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THE AXIOLOGICAL DIMENSION OF UNIVERSITY BRANDING IN THE DIGITAL AGE THROUGH THE CONTEXT OF DEIRDRE MCCLOSKEY'S HUMANOMICS

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The article examines the ethical potential of Deirdre McCloskey's humanomics in the context of forming the moral image of the university and a value-oriented institutional culture. Humanomics is considered a philosophical approach that integrates institutional reflection with the tradition of virtue ethics. In this perspective, the university emerges as a moral community in which the production of knowledge is inseparable from the development of ethical responsibility and respect for human dignity.

The study highlights the role of virtues in shaping the ethical brand of a contemporary technical university. In particular, it explores the philosophical meaning of courage, prudence, moderation, justice, and solidarity in the professional formation of engineers and researchers. Humanomics provides a conceptual foundation for revealing the ethical dimension of institutional reputation and interprets the university brand as an expression of moral culture embodied in daily academic practice. Special attention is given to the humanistic principles of inclusivity and gender equality.

Using the example of National Aerospace University "Kharkiv Aviation Institute", the article demonstrates how the principles of humanomics are implemented in the activities of a technical university, integrating educational, research, and developmental processes into a unified system of value-based branding. The academic environment is portrayed as a space of moral communication, where the values of trust, responsibility, and dialogue are structurally embedded in all aspects of educational and research activity.

The study shows that the ethical image of the university is formed through the combination of intellectual competence, moral reflection, and social responsibility. In this context, the university functions as a cultural institution that produces knowledge while cultivating ethical consciousness in society. Humanomics serves as a philosophical and methodological resource for understanding the moral foundations of contemporary academic institutions and for conceptualizing the university as a living ethical ecosystem founded on virtues, trust, and collective responsibility, realized in practice through the integration of educational, research, and developmental processes into a coherent system of value-based branding.

Key words: humanomics, ethical branding, trust, education, reputational capital, digitalization, virtues, image, communication.



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Contemporary sociocultural and technological transformations place new demands on universities that extend beyond their traditional educational mission. In conditions of the general accessibility of information, the university acquires the role of a guarantor of the relevance and reliability of knowledge. Such a transformation of its social role determines the increasing importance of the value dimension that ensures the adequate functioning of the institution within the global educational space. Higher education forms a space of trust, responsibility, and academic integrity that is realized through the deliberate formation of an ethical brand of the university as a systematically organized image of the institution that reflects moral values, academic integrity, social responsibility, and a culture of communication integrated into the managerial, communicative, and interactive practices of the educational community.

The university functions as an open intellectual system in which the pursuit of technological excellence is combined with ethical orientations and ensures the sustainable development of the institution while affirming its role as a center of intellectual and moral development. In this context reputational capital and trust become organic outcomes of the interaction between the university and the broader world, and the ethical brand becomes a point of convergence for contemporary educational methodologies, social responsibility, and the moral foundations of the academic community. In this way the issue of developing strategies for the formation of the ethical brand of the university is actualized as a key factor of trust, reputational stability, and social responsibility in the contemporary conditions of rapid transformation of the sociocultural environment and of the educational sphere in particular.

The problem of constructing the public image of an educational institution possesses a profound theoretical foundation that considers ethics as a basis of institutional sustainability. The analysis of the scholarly literature makes it possible to trace the development from a sociological interpretation toward a philosophical understanding of managerial models of ethical branding.

A fundamental contribution to the study of the institutional nature of trust is the approach of Anthony Giddens, who defines trust as a critical element of the stability of any expert systems [1, p. 76]. For a university this means that its public image should be grounded in symbolic signs of reliability. Trust in this context functions as a dynamic process of reflexive confirmation of professional competence and ethical integrity before society. The philosophical orientation of constructing a new mission for academic institutions is presented in the concept of the “ecological university” developed by Ronald Barnett, who emphasizes that under contemporary conditions the university should transcend the limits of purely intellectual autonomy and transform into a subject of ethical action. The formation of the image of such an institution is based on an ethics of care for knowledge and for society, within which responsibility becomes the principal criterion of the authenticity of the university space [2].

The transformation of values in the conditions of informational abundance is examined in detail by Stefana Broadbent and Claire Lobe-Mari, where within the educational context the research emphasis shifts from the possession of information toward the ethics of its verification. The public image of the university is constructed as the image of a moral authority that provides orientation within a complex field of meanings, within which the ethical position of the institution becomes the filter that transforms chaotic data into socially valuable knowledge [3, p. 113].

