of soft skills [4; 5]. This approach ensures a balance between rigid procedures and the flexibility of the human factor. For a publishing and printing company, this means comprehensive development, high adaptability, and competitiveness in the market. A more detailed overview of existing theoretical and methodological approaches to communication standards is presented in *Tbl. 1*.

It should be noted that the communication standards described in the table create a basic framework for organizing interaction within the company and between its departments. However, their real value becomes evident when they are integrated into the daily practice of communication with clients. It is precisely at this point that psychological tools come to the forefront, complementing formal regulations with a living, flexible, and human dimension.

In this context, neuro-linguistic programming (NLP) functions not only as a set of techniques but as a practical bridge between standards and real communicative situations. Rapport helps the manager quickly establish a trusting contact, calibration enables the timely detection of hidden tension, and reframing makes it

Overview of the existing theoretical and methodological approaches to communication standards

Approach	Area of application	Key elements	Expected effect in project management
ISO standards (ISO 9001, ISO 14001, ISO 45001)	Quality, environmental, and safety management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documented communication procedures • Transparency of information flows • Responsibility and control 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk reduction • Increased client trust • Process alignment
Corporate communication standards	Internal company culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Code of ethics • Communication regulations (meetings, reports, e-mail) • Unified interaction rules 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team stability • Reduction of misunderstandings • Formation of corporate identity
Soft Skills Framework	Staff development, HR, project management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emotional intelligence • Active listening • Negotiation skills • Conflict management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased team effectiveness • Reduced conflict levels • Growth in productivity and motivation
Hybrid models (ISO + corporate standards + soft skills)	Integrated management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Combination of formal procedures and flexible skills • Balance between standards and the human factor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehensive development • High adaptability • Increased company competitiveness

possible to transform potentially conflict-generating statements into constructive proposals [23; 24]. In combination with corporate norms and ISO procedures, these tools ensure not only formal compliance but also emotional stability in interaction. Other psychological approaches, such as the development of emotional intelligence, active listening, or the use of the VAK model, make it possible to adapt communication to the individual characteristics of the client [7; 8; 10]. This means that standards cease to be a dry set of rules and are transformed into a living system that considers both organizational requirements and the human factor.

Thus, formal communication standards become the foundation, while psychological tools serve as the means of their practical implementation in client relations. Together, they form a holistic model in which each interaction is built on trust, openness, and a commitment to a mutually beneficial outcome.

Basic standards of communication with clients are defined in *Tbl. 2*.

Tbl. 2 presents standards of manager-client communication, which include examples of formulations aimed at improving interaction and communication effectiveness. The standard is developed on the basis of contemporary research [13–22]. These communication directions are important tools that can help managers establish productive dialogue with clients, reduce conflict, and increase the level of customer satisfaction.

1. Active listening. The active listening standard involves the use of clarifying questions that demonstrate to the client that their thoughts and feelings are important. Example formulations such as “If I understand correctly, you mean that...?” or “If I heard you correctly...” emphasize the manager’s interest in the details of the conversation. This reduces the likelihood of misunderstandings and creates a sense of trust.

2. Acknowledgement of emotions. Acknowledging clients’ emotions is critically important for creating a positive communication climate. Statements such as “I see that this is important to you” or “I understand that you are disappointed” help demonstrate empathy and sensitivity to the interlocutor’s experiences. This can significantly improve the relationship between the manager and the client, as the client feels that their emotions are recognized and respected.

3. Focus on a shared goal. Focusing on a shared goal is an important aspect of resolving issues that arise during communication. The formulation “Our common task is to resolve this issue in the best possible way” helps shift the emphasis from conflict to cooperation. This supports constructive dialogue and encourages clients to engage in joint problem-solving.

