

# Moral Values of Russian Young Men as an Indicator in Effective Negotiations

Osipenok O.A.

Department of Foreign Languages  
Irkutsk State University  
Irkutsk, Russia  
cominagetcha@mail.ru

Karnakova I.M.

Department of Foreign Languages  
Irkutsk State University  
Irkutsk, Russia  
karnakova.i@mail.ru

**Abstract** – The article considers moral values of Russian young men. The authors consider moral values as the key features of future specialists. The research conducted by the authors is devoted to the problem discussed in the article. In order to get the answers to research questions, the authors surveyed a sample of 130 young men by means of a questionnaire. The authors present the analysis of the research which demonstrates the features of character and moral values which are recognized by young men as the most respectable; as well as moral values and the features they possess themselves. The experience of foreign researchers in the field of ethical effective negotiations has been analyzed.

**Keywords** – moral values, society, negotiations, personality traits, ethical, effective

## I. INTRODUCTION

The fact that negotiation is an essential part of human life is taken for granted. People are involved in negotiation process virtually in all spheres of their lives: professional, social, political, educational, private etc. To negotiate effectively people need to know not only the basic rules, tactics of negotiation, formulate particular targets and objectives. They should think of their reputation among the colleagues and even the opponents. In order to establish long-lasting relationships with the counterparts, and be effective in the future professional career they should accept moral values recognized in the modern society. The purpose of this study is to find out moral values of Russian young men, the personality traits they possess themselves and those ones they appreciate in the others. Moreover, the authors single out the main conditions that enable young people succeed in their future career. The authors explore if young men feel ready to break moral values in order to achieve their goals or if they consider it to be immoral.

## II. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A consistent thread running through many of the ethical and moral scandals of the last decade is a flagrant disregard for basic standards of honesty. Lying and cheating seemed to be in vogue, and the examples abound. Scientists falsify their research results. Major corporations fail to disclose product defects or chemical spills. Manufactures fail to report known defects in their products.

Negotiations are an interesting arena for the study of ethical decision making regarding honesty. Firstly, negotiation is a

pervasive activity in the management context. Secondly, and more importantly, those who have written about effective negotiation strategies have often suggested that some types of dishonest behavior may be appropriate or even necessary for a person to be an effective negotiator. [1]

However, most of people are eager to be engaged in honest ethical negotiations which could result in long-lasting and trustful relationships.

Most people learn ethical norm at home, at schools, in church, or in other social settings. Although most people acquire their sense of right and wrong during childhood, moral development occurs throughout life and human beings pass through different stages of growth as they mature. Ethical norms are so ubiquitous that one might be tempted to regard them as simple commonsense. On the other hand, if morality were nothing more than commonsense, then why are there so many ethical disputes and issues in our society?

One plausible explanation of these disagreements is that all people recognize some common ethical norms but interpret, apply, and balance them in different ways in light of their own values and life experiences. Many different disciplines, institutions, and professions have standards for behavior that suit their particular aims and goals. These standards also help members of a discipline to coordinate their actions or activities and to establish the public trust of a discipline. For instance, ethical standards govern conduct in medicine, law, engineering, and business. [2]

It is impossible to talk about moral values and ethical negotiations without specifying some terms. Although morality and ethics are closely interrelated they are defined differently. The dictionary definition of ethics is “the study of ideal human character; the nature of the highest good; a system of moral principles; and so on”. [3] As for morality or moral values, they are related to the right or wrong sides of the actions.

Both these phenomena characterize effective negotiations. Lax and Sebenius [4] define negotiation as “a process of potentially opportunistic interaction by which two or more parties, with some apparent conflict, seek to do better through jointly decided action, than they could otherwise”.

Lewicki, Litterer, Minton and Saunders [5] state that a negotiation situation has the following parameters: a) two or more parties who are interdependent; b) a conflict of interest; c)

the parties are attempting to use one or more form of influence to obtain a “better” set of outcomes; and d) the parties expect that there will be some “give and take”, or concession making, to resolve their conflict.

The authors consider the negotiations as the field where the specialists in various spheres can achieve their goals with maximum benefit for both parties. To do this perfectly, negotiators should be pursued in accordance with the standards of negotiation culture which we define as a complicated dynamic professional feature characterized by a set of definite personality traits and directed to the effective performing negotiations. [6]

All discussed aspects encouraged the authors to explore the attitude of Russian young men to the moral values and ethical negotiations. Why have young men been particularly chosen? The authors agree upon the fact that the number of women participating in negotiations of different levels is constantly increasing. However most of negotiating situations are held by men.