The managerial model for the implementation of these ideas is proposed by Goran Svensson and Greg Wood, who substantiate that the ethical culture of an organization constitutes its most valuable intangible asset. The construction of a public image through the implementation and communication of ethical codes makes it possible to convert internal integrity into external reputation. Ethical branding therefore appears as an instrument of the capitalization of trust [4, p. 305–307].

The national scholarly interpretation of the problems of higher education through the perspective of institutional reputation is represented in the works of Serhii Kurbatov. In examining the model of the world class university, the author argues that the status of an elite institution of the twenty first century represents the materialization of a high academic idea. The public image of a university reflects its capacity to produce intellectual output together with high moral standards, which determines its role as a leading center of influence within the global educational space [5, p. 12–13].

The problem of the transformation of worldview, thinking, and educational practices within the context of digital culture, examined in the works of Olga Horodyska and Olga Dolska, actualizes the question of the value foundations of the functioning of the university and provides a theoretical basis for understanding the ethical brand as a form of institutional self determination within the conditions of a blended educational reality and the transformational changes of academic communication [6, p. 8]. The importance of strategic positioning is emphasized by Galyna Piatnytska, who defines the brand of higher education as a specific asset grounded in long term trust [7, p. 134].

The practical aspects of the implementation of these strategies are presented in the works of Lidiia Kaliuga and Olena Afanasieva, who interpret the brand as an instrument of success within an oversaturated educational market [8, p. 288]. Particular attention should be given to the approach of Halyna Plysenko, who substantiates ethical branding as a strategy of sustainable growth. The author demonstrates that the capitalization of trust through transparency and social responsibility functions as the principal mechanism for the development of reputational resilience in contemporary conditions [9].

Despite the existence of studies devoted to the ethical branding of educational institutions, the contemporary scholarly discourse continues to be dominated by an instrumental approach to reputation that does not sufficiently consider the role of the internal virtues of the participants in the educational process as the primary source of trust. This circumstance determines the relevance of addressing the methodology of humanomics developed by Deirdre McCloskey, within which the ethical brand of a university is interpreted as a natural consequence of the affirmation of moral virtues and the formation of high-quality academic communication.

The purpose of this study is to identify the potential of the concept of humanomics proposed by Deirdre McCloskey as a conceptual foundation for the development of the ethical brand and the image strategy of the university oriented toward values, trust, and moral leadership.

Today ethical branding no longer functions as an autonomous phenomenon and instead operates as a foundational component of the holistic positioning of an institution of higher education. The relationship between ethical branding and image strategy therefore acquires the character of a complementary synthesis of form and content. While the image strategy determines the instrumental vector of the presence of the university within the information space, ethical branding provides the axiological content of this activity and functions as a source of reputational sustainability. The integration of these components makes it possible to overcome the purely decorative character of the institutional image. Ethical virtues legitimize the marketing efforts of the institution and transform declarative slogans into an authentic reputational asset. The implementation of humanistic management grounded in the ideas of dignity, trust, moral leadership, and shared values strengthens public confidence in the university as a bearer of humanistic values and a culture of dialogue. It also contributes to the formation of a positive reputation of the educational environment within which academic competence and moral responsibility are combined.

Deirdre McCloskey proposes an original perspective on the development of institutions and argues that economic and social success, including academic success, is impossible without

consideration of the human factor in its ethical and rhetorical dimensions. In her theoretical works, particularly in the trilogy devoted to the Age of Virtues, she demonstrates that the sustainable development of any system is based not only on the utilitarian principle of “Max U” or the maximization of utility, but also on a system of virtues among which justice, prudence, hope, and love occupy a central place. For the contemporary university this means that the public image cannot be constructed exclusively on the basis of quantitative indicators of rankings such as citation indexes or the number of research grants. The institution must instead demonstrate its belonging to a world of meanings within which trust arises from ethical consistency and from the capacity for dialogue [10].

The heuristic potential of the axiological model of branding may be examined through the institutional environment of National Aerospace University “Kharkiv Aviation Institute”, where the process of forming the ethical reputation of the institution correlates with the long term personal and professional development of the future specialist. Reference to the experience of this university provides grounds for analyzing the manner in which educational, scientific, and formative practices are integrated into a unified system of value-oriented brand construction within a technical university with a strong engineering tradition. Within the philosophical and axiological coordinates of aerospace engineering the university appears as an intellectual space within which the foundational virtues of the engineer creator are formed. In this context ethical branding may be interpreted as an integrated dimension of everyday educational practice that includes the cultivation of professional honor, prudence, and responsibility, which represent classical qualities that ensure readiness for activity within high technology sectors characterized by an increased level of social significance.