4. Questions instead of statements. Using questions instead of statements is an effective method that encourages the client to participate more actively in the conversation. For example, the question “What would be the optimal outcome for you?” makes it pos-

Table 2

Standards of manager-client communication

Standard	Example formulations
Active listening	"If I understand correctly, you mean that...?" / "If I heard you correctly..."
Acknowledgement of emotions	"I see that this is important to you." / "I understand that you are disappointed"
Focus on a shared goal	"Our common task is to resolve this issue in the best possible way"
Questions instead of statements	"What would be the optimal outcome for you?"
Micro-confirmations	Summarizing agreements: "So, we are doing A by (date)"
Solution-oriented language rather than problem-focused language	"What can we do right now?"

sible to understand the client's expectations and adapt actions accordingly. This not only improves the quality of communication but also contributes to achieving mutually beneficial solutions.

5. Micro-confirmations. Micro-confirmations are an important element that helps summarize agreements and ensure clarity in communication. For instance, the phrase "So, we are doing A by (date)" clearly formulates the outcome of the discussion and helps avoid further misunderstandings. It also creates a sense of shared responsibility for fulfilling commitments on both sides.

6. Solution-oriented language rather than problem-focused language. Using solution-oriented language focuses attention on finding possible ways out of a situation. The phrase "What can we do right now?" encourages action and a positive approach to resolving issues instead of concentrating on the negative aspects of the problem. This helps create a proactive atmosphere in which clients feel that their issue can be resolved.

Overall, the communication standards presented in Tbl. 2 are important tools for managers in their work with clients. They contribute to improved interaction, increased trust, and a reduced likelihood of conflicts. Implementing these methods in daily practice can significantly enhance the quality of customer service and support success in the printing business.

Next, we continue to develop and analyse the checklist system. For example, a checklist system designed to support managers in conflict management is an effective tool that enables a structured approach to resolving complex situations and ensures the effectiveness of everyday communication with clients. Below are several key justifications for implementing such a system.

1. Structuring the process. Checklists allow managers to systematize the stages of conflict management, helping to avoid omissions of important actions. Each conflict is unique; however, there are common

stages that can be identified, such as problem identification, analysis, solution development, and agreement on actions. The use of a checklist ensures consistency in conflict management, which can lead to more effective outcomes.

2. Stress reduction. Conflict situations are often accompanied by emotional tension for both the manager and the parties involved. Checklists can serve as an "action plan" that helps the manager focus on specific steps instead of panicking or feeling overwhelmed. This can reduce stress levels and improve the overall communication process.

3. Increased efficiency. With the use of checklists, managers can respond to conflicts more quickly and accurately, as they have a clear plan of action. This saves time, since instead of spending it on deciding what to do next, the manager can follow a validated structure that leads to faster conflict resolution.

4. Support for learning and development. Checklists can serve as a training tool for new managers or employees. They help familiarize staff with best practices in conflict management and provide support in developing relevant skills. Checklists may include recommendations, example phrases, and techniques, which contributes to the enhancement of professional competence in this area.

5. Improvement of communication. Checklists may include elements aimed at improving communication between the parties to a conflict. For example, they may contain clarifying questions, phrases for building rapport, or methods for reframing the problem. This supports more constructive dialogue and reduces the likelihood of conflict escalation.

6. Monitoring and evaluation. Checklists can be used to monitor progress in conflict management. Managers can track which stages have been completed and which remain unfinished, making it possible to assess the effectiveness of their actions. This also supports further improvement of conflict management processes based on accumulated experience.

The checklist system is a powerful tool for managers in the process of managing everyday communication and resolving conflicts. It enables process structuring, stress reduction, efficiency improvement, and learning support. Implementing such a system can significantly contribute to successful conflict resolution and the strengthening of relationships between the parties.

A highly effective tool in the real professional activity of publishing and printing project managers is the mini-card of the managerial communication standard “Stop – Clarify – Agree” (Tbl. 3).

with a clear time frame. This ensures coordination of actions among all participants.

Example phrases: “Our goal is not to miss the deadline”; “At 11:25 we lift the press and start printing; before that – unit preparation for 5–7 minutes.” These formulations create clarity regarding goals and tasks, thereby reducing the likelihood of future misunderstandings.