When deciding what questions to include in the questionnaire, the authors were guided by the goal to find the most effective way to reveal the correlation between personal and social values, and thus to anticipate the way people might behave in different situations.

The authors made a questionnaire containing the following items:

- What personality traits do you appreciate?
- What traits do you personally possess?
- What values are recognized in modern Russian society? (choose three options from the list)
- What personality aspects are inherent to Russian young men?
- What is the most important in building up a successful career? (choose three options from the list)
- Who is responsible for the morale of the Russian society?
- Can you break moral values to achieve success?

The authors interviewed 130 young men in the age range from 18 to 23 years old. Almost all of them come from Irkutsk region being full-time students at in various Irkutsk Universities. The research revealed the following results:

Answering the first question the respondents enumerated such personality aspects as, kindness, honesty, sincerity, tenderness, a sense of humor, pragmatism, purposefulness, openness, responsibility, coolness, reliability, confidence, tolerance. The most important of these were kindness – 52%, honesty – 76%, purposefulness – 52%. The traits among the least important were pragmatism – 12%, coolness – 20%, confidence – 20%, tolerance – 20%.

The answer to the second question showed that the young men largely possess such traits as kindness – 36%, sincerity – 36%, a sense of humor – 44%, tenderness – 28%, openness –

28%. According to their answers the other personality traits are less inherent to them: honesty – 24%, pragmatism – 12%, purposefulness – 20%, responsibility – 16%, reliability – 16%, tolerance – 8%.

As for the next item, among the values which characterize modern Russian society they named:

- Family and children – 56%;
- Public activity – 20%;
- Work for the benefit of the community – 4%;
- Patriotism – 28%;
- Religion – 28%;
- Education and culture – 16%;
- Self- actualizing – 24%;
- Welfare – 60%;
- Prestigious position in the society – 40%.

As it can be seen, most young men think that main characteristics of modern Russian society are welfare, prestigious position in the society, family and children.

Characterizing a modern young man, the respondents pointed out the following features of character: patriotism, optimism, kindness, trust, patience, courage, purposefulness, independence, love of freedom, laziness, honesty, tenderness, diligence, commercialism.

On the one hand, the positive features are optimism – 40%, love of freedom – 52%, patience – 36%, courage – 32%. On the other hand, we have remarked that according to their answers a modern young man is featured by laziness – 76% and commercialism – 36%. The authors consider these traits to be negative. Such personality traits as kindness, tenderness, diligence got 8% each.

Thinking of the fifth item, young men chose the following conditions which could lead them to a successful career in future:

- Good education – 44%;
- Intellectual ability – 52%;
- Strong will – 48%;
- The right connections in the society – 44%;
- Purposefulness – 40%;
- Diligence – 40%;
- Persistence – 40%;
- Money – 24%;
- Charm or charisma – 60%.

Having analyzed the results, the authors noted that charm/charisma, intellectual ability and good education are recognized by young men as the key factors in building up a successful career.

Realizing the assumption that the morale of the society is a very urgent problem nowadays we included this item into the questionnaire. The respondents believed that the morale of the society is in the area of responsibility of:

- Educational institutions – 32%;
- Family – 56%;
- Mass Media – 36%;
- Government – 36%.

Moreover, the respondents were asked to give their own answer to this question. 4% of the respondents thought that the person himself or herself is responsible for it and 8% of them supposed that the society itself is responsible for its morale.

And having expressed their opinion on the last item, concerning the readiness to break moral values to achieve success they gave the following answers:

- 52% of them are ready to break moral values if necessary;
- 32% of young men consider it impossible;
- 8% of the respondents could not give the answer;
- 4% of them think that moral values outlived themselves;
- 4% are sure that everything depends on a particular situation.

Here it can be seen that half of the respondents may violate moral standards, if a particular situation demands. This may be the case if one's welfare is involved, as 60% of people picked it up as a value recognized in the society. At the same time 36% of the respondents opposed this idea.

Taking into consideration the above mentioned analysis, what the young men appreciate in people around generally goes in line with the personality traits they possess themselves. And personality traits are known to play a vital role in building up one's reputation.

