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CHALLENGES OF PROJECT MANAGEMENT IN UNCERTAIN TIMES

In the 21st century, project management has become one of the most dynamic and rapidly developing disciplines. The global environment is increasingly shaped by political instability, technological disruption, and the long-term consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic. Companies and organizations are forced to operate in conditions of growing uncertainty, which requires project managers to rethink their methods, improve flexibility, and integrate innovative tools into everyday practice. The following paper expands on key challenges and trends in project management that shape its future development.

Global Economic Shifts and Trade Wars

The trade conflict between the United States and China remains one of the most important factors influencing global project management. Tariffs, restrictions, and unstable cooperation patterns increase risks for international projects. For instance, supply chain disruptions force companies to diversify markets and search for alternative suppliers. This trend is especially relevant for Ukraine and European countries, which are integrated into the global value chain and highly dependent on the stability of international trade.

Digitalization and Artificial Intelligence

Rapid digitalization has transformed project management into a technology-driven discipline. Artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning tools allow project

managers to forecast risks, optimize resource allocation, and improve decision-making accuracy. For example, AI-powered platforms can identify early signs of project delays, propose corrective measures, and evaluate performance. In addition, digital project methodologies such as Agile, Scrum, and Kanban emphasize adaptability and flexibility, ensuring that teams remain efficient even in turbulent environments.

Geopolitical Instability and Military Conflicts

Geopolitical instability has become another major challenge for project management. The Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2022 demonstrated how military conflicts could disrupt logistics, paralyze investment projects, and significantly increase risks. International companies operating in unstable regions must develop flexible risk management strategies, including scenario planning, emergency reserves, and relocation of operations. Project managers today need to account not only for financial or technological risks but also for complex political and security dimensions.

Sustainability and ESG Principles

Sustainability has moved from being a voluntary practice to a mandatory requirement for many organizations. ESG (Environmental, Social, Governance) principles are increasingly integrated into project lifecycles. Companies such as Microsoft and Tesla actively report on their ESG performance, while European businesses adapt to EU green policies. In Ukraine, despite the war, many firms also incorporate sustainability principles, recognizing their importance for attracting investors and maintaining competitiveness. This shift requires project managers to balance efficiency with environmental and social responsibility [2, 47].

To better illustrate the challenges and trends in project management, it is useful to consider several real-world case studies. These cases highlight how global companies and Ukrainian businesses adapt to uncertainty, crises, and the growing importance of sustainability.

Firstly, Microsoft faced the challenge of maintaining productivity during the COVID-19 pandemic. By rapidly transitioning to remote work, the company leveraged Microsoft Teams, Azure DevOps, and advanced cloud solutions to coordinate global project teams. This allowed the continuation of critical projects and set an example of how digital tools support resilience [3].

Secondly, Tesla represents a strong example of how ESG principles are integrated into project management. The company's Impact Reports detail its commitment to reducing CO₂ emissions, adopting renewable energy sources, and promoting sustainability across all operations. These initiatives show how environmental and social responsibility are now essential parts of global project strategies.

Finally, Ukrainian IT companies such as SoftServe and EPAM adapted their project management practices during the war. By relocating parts of their teams abroad, introducing hybrid work models, and applying Agile methodologies, they managed to continue delivering projects to international clients. This demonstrates how flexibility and rapid adaptation ensure business continuity even under extreme geopolitical challenges.

Modern project management operates in an environment characterized by rapid change and high uncertainty. Success increasingly depends on the ability of managers to combine classical methodologies with innovative tools, digital technologies, and sustainable approaches. The future of project management will be strongly influenced by artificial intelligence, global economic transitions, and the rising demand for ethical and environmentally responsible outcomes. Project managers who embrace flexibility, adaptability, and innovation will be best positioned to succeed in this challenging context. In addition, case studies confirm that organizations which adopt digitalization, prioritize sustainability, and develop flexible crisis-response strategies are more likely to remain competitive and resilient in the long term.

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THE MAIN ASPECTS OF TEAMWORK IN A PROJECT MANAGEMENT ENVIRONMENT

In today's context of rapid change and digital transformation, teamwork has become one of the key factors in the successful implementation of projects. The project environment is characterized by high dynamics, the need to adapt quickly to new customer requirements, and effective interaction with various stakeholders. In this regard, the role of the team is decisive, since collective interaction allows the achievement of set goals within deadlines and budget.

Teamwork in project management is not limited to task execution. It also includes planning, analysis, problem-solving, and even the formation of corporate culture. A project team becomes a micro-model of the organization, where it is important to balance the individual interests of participants with the global goals of the project.