The communication standard “Stop – Clarify – Agree” represents a practical approach to managing communication in conflict situations. Its use helps maintain safety, reduce tension, achieve a clear understanding of the situation, and ensure coordinated ac-

Table 3

Mini-card of the managerial communication standard “Stop – Clarify – Agree”

Block	Content	Example phrases
Stop	Pause actions in case of safety risks or misunderstandings	“Let’s stop for safety reasons – let’s take five minutes to clarify, without assigning blame”
Clarify	Ask clarifying questions, identify facts and emotions	“What exactly happened?” / “What is the minimum needed to proceed...?”
Agree	Formulate a shared goal and define the next step with timing	“Our goal is not to miss the deadline” / “At 11:25 we start setting up and begin printing; before that – unit preparation for 5–7 minutes”

Tbl. 3 provides an overview of the communication standard “Stop – Clarify – Agree,” which is a useful tool for effective communication management in situations that may lead to misunderstandings or safety risks. Let us consider each block of this standard in more detail.

1. Stop. *Content:* this block emphasizes the need to pause actions in situations where there is a risk to safety or a potential misunderstanding. This is the first and most important step, as it helps prevent further complications and ensures the safety of all participants.

Example phrase: “Stop for safety reasons – let’s take five minutes to clarify, without assigning blame.” This formulation demonstrates that the focus is on safety rather than punishment, which helps reduce tension and creates an atmosphere of openness.

2. Clarify. *Content:* at this stage, it is important to ask clarifying questions in order to identify facts and emotions that may be the causes of conflict or misunderstanding. This makes it possible to gain a clearer understanding of the situation.

Example phrases: “What exactly happened?”; “What is the minimum needed to proceed...?” These questions help reveal details that may be critical for understanding the problem and open the way for constructive discussion.

3. Agree. *Content:* at the final stage, it is important to formulate a shared goal and define the next step

tions. Clearly formulated phrases and questions foster an atmosphere of trust and cooperation, which is essential for successful conflict resolution. Implementing this standard in practice can significantly enhance communication effectiveness within teams and organizations.

For effective management of interaction with interlocutors, managers can also use the pocket card “5 Steps of Communication” (Tbl. 4).

Tbl. 4 presents the manager’s pocket card “5 Steps of Communication” [13–17], which serves as a practical tool for improving communication skills and effectively managing interaction with interlocutors. Let us consider each of the five steps in more detail.

1. Listen. *Brief description:* the first step involves active listening, which means allowing the other person to speak without interruption. This helps create an atmosphere of trust and openness, where the interlocutor feels that their thoughts and feelings are important.

Example phrase: “I hear that...” This phrase demonstrates attentive listening and readiness to receive information, thereby enhancing the quality of communication.

2. Name the emotion. *Brief description:* the next step is to mirror the emotional state of the interlocutor. This helps acknowledge and validate their feelings, which can reduce tension during the conversation.

Table 4

Manager’s pocket card “5 Steps of Communication”

No.	Step	Brief description	Example phrase
1	Listen	Let the person speak without interrupting	“I hear that...”
2	Name the emotion	Mirror the emotional state of the interlocutor	“I see that you are angry / worried”
3	Clarify the facts	Verify and specify the information	“The machine is occupied until 11:20”
4	Shared goal	State the result that unites both sides	“Our goal is to finish without delays”
5	Agree on the next step and timing	Specify clearly who / what / when	“At 11:25 we lift your forms and start printing”

Example phrase: “I see that you are angry / worried.” By recognizing the interlocutor’s emotions, the manager shows not only that they are listening, but also that they understand the person’s state, which contributes to more effective communication.

3. Clarify the facts. *Brief description:* this step involves verifying information in order to avoid misunderstandings and ensure clarity in communication. Accurate data are essential for making informed decisions.

Example phrase: “The machine is occupied until 11:20.” Such a statement helps establish clear facts that may influence subsequent actions and decisions.