The authors consider trust to be the basis of personal reputation. If the negotiator does not trust the opponent, he or she doubts the opponent reputation.

Reputation is understood as "the opinion that people in general have about someone or something, or how much respect or admiration someone or something receives, based on past behaviour or character". [7]

As business term reputation is "the opinion that people have of something or someone, based on past behavior or character. [8]

For psychologists, this coherent image someone has of another party's character is called a person-schema. The schemas are cognitive structures, based on declarative knowledge, which give meaning to environmental stimuli. The importance of identifying reputations as perceptual mechanisms that evoke schema is because of the durable nature of schemas. When parties have an organizing schema from the outset, it influences their interpretation of subsequent information.

According to Tinsley and Cambria [9] a final characteristic of reputation emerges over time. Often this time spans across different transactions, so that reputations are a way of linking transactions across time. For example, although one may be currently negotiating a more discrete transaction (e.g., rise at work), these discrete transactions are often embedded within a series of prior negotiated transactions (as a repeat customer or when discussing job assignments with your boss), or future ones.

They add that if reputations are perceptual mechanisms that develop over time and evoke person-schemas to help characterize the other party. How do these reputations influence the negotiation process? Although negotiators typically try to maximize their final outcomes, the process by which final outcome are maximized is "mixed motive" in nature, meaning that in order for negotiators to maximize their own individual outcomes they must try both to cooperate with the other side to create joint value (the strategy also known as integration) and to claim individual value (the strategy also known as competition). Given that there are at least two strategic orientations embedded in any negotiated exchange, negotiations are marked by high degrees of uncertainty (as to which strategic orientation the other is using at any one point in time). This uncertainty is where reputations become important.

A reputation as well as trust is relatively simply to maintain but once discredited is very complicated to restore again.

Lewicki and Robinson [1] propose that dishonesty in negotiation is primarily concerned with the problems of lying and truth telling.

Information generally and in negotiation particularly is one of the most valuable and dominant sources of power. Possessing relevant, important information strengthens the negotiator's position.

Since negotiation is primarily a process of exchanging and communicating this information in a persuasive manner, the opportunities for unethical conduct are the ones of dishonest communication. Negotiators must decide how open and direct to be about their true settlement preferences, how to manage potential access to privileged communication, and how open to be about future and intended actions (threats and promises).

Lewicki [1] argued that the primary purpose of lying in negotiation is to increase the liar's power over the opponent through false or misleading information. Lies function to misinform the opponent, to eliminate or obscure the opponent's choice alternatives, or to manipulate the perceived costs and benefits of particular options that the opponent may wish to pursue.

According to the classification formulated by Lewicki and Robinson [1] lies take several forms:

- Misrepresentation of position to an opponent. A negotiator distorts his/her preferred settlement point.
- Bluffing. A negotiator falsely states his/her intentions to perform some act. Bluffs can generally be described as false promises and false threats.

- Falsification. A third form of lying is the introduction of erroneous, incorrect information as though it were true. Examples include erroneous and misleading financial information, certifications of “proofs”, or false warranties and guarantees.
- Deception. It attempts to manipulate the opponent’s logical and inferential processes, in order to lead the opponent to an incorrect conclusion or deduction.
- Selective disclosure or misrepresentation to constituencies. The final form of lying occurs in situations where other parties – in addition to the opponent – are involved in the negotiating relationship. The primary difference is in the target audience.

Hon Jamie Jacobs [10] thinks that “as negotiators become more irritating, more stubborn, and more unethical, their effectiveness ratings drop...”

All points mentioned above can break moral values, ruins not only the reputation of the ethical and effective negotiator but also the career.

Trust can be understood in different ways. For example, Moorman [11] defines trust as a belief, a feeling or an expectation of exchange which results from the party’s expertise, intentions and reliability. Williamson [12] defines trust as “the result of a relational computation meant to reduce transaction costs”.

Trust among the partners assumes that the parties are confirmed in performing negotiation in a reliable and effective manner. Trust can slow down tension at the negotiating table, settle up conflict situation and lead the parties to the compromising decision-making satisfying both partners.

Delech [13] insists that trust has the three-dimensional nature. It jointly includes affective dimensions (goodwill and integrity as related to ethics and moral) and cognitive ones (competence as related to tangible expectations).