The example of National Aerospace University “Kharkiv Aviation Institute” makes it possible to consider the authenticity of the university brand as a derivative of the value orientations of its academic community. Each graduate in this context represents the university within the professional environment through the combination of technical competence with an awareness of moral responsibility for safety, innovative transformations, and the long term consequences of engineering decisions. In this manner the reputational capital of the university is formed through the humanomics of virtues embodied by the participants of the educational process, which allows engineering education to be interpreted as a strategic practice of responsible design of the future.

The theoretical understanding of the ethical dimension of institutional sustainability of the university can be further deepened through a managerial reflection on the functioning of the institution under conditions of martial law. Such analysis considers the university as a space in which institutional identity, managerial culture, and the moral solidarity of the academic community are tested, emphasizing the preservation of the core values as a strategic condition for the continuity of development [11, p. 14]. Within the context of the present discussion this work provides the possibility of examining how, under conditions of extreme historical tension, the reputational capital of the university is formed on the basis of the consistency of value orientations, the transparency of managerial decisions, and the capacity for moral leadership. Consequently, the experience of National Aerospace University “Kharkiv Aviation Institute”, conceptualized in the aforementioned study, functions as an empirical foundation for the investigation of the axiological model of branding within which the image of the institution acquires the meaning of the result of ethical practice and responsible institutional self determination [11, p. 67].

In this perspective the contemporary technical university appears as an engineering and scientific hub and at the same time as a center of ethical culture capable of communicating an image of an institution that unites technological competence with a humanistic worldview [12, p. 19]. Within the globalized space of competition for attention and trust the system of

value orientations determines the persuasiveness of the university brand, while virtues acquire the status of a fundamental reputational resource. Within this dimension humanomics outlines the intellectual and moral framework for the construction of a holistic image of the university as a community of dignity, openness, and responsibility within which the achievements of aerospace engineering are organically connected with the axiological maturity of their creators.

The theory of humanomics developed by the American economist Deirdre McCloskey is oriented toward overcoming the reductionist tendencies of neoclassical economics through the integration of ethical, rhetorical, and cultural dimensions into the sphere of social analysis. Its conceptual foundations are based on the recognition of the dignity of every individual and on the decisive role of bourgeois virtues such as honesty, responsibility, compassion, and enterprise as factors of social prosperity. In her studies Deirdre McCloskey argues that the economic growth of the modern West is connected with a transformation of the moral and communicative attitudes toward labor, innovation, and freedom, which contributed to the emergence of a new culture of enterprise and trust. In a broader intellectual context humanomics may be considered a worldview paradigm within which ethics, trust, and moral leadership function as foundations of sustainable development and at the same time as resources for the formation of a positive image of institutions, including universities.

The concept of humanistic value management interpreted through the perspective of humanomics outlines a managerial paradigm at the center of which are dignity, trust, and virtues as decisive factors in the formation of the organizational culture of the university [12, p. 22]. Within such a theoretical horizon the university represents a community of moral leadership in which a culture of responsibility and mutual respect determines the character of its public image. The ethical atmosphere of the educational environment ensures the cohesion of the academic community, supports motivational mechanisms, and at the same time affirms the reputation of the university as a space of humanistic values and professional integrity. Value orientations acquire practical realization through communication strategies, managerial decisions, and the style of intra-institutional interaction. As noted by Deirdre McCloskey, ethical governance and moral leadership create the conditions for long-term prosperity and ensure the sustainability of the positive image of the institution [10].

Within the discourse of humanomics academic integrity is interpreted as a fundamental moral virtue that determines the quality of education and at the same time forms the spiritual identity of the university [13, p. 99]. In this context the emphasis is placed on the cultivation of internal honesty as a mode of existence within the academic world that includes a responsible attitude toward knowledge, truth, and professional duty. Integrity appears as a form of moral self-affirmation grounded in personal dignity, mutual trust, and reputation as an expression of the shared moral memory of the university community. Ethical leadership within the framework of the humanomic approach is interpreted as a model of governance based on moral authority, persuasion, and personal example that forms an atmosphere of mutual responsibility and trust. In this interpretation humanomics actualizes the ethical mission of the university connected with the creation of a space of moral development within which integrity becomes the foundation of reputation and reputation functions as a key factor of public trust [13, p. 100].

The combination of managerial influence with moral example, interpreted by Deirdre McCloskey as a harmony of economic rationality and bourgeois virtues, forms the ethical fabric of university life. Such an integration of rational thinking and integrity creates an atmosphere of trust, shared belonging, and common purpose that enables the university community to respond to contemporary challenges with technical competence and moral reflexivity [14]. Humanomