

## **Leadership in Unstable Conditions: Change Management Strategies and Effective Crisis Management for Achieving Success**

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*Abstract:* - The paper is devoted to the issue of leadership in unstable conditions in terms of change management strategies and effective crisis management for achieving success. The relevance of the study lies in the fact that it is challenging to be a leader in a changing world where it is almost impossible to predict all the factors of influence, as well as the significance of each unfavorable factor. Consequently, the leadership should be based on precise calculations and a deep understanding of the processes. Also, it should be based on the absence of fear of risk and loss of the company's leading position in the market. The article aims to highlight the leadership in unstable conditions in terms of change management strategies and effective crisis management for achieving success. The subject of the study is modern change management strategies in the business environment. Research methods. The research employed such methods as description, analysis and synthesis, comparison, generalization, and modeling. The article outlines the complexities of leadership in the modern unstable environment. The authors describe the factors influencing the contemporary business environment. Furthermore, they analyze the essence of VUCA as a modern world and compare the differences between the VUCA and BANI worlds. The paper considers such features of the contemporary world as complexity, ambiguity, uncertainty, instability, fragility, anxiety, and the presence of many threats. In addition, it summarizes the impact of artificial intelligence on the business environment and competitiveness. The authors describe such modern change management strategies as the strategy of developing emotional intelligence and intuition, the strategy of non-linear thinking, the VUCA concept, and mindfulness. The article describes the possibilities of developing each strategy while training staff and managers. Also, the use of scenarios in specific cases is analyzed. The paper analyzes the essence of crisis management and determines the differences between preventive and curative strategies. The study considers the application of crisis management in certain circumstances and its benefits. It was determined that the relevance of this work is the importance of leadership in today's unstable world, which allows us to determine how leadership can be effectively implemented in various aspects. In addition, due to the pandemic and military operations, economic crises, and the emergence of new markets, it is difficult to fully compete with strong players. Accordingly, the issue of leadership strategies is quite relevant.

*Key-Words:* - Bani, Business environment, Concept, Crisis management, Leadership, Modern change management strategies, Unstable conditions, Vuca.

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## 1 Introduction

Today, it is quite difficult to keep a leading position in the market and maintain leadership. Many factors directly affect the leadership. For example, the instability of the modern business environment is manifested in the fact that the business world can be affected by factors that seem to have no direct connection. For example, a conflict between two countries may be perceived as a political issue. However, if one of the countries closes its border crossing points fully or halfway through the conflict, this factor will have a significant impact on the economic situation. Therefore, companies will need to build new logistics routes and look for new partners and suppliers.

In addition, leadership is now becoming more complicated because various virtual technologies have emerged that allow businesses to find their target audience quickly. If a company uses outdated systems, in this case, it will be difficult for it to achieve leadership, as competitors will use the latest technologies. On the other hand, if the system fails, the company will have to look for new ways to attract the target audience.

Therefore, the issue of leadership in an unstable environment is quite important today. In particular, the study of this topic reveals what strategies should be used by an enterprise if a leader wants to succeed.

## 2 Literature Review

The issue of leadership in unstable conditions in terms of change management strategies and effective crisis management to achieve success has been studied by such Ukrainian researchers as, [1], [2], [3], [4], [5]. In their opinion, a manager must be flexible and quickly adapt to new changes, as well as effectively train staff to have a leadership position.

For example, [2] emphasizes that modern leadership is based on considering various aspects and factors because the current world is quite changing. As a result, leadership is possible today only if the leader thinks outside the box and in a non-linear way without clear correlations.

Another notable study is the work, [4]. The author identifies non-linear thinking as a component

of developing an effective change management strategy. In particular, it is essential not to draw straightforward correlations but to understand correlations as well as to consider psychological and other factors. This is the only way to achieve the desired result.

The analyzed literature is sufficient for the study. However, the issue of leadership in unstable conditions is not fully disclosed, which determines the relevance of this study.

This paper aims to highlight leadership in an unstable environment through the lens of change management strategies and effective crisis management for achieving success. The significance of achieving this goal results from the fact that the modern world is quite unstable, so the business environment needs to adapt to new changes quickly. Therefore, it raises the question of the essence of transformational leadership at the current stage.

The research data allow us to determine that leadership issues in crises are based on both economic methods and methods related to the study of consumer behavior in unstable situations.

## 3 Research Goals

According to the study's aim, the following tasks should be achieved:

- to define the leadership within unstable conditions;
- to determine the impact of the BANI worlds on the business environment;
- to analyze modern change management strategies;
- to describe effective crisis management.

## 4 Methods

The following research methods were used in this study: description, analysis and synthesis, comparison, generalization, and modeling. The description method was used to reflect the essence of leadership in unstable conditions. Analysis and synthesis methods were used to highlight the existing scientific base on the research topic and to determine the main results. The method of comparison was used to compare the worlds of BANI (undefined world that does not lend itself to

explanation) and VUKA (undefined world that lends itself to explanation). The method of generalization was used to summarize the main research findings.

The modeling method is one of the main ones in this study. Its essence lies in the fact that the main change management strategies are reflected and presented as a model. According to this method, elements and aspects were identified that allow to building of a system of steps that facilitates change management in unstable conditions.

## 5 Results

The issue of leadership is currently receiving considerable attention. The reason for this is that today, it is quite challenging to be a leader in the face of such factors as:

- Growing competition.
- New factors of influence.
- Changing geopolitical situation.
- The economy integrates into other areas.

Accordingly, achieving success no longer involves following clear guidelines that promote business development but rather strategic planning to accomplish tasks, considering various factors and scenarios. In particular, if company managers want their company to become a market leader, they should decide with their team what needs to be done to increase profits and expand the target audience. Moreover, they should determine what steps should be taken to achieve success in the following cases: if a new competitor appears, if demand for a particular product or service decreases, if the economic situation in the country worsens, if the main supplier or partner refuses to cooperate, [2].

Given the unstable conditions that are currently present in the Ukrainian economy, in particular, due to Russia's war against Ukraine, leadership involves determining the optimal logistics routes or ways to deliver products to customers. The leader must understand that it may be necessary to change the route or transportation means. Therefore, alternative ways of delivering products or goods must be developed in this case.

The uncertainty also affects the fact that the company's leadership in a particular area is more often determined by how widely the company is represented in the virtual space. After all, the Internet enables the audience to be informed about the existence of a particular brand at minimal cost and with a significant set of marketing tools. It also provides an opportunity to discover customer preferences and demonstrate the benefits of company products and services.

At the same time, the virtual space has precisely the technologies that help the target audience familiarize themselves with products and services without physical contact or the need for a warranty period. Therefore, the client can explore detailed product descriptions in a picture, read reviews, and use trial services on the Internet without visiting a company branch, [6]. Besides, the fact that leadership can be influenced by such factors as virtual space and social networks is evidenced by the studies of such scholars as, [7], [8].

The leadership issue is now complicated by what is commonly called the VUKA world. In other words, it is an unstable, complex, ambiguous, and uncertain world. In particular, the business environment today is influenced by many factors that are difficult to predict and determine their course, such as:

- the geopolitical situation or natural disasters;
- some changes are impossible to predict, or information about them is confidential;
- often, one minor situation has a significant impact on the entire business environment, which could not have been predicted in advance;
- leaders in certain areas often determine the trends of the entire market.

All these factors make it impossible to develop a perfect business strategy that works with great accuracy. Leadership is manifested in the fact that leaders must constantly adapt their company and their product to the current challenges and take risks to be competitive. In an unstable environment, risks often lead to the fact that an enterprise can go bankrupt or lose customers. However, it can also lead to improved market positions, [9].

It is also commonly believed that modern leadership takes place in the BANI world. It is a world where everything is fragile and disturbing, yet this does not mean that such a world is unstable, as certain processes can be predicted. Fragility here is defined by the fact that leadership is about being ready to lose everything but gaining invaluable experience. Quite often, in such a world, one change can affect the trends of the entire market, [10].

According to, [11], the leader's personality can influence the effectiveness of achieving success. Furthermore, leadership is now complicated by anxiety. For example, while it used to be challenging to build an effective business strategy due to the lack of access to the full range of information, today, the problem is that such information is changing rapidly. In other words, the market situation that existed six months ago is entirely different in the next six months. Therefore, if leaders are worried about whether they can

develop the company, this anxiety can only harm its development.

Also, leadership is now full of various threats. The CEO and management staff must constantly expect that a certain situation can cause destabilization. At the same time, they need to plan for the future, what will happen if something goes wrong, and how to deal with it to gain advantages rather than lose the target audience.

The modern world is also full of non-linearities. Thus, it is difficult to determine what kind of event can affect the market environment. For example, the emergence of a new competitor may or may not dramatically affect the market. At the same time, even the coronavirus pandemic was not initially considered a factor that would affect the global economy and the organization of other areas. Therefore, leadership must assess the risk in each factor, [12].

In addition, it is worth noting that artificial intelligence is now a key factor influencing the business environment. Thus, special programs can choose the most optimal option for a person, determine a set of goods and services for a customer, create or generate an image or a specific work of art, and find the necessary information. As a result, they can replace the services of different companies and employees and reduce the cost of their goods. Therefore, leadership must ensure that the company develops in a way that makes its products and services unique so that artificial intelligence cannot surpass them. However, the use of artificial intelligence, depending on the situation and method, can be both legal and illegal, as emphasized by, [13], [14], [15].

Therefore, given the above, the following change management strategies can be identified. They are shown in Figure 1.

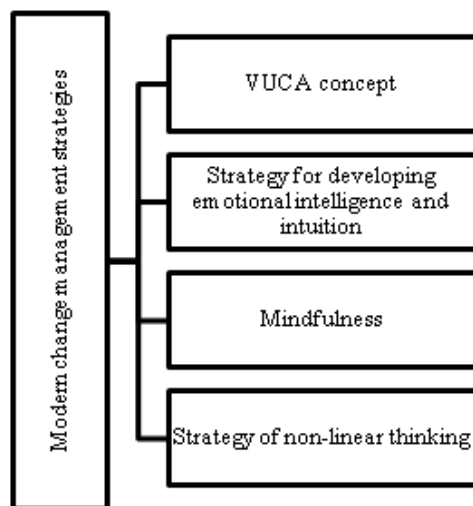


Fig. 1: Modern change management strategies.

The VUCA concept means that a leader who wants to succeed in an unstable environment must be able to see the connection between different processes, realize cause and effect, clearly see the reasons for various events, and make fast decisions. Leadership in today's world is risky, so leaders must understand in advance whether they are ready to build everything again if something fails. Therefore, this concept is determined by the ability to create and reformat everything depending on the circumstances. Also, a leader must be constantly calm and rationally solve problems without unnecessary emotions. In particular, leadership here is based on attention to detail, as well as taking into account various factors, [24].

In addition, according to this concept, leaders must be able to identify their role in specific processes and their environment correctly. In other words, this strategy implies that leaders must understand how they can solve a particular issue and how their subordinates or colleagues can solve the problem as well. It allows us to eliminate those expectations that are difficult or unrealistic to realize, as well as to mobilize resources in time to stop the negative factors. For example, if sales fall due to a deteriorating economic situation, leaders must understand what they can offer employees to retain their jobs due to falling income. Meanwhile, their employees must understand how they can interest the target audience in buying the product, [5].

The concept also involves the development of critical thinking. For example, leaders who think only rationally and operate with simple ratios cannot achieve the desired success for their company. In particular, this is because a leader must see the connection between different processes and predict their trends. As a result, it is vital that the leader can see how some factors can affect others, i.e., perceive risks as something normal, [16].

This strategy can only be implemented through staff training. A leader can do this by engaging companies that offer staff development services. For instance, it is possible to teach critical thinking and determine one's place in teamwork through training, seminars, and courses for employees. A leader can also attend special lectures on leadership development, [17].

The strategy of developing emotional intelligence and intuition involves the formation of such a component of self-development as emotional intelligence in employees and leaders. In particular, it helps to develop the ability to make the right decisions, determine communication tactics, develop intrapersonal aspects and socialization, and

develop compassion. In other words, people learn to control their internal processes and influence the resolution of the situation in this way, [18]. The importance of this strategy in the development of network and transnational business was emphasized in the studies by, [19].

Intuition, in this case, implies the ability of the leader and staff to focus on their feelings rather than on reasonable indicators and trends. In other words, it is important to develop one's premonitions and sense of what is inevitable. At the same time, intuition in leadership is essential only when leaders rely on their own experience and understanding of certain relationships. In this case, certain reflexes and instincts are triggered, allowing a person to feel what is happening. Furthermore, intuitive thinking is also based on the model formed in a person's mind so that a leader can make both the right and wrong decisions. Yet, it is worth noting that the longer a leader thinks about something, the higher the percentage that this decision may be wrong, [1].

Conducting various trainings and seminars forms a strategy for developing emotional intelligence and intuition. In particular, a manager can use practical situations to discuss with staff how to act in certain scenarios, as well as how to respond appropriately and what to do first. Such training is also crucial for leaders, as it will make them feel more confident, [20].

The strategy of non-linear thinking is manifested in the fact that the leader must learn to think not according to certain standards but to see the essence of specific processes. In particular, if a company surveys the target audience, it should realize that the results may differ from the real picture. For example, there may be the following scenarios:

- If respondents want to provide an answer, that will present them in a better light.
- If respondents wish to reflect their positive attitude towards the brand.
- If respondents want to hide something.

In particular, there are the following strategies of non-linear thinking, which are demonstrated in Figure 2.

For example, if a survey is conducted on the target audience's income level to understand the pricing policy's formation, respondents may provide a false answer about their real income to create a vision of themselves as successful and fulfilled for the brand.

In other words, non-linear thinking allows a leader to get the desired result while looking at the problem non-standardly. Often, such a decision may be risky and illogical, but it is mostly the right one. In addition, staff training takes place through the

study of practical cases, when real-life experience determines which tactics are correct. Besides, leaders can teach their staff and learn from their own experience when the company's mistakes are not something to be hidden but instead can be a helpful experience for achieving success, [4].

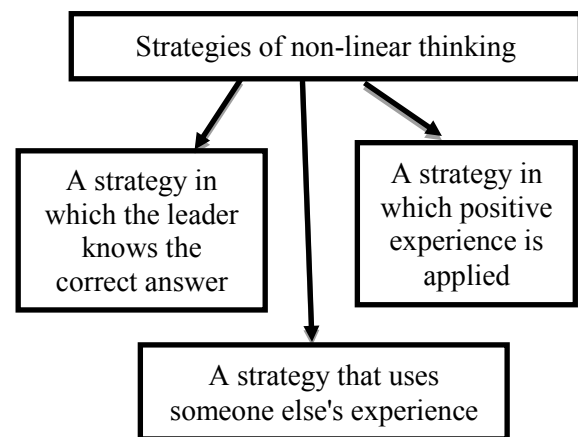


Fig. 2.: Strategies of non-linear thinking

According to, [21], mindfulness is a strategy whereby a leader does not use intrusive ideas. In other words, a leader does not worry about the fact that the company is operating in an unstable environment but simply develops options for the company's development. As a result, the leader can control all processes in the organization, allowing them to succeed quickly. They are guided only by their own experience and do not use situational assessments but focus on the critical aspects of the present. Therefore, leaders do not just constantly improve their productivity but also train their staff. This allows them to increase the overall company's effectiveness, [22].

In particular, mindfulness can be developed through seminars and online classes. Accordingly, this strategy aims to build normal relationships between employees, customers, and partners. An essential aspect of this strategy is that employees and managers learn not to be attached to certain things and places. For example, if a brand has a well-known product line that is no longer in demand, it should abandon such a product. The strategy is also effective now when businesses have to relocate during the war, so being tied to a location only negatively affects success, [25].

Leadership in an unstable environment means that a company must have a developed apparatus for getting out of difficult situations, namely, a crisis management system. It can be both preventive and emergency. Preventive crisis management is the development of alternative ways out of difficult situations before they occur. It is possible to do this

when a company understands the risks it may face. At the same time, it is impossible to foresee all the unfavorable situations that may occur, but their calculation already allows for the development of specific ways to improve operations. For example, if a company understands that it may be subject to hacker attacks or stop working due to a server failure, it should define its activities in such a way as to organize work on additional services, [23].

An emergency crisis management occurs when a situation has already happened that may destabilize the company's operations. Mainly, such problems arise when an economic crisis occurs or when factors can affect the company's financial condition. As a result, when a problematic issue arises, the company must quickly adapt to new realities. It is related to changes in the organization of the company's work, as well as to changes in employees' activities and changes in the leader's thinking, [3].

Also, crisis management nowadays mostly solves the problems that arise due to the war's impact on the functioning of organizations. These may include the following:

- relocation of an enterprise;
- organizational changes;
- reorientation to a new market;
- search for new partners;
- expansion of the target audience.

Therefore, wartime leadership is complex and requires strong-willed decisions.

## 6 Discussion

According to our research, leadership in an unstable environment is a complex and integrated process that requires the cooperation of the manager and staff. However, it is a controversial issue what strategies should be chosen to achieve success. In particular, it is determined that the company should make innovative decisions, and the leader should take risks to achieve the desired. However, such a risk can lead to the company's collapse, and it may lose its market position. Therefore, despite their effectiveness, the analyzed strategies can only work if certain factors coincide. As a result, none of the strategies considered can guarantee success for a leader.

It is also determined that crisis management is preventive and extraordinary. At the same time, it is not considered what measures are carried out mainly in managing situations that have not occurred, as well as in handling cases that have already happened. Accordingly, more attention should be paid to crisis management, for example, how

leadership affects the development of crisis management.

It can be noted that promising areas of research on this issue include as follows:

- The role of leadership in solving problematic issues.
- The personality of a leader in uncertain conditions.
- The choice of a specific leadership strategy depends on the situation.

In particular, it is advisable to consider specific strategies certain companies use depending on the unstable environment they face.

## 7 Conclusions

Therefore, this paper has highlighted leadership in unstable conditions in terms of change management strategies and effective crisis management for achieving success. The importance of this topic results from the fact that the modern world is unstable. For this reason, a leader must make effective decisions to avoid conflict and crises.

The article describes leadership in an unstable environment. The modern world is marked by various factors that affect the effectiveness of activities, such as economic, social, and political factors. These include economic and geopolitical factors, as well as the impact of virtual space and artificial intelligence. In addition, competitiveness significantly affects the specifics of doing business.

The authors determine the impact of the VUCA and BANI worlds on the business environment. It is established that the VUCA world is defined by its instability and uncertainty. In other words, each factor can significantly affect business. At the same time, the BANI world is defined as one where the world is fragile and disturbing, and it is possible to find a correlation between different factors.

The article analyzes modern change management strategies. Current change management strategies include the following:

- the strategy of developing emotional intelligence and intuition;
- the strategy of non-linear thinking;
- the VUCA concept;
- mindfulness.

The combination of different strategies allows for achieving the desired results.

This paper describes effective crisis management. Effective crisis management is a way of solving issues when a leader implements changes and gets the desired result. Such management has a preventive and emergency nature. At the same time,

hostilities have a significant impact on the ways of solving complex issues of using crisis management.

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### **Contribution of Individual Authors to the Creation of a Scientific Article (Ghostwriting Policy)**

The authors equally contributed to the present research, at all stages from the formulation of the problem to the final findings and solution.

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The authors have no conflict of interest to declare.

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