- Goodwill: it is the fact of believing that the partner is worth the trust and respects the mutual well being and interests of the parties. [14]
- Integrity: it is believed that the promises of the other party will be respected and that information exchange will be sincere. In other words, it measures the partner degree of compliance with principles judged acceptable. [15]
- Competence: it is believed that the partner has the skills, qualifications and resources to efficiently intervene within their expertise. It is executing the relationship that binds suppliers and customers (increasing trust and respecting written or spoken promises). [16]

Trust is hard to earn and easy to destroy. [10] The efficiency of a negotiation, the maximization of value, and the likelihood of a mutually beneficial agreement are all products of positive working relationships that in turn rest on trust earned through behavior. Trust produces cooperation, sharing information, and seeking mutually satisfying solutions to problems. Trust has

been called ‘social capital’, facilitating positive interactions, collaboration and a sense of satisfaction.

It is possible to conclude that ethical behavior through the negotiations will be rewarded. It implies cooperation, compromise, and mutually satisfying outcomes.

Hon Jamie Jacobs [10] offers some practical tips to increase trust in negotiation:

- Establish a relationship with your adversary. As we become better acquainted, we stop objectifying the other, find things we have in common, open up and start feeling comfortable and connected, and the seeds of trust are sown.
- Obey the rules of the game. The quickest way to lose trust is to violate a set of rules, whether it is returning phone calls, being on time, or delivering on a promise. The rules may be different when parties have different expectations for cultural, business or social reasons. Know the rules that govern your negotiation and obey them.
- Make low risk/ high return concessions. A concession can work wonders for trust. By legitimately appreciating the other party’s situation and making a move to meet its needs, you signal a desire to have a positive relationship, and establish a reputation as someone who is competent and easy to get along with, and who understands what the other side values.
- Negotiating with the ethically challenged. Deception is the use of information to create a false belief. The more prepared and knowledgeable you are, the less likely you will be misled. Do not take information you receive at face value. Ask questions and ask for documentation.
- Impasse. If you are unsuccessful in negotiating with your counterpart, consider using a third-party neutral. A mediator can build trust and rapport, communicate concessions without making a party vulnerable, receive candid information without subjecting the party to exploitation, and filter information in a way that can lead to a successful outcome.

To sum up all the aspects examined above the authors agree upon the fact that a negotiator establishes this reputation slowly and by creating “small wins”.

Tinsley and Cambria [9] suggested one common technique: first to ask the hostage taker if he\she wants a negotiator to tell the truth or not. This does several things. First, it starts a reciprocity process, because when a hostage taker says “yes” and a negotiator agrees, then a negotiator has made a concession of sorts, establishing that a negotiator is willing to work with the hostage taker or problem-solve. Second, when a hostage taker says “yes” a negotiator can then agree, and has started to build his or her reputation for honesty. Third, when a hostage taker says “yes”, a negotiator can then reply that he will be honest, but a hostage taker must promise to not do any harm if he has a negative reaction to what a negotiator might say. This starts to establish the negotiator’s reputation for compassion

and problem-solving – that a negotiator wants a good outcome for everyone. It also begins establishing control for a negotiator.

In situations of conflict negotiations, a negotiator should follow his or her own individual line of argumentation, a unique dialogue. A negotiator participating in conflict negotiations should build a reputation for credibility, collaboration, compromise more thoughtfully.

Thus the research has shown that reputation based on moral values is vitally important in negotiations and should not be left to chance. Young men building up their career need to realize the impact their reputation has. They should keep in mind that the reputation should be maintained throughout their professional activity. It is the reputation that helps them to strengthen not only their position in the society but also establish long-lasting relationships and ensure information exchange.

Young men caring about their reputation should not forget about their colleagues while negotiating. Support them if necessary in troubleshooting situations. [17]

### III. CONCLUSION

Furthermore, ethical behavior is perceived as more effective by a counterpart. Finally, even in a single session of negotiations with no interactions carried out before and without any further interactions, the intention to create a trustful reputation is very valuable. Organizations employing young men appreciate specialists with respectable reputation presenting them as a “brand” of the company in negotiations with different counterparts whether they are well-trained and experienced or not, and in negotiations of any level. Building up reputation is a long, purposeful, and careful process. It takes time and much effort and cannot be discredited. However, it is and will be one of the most professionally valuable tools for young men who enable them to be effective and successful in different negotiations and in the future career. Thus once built reputation is easier to maintain and protect than restore and regain.

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