4. Shared goal. *Brief description:* it is important to articulate a shared goal that unites the parties involved. This helps focus attention on an outcome that is beneficial for everyone.

Example phrase: “Our goal is to finish without delays.” This formulation emphasizes a common interest and supports a sense of teamwork.

5. Agree on the next step and timing. *Brief description:* the final step consists of specifying concrete actions to be taken, as well as defining responsibility and time frames. This is crucial for ensuring clarity in task execution.

Example phrase: “At 11:25 we lift your forms and start printing.” Clearly defining actions and timing helps avoid misunderstandings and makes the next steps explicit.

The pocket card “5 Steps of Communication” is a simple yet effective tool for managers seeking to improve their communication skills. Applying these five steps helps create a positive atmosphere in which interlocutors feel heard and understood. This enhances communication effectiveness, reduces the likelihood of conflicts, and contributes to the achievement of shared goals. Integrating these steps into everyday practice can significantly improve interaction within teams and across the organization as a whole.

A radio log template is another very simple yet effective communication tool (Tbl. 5).

Table 5

Radio log template with ready-made phrases

Field	What to record	Example
Time	Exact time of the agreement	11:25
Situation / fact	Brief description of the situation	“The machine is occupied until 11:20”
Micro-agreement	Agreed step and time	“Lifting the forms and starting printing at 11:25”
Responsible person	Name or role	“Master Petrenko”
Who informs	Who notifies other departments	“Manager Ivanenko”
Confirmation	Confirmation phrase	“Confirmed – printing starts at 11:25”

Tbl. 5 presents a radio log template with ready-made phrases, which can be used for effective recording of important communication moments in the work process. Such a log is a useful tool for information management and for ensuring clarity in communication. Let us consider each field of the table in more detail.

1. Time. *What to record:* exact time of the agreement.

– *Example:* 11:25.

– *Analysis:* recording the time is critically important for accuracy and coordination of actions. It allows all participants to be aware of exactly when specific actions should take place, thereby reducing the risk of misunderstandings.

2. Situation / fact. *What to record:* a brief description of the situation.

– *Example:* “The machine is occupied until 11:20”.

– *Analysis:* a clear formulation of the situation or fact provides all participants with clarity about the current state of affairs. This enables faster decision-making based on up-to-date information.

3. Micro-agreement. *What to record:* the agreed step and time.

– *Example:* “Lifting the forms and starting printing at 11:25”.

– *Analysis:* this field records a specific agreement between the parties, emphasizing a shared goal and responsibility for execution. It helps avoid confusion in subsequent actions.

4. Responsible person. *What to record:* name or role.

– *Example:* “Master Petrenko”.

– *Analysis:* identifying the responsible person is important for clarity in task management. It makes it easy to determine who is accountable for performing specific actions, thereby increasing the level of responsibility.

5. Who informs. *What to record:* who notifies other departments.

– *Example:* “Manager Ivanenko”.

– *Analysis:* indicating the person who informs others ensures clarity in communication. This helps avoid confusion and ensures that the entire team is informed about changes or important developments.

6. Confirmation. *What to record:* a confirmation phrase.

– *Example:* “Confirmed – start at 11:25”.

– *Analysis:* confirmation in the form of an on-air phrase is important for reinforcing information. It acts as a form of control, allowing all participants to be confident that the information has been correctly received and agreed upon.

The radio log template with ready-made phrases is a useful tool for managing communication and information within teams. It promotes a structured approach to recording key moments, thereby reducing the likelihood of misunderstandings. The use of such logs helps ensure clarity, accountability, and coordination of actions among all participants, which is critically important for the successful completion of tasks.

Thus, the checklist system is an indispensable tool for managers of publishing and printing projects. The use of checklists helps structure the communication process by ensuring consistency of actions and reducing the risk of missing important stages. This not only increases the effectiveness of handling complex situations, but also reduces stress for both the

manager and the participants in a conflict, as a clear action plan provides confidence and predictability.

The mini-card of the communication standard “Stop – Clarify – Agree” is another important element that enables managers to respond to conflicts and challenging situations promptly and effectively. This standard supports the suspension of actions in critical situations, clarification of facts, and formulation of shared goals. Owing to such a structured approach, managers can avoid conflict escalation and maintain constructive dialogue.

The manager’s pocket card “5 Steps of Communication” summarizes the key elements of successful interaction. It provides clear guidance on active listening, mirroring emotions, clarifying facts, defining shared goals, and agreeing on actions. This helps not only to reduce the likelihood of conflicts, but also to create an atmosphere of cooperation, which is critically important for achieving success within a team and the organization as a whole. Implementing all of these tools in practice can significantly enhance the effectiveness of conflict management.

The radio log template with ready-made phrases is an important tool for ensuring effective communication within teams, especially in the context of operational project work, where speed and accuracy of information are of critical importance. This template makes it possible to structure key messages by recording essential elements such as time, situation, micro-agreement, responsible persons, and confirmation. The use of standardized phrases helps reduce the likelihood of misunderstandings and errors, ensuring clarity and transparency in communication. Thanks to the radio log, the team can respond promptly to changing situations, coordinate actions, and maintain a high level of alignment, which is particularly important in stressful or dynamic working conditions.

Within the framework of project implementation, the proposed methodology was introduced into the activities of the advertising and printing agency “Berberis M” (Kharkiv). Context: a small publishing and printing company with a staff of 25 employees, an average monthly order volume of approximately UAH 300,000, an average project turnaround time of 7 days, and 1–2 project managers.

The objective of the implementation was to improve the quality of communication between managers and clients, as well as to reduce the number of conflicts that negatively affect deadlines, budgets, and the company’s reputation. To assess effectiveness, clear performance criteria were defined, reflecting both quantitative and qualitative changes in operations.

Stages of implementation:

Stage 1 – diagnosis of communication problems. Typical difficulties were identified, including

emotional conflicts and misunderstandings with clients caused by different communication styles; the lack of structured negotiation techniques; and a low level of early conflict detection. These issues created risks of missed deadlines and client loss.

Stage 2 – training managers in communication techniques. Managers completed training in active listening, rapport building, reframing, and working with emotional states. This made it possible to establish a foundation for more professional and stable interaction with clients.

Stage 3 – implementation of communication checklists. A system of practical checklists was developed to standardize processes from the first contact with a client through to project completion. The checklists included algorithms for handling complaints, rules for conducting negotiations, and techniques for reducing emotional tension.

Stage 4 – monitoring results. Over a period of 3–6 months, the following indicators were assessed: the number of complaints, the share of repeat clients, the level of satisfaction with communication, and order dynamics.

Effectiveness criteria:

1. Reduction in the number of client complaints.

The implementation of checklists made it possible to reduce the number of formal and informal complaints related to misunderstandings, delays, and emotional conflicts. This served as an indicator of increased transparency and predictability in communication.

2. Growth in the number of repeat clients. The quality of interaction between managers and clients improved, trust increased, and the number of misunderstandings decreased. The share of repeat clients grew by 10–15%, which is strategically important for small companies.

3. Increase in the level of client satisfaction. Satisfaction was assessed based on the following parameters: response speed, clarity of explanations, the manager’s emotional stability, and the ability to propose solutions. The level of satisfaction increased by 20–25%, confirming the effectiveness of the approach in the field of service interaction.

4. Growth in the number of orders by 20–30%. Improved communication and reduced conflict levels directly influenced the speed of client decision-making and their willingness to recommend the company to others. This resulted in an increase in new orders by 20–30%, which is a critically important indicator for small companies.

The implementation of a communication checklist system in the activities of a small publishing and printing company demonstrated that the standardization of communication, combined with psychological tools (NLP techniques, emotional intel-

ligence, and active listening), can significantly improve the quality of client relationships. This approach not only reduces the number of conflicts but also creates a long-term competitive advantage – stability of the client base, growth in orders, and the formation of a positive company reputation.

Recommendations for implementing communication standards in enterprises:

1. Organizational level:

- Develop a corporate communication code that defines rules for negotiations, email correspondence, and meeting management.
- Integrate ISO standards (9001, 14001, 45001) into internal processes to ensure transparency of information flows and accountability control.
- Create a system of checklists for key stages of client interaction: initial contact, agreement of terms, project support, and conflict resolution.

2. Project manager level:

- Apply client communication standards (active listening, acknowledgement of emotions, focus on a shared goal, solution-oriented language).
- Use psychological tools: rapport to build trust; calibration for early detection of tension; reframing to transform conflict-prone statements into constructive ones.
- Implement the mini-card “Stop – Clarify – Agree” as a rapid-response tool in challenging situations.
- Use the pocket card “5 Steps of Communication” for daily practice (listen → name the emotion → clarify facts → shared goal → agree on the step and timing).

3. Staff training and development:

- Conduct regular training in soft skills: emotional intelligence, negotiation, and conflict management.
- Use checklists as training materials for new employees.
- Introduce a mentoring system in which experienced managers share best practices in applying communication standards.

4. Monitoring and effectiveness evaluation:

- Define key performance indicators (KPIs): number of complaints, share of repeat clients, satisfaction level, number of new orders.
- Conduct quarterly analyses of the results of implementing checklists and standards.
- Use customer surveys to assess communication quality.
- Adjust standards based on collected data to ensure relevance and effectiveness.

5. Cultural aspect:

- Foster an atmosphere of trust and openness: standards should function not only as formal rules but as part of the corporate culture.

- Encourage the use of solution-oriented language instead of problem-focused language.
- Support a positive company image through stable and predictable communication with clients.

A roadmap for implementing communication standards is presented in *Tbl. 6*.

human factor, reducing the dependence of communication outcomes on the subjective characteristics of individual manager. Psychological tools, in particular NLP techniques, active listening, and acknowledgment of emotions, complement these standards with a living dimension that contributes to conflict reduction and trust building, enhances the predictability of cli-

Table 6

Roadmap for implementing communication standards

Stage	Tools / actions	Expected results
1. Diagnosis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surveys of clients and employees • Analysis of complaints and conflict cases • SWOT analysis of communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of typical problems • Formation of basic needs for standardization
2. Development of standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ISO procedures • Corporate communication code • Soft Skills Framework 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of unified rules of interaction • Alignment of internal and external processes
3. Staff training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training in NLP techniques (rapport, reframing) • Pocket cards ("5 Steps of Communication") • Mini-card "Stop – Clarify – Agree" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased managerial competence • Reduced stress levels • Development of constructive dialogue skills
4. Implementation of checklists	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Checklists for negotiations • Algorithms for handling complaints • Standards of active listening and emotion acknowledgement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduction in the number of misunderstandings • Increased client trust • Communication transparency
5. Monitoring and evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KPIs: number of complaints, repeat clients, satisfaction level, new orders • Regular surveys • Content analysis of communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduction in complaints by 25–40% • Increase in repeat clients by 10–15% • Increase in satisfaction by 20–25% • Growth in orders by 20–30%
6. Adjustment and development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updating checklists • Adapting standards to new conditions • Mentoring and experience exchange 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuous improvement of communication • Increased company competitiveness • Formation of a culture of trust and openness

Thus, the implementation of communication standards and checklists at an enterprise makes it possible to reduce the number of conflicts, increase the level of customer satisfaction, expand the share of repeat orders, and strengthen the company's reputation in the market.

CONCLUSIONS

The introduction of communication standards and a checklist system into the activities of publishing and printing enterprises has proven to be an effective tool for improving the quality of interaction with clients and for optimizing project management processes in a highly competitive market environment. The use of structured approaches that combine international ISO standards, corporate regulations, and the development of soft skills ensures a balance between formal procedures and the flexibility of the

ent interactions, and creates a stable communicative environment within project teams. The integration of mini-cards, pocket algorithms, and radio logs enables managers to respond promptly to complex and stressful situations without compromising the quality of managerial decisions. As a result of implementing such practices, companies achieve a reduction in the number of complaints, growth in repeat clients, higher levels of customer satisfaction, and an increase in orders, which is critically important for competitiveness and the sustainable development of the business, as well as for the formation of long-term reputational advantages based on trust, openness, and professional communication. The obtained results confirm the feasibility of using a system of communication standards and checklists as a practical tool for the sustainable development of small and medium-sized publishing and printing enterprises. ■

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ФРАНЧАЙЗИНГ ЯК БАЗИС ФОРМУВАННЯ КРОС-КУЛЬТУРНИХ УПРАВЛІНСЬКИХ ПРАКТИК У БІЗНЕС-ПРОЦЕСАХ ПІДПРИЄМСТВ

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Золочевський О. В., Пікула Г. С. Франчайзинг як базис формування крос-культурних управлінських практик у бізнес-процесах підприємств

У статті здійснено аналіз франчайзингу як управлінського базису формування крос-культурних управлінських практик у бізнес-процесах підприємств. Обґрунтовано, що активне поширення франчайзингових моделей у сучасному підприємницькому середовищі супроводжується ускладненням управлінських взаємодій, зумовлених культурною різноманітністю учасників франчайзингових мереж. За таких умов традиційні підходи до стандартизації бізнес-процесів не завжди забезпечують належний рівень ефективності управління. У межах дослідження франчайзинг розглянуто як системоутворююче середовище, у межах якого відбувається трансляція корпоративних стандартів, управлінських регламентів і організаційних рішень, що потребують адаптації до локальних соціокультурних умов функціонування підприємств. Крос-культурний менеджмент інтерпретовано як інструмент узгодження уніфікованих управлінських практик із культурними особливостями персоналу, управлінських стилів і комунікаційних моделей у франчайзингових системах. Визначено, що інтеграція крос-культурних управлінських практик у бізнес-процеси франчайзингових підприємств сприяє підвищенню адаптивності управлінських рішень, узгодженості управління та стійкості функціонування франчайзингових мереж у багатокультурному середовищі. Доведено, що поєднання стандартизації бізнес-процесів і культурної чутливості управління дозволяє знизити рівень управлінських конфліктів, підвищити результативність реалізації бізнес-процесів і конкурентоспроможність підприємств. Отримані результати поглиблюють теоретичні положення щодо взаємозв'язку франчайзингу, управління бізнес-процесами та крос-культурного менеджменту та можуть бути використані при формуванні адаптивних моделей управління підприємствами в умовах багатокультурного підприємницького середовища.

Ключові слова: франчайзинг, крос-культурний менеджмент, управлінські практики, бізнес-процеси, стандартизація, адаптація.

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Zolochevskiy O. V., Pikula H. S. Franchising as the Basis for the Formation of Cross-Cultural Managerial Practices in Enterprise Business Processes

The article analyzes franchising as a managerial basis for the formation of cross-cultural managerial practices in enterprise business processes. It is substantiated that the active spread of franchising models in the modern entrepreneurial environment is accompanied by complications in managerial interactions caused by the cultural diversity of participants in franchising networks. Under such conditions, traditional approaches to standardizing business processes do not always ensure an adequate level of managerial efficiency. Within the study, franchising is considered as a system-forming environment within which the transmission of corporate standards, managerial regulations, and organizational decisions takes place, requiring adaptation to the local sociocultural conditions of enterprise operations. Cross-cultural managerial is interpreted as a tool for aligning standardized managerial practices with the cultural characteristics of staff, managerial styles, and communication patterns within franchising systems. It is defined that integrating cross-cultural managerial practices into the business processes of franchising enterprises enhances the adaptability of managerial decisions, consistency of managerial, and the resilience of franchising networks in a multicultural environment. It is proved that combining business process standardization with cultural sensitivity in management reduces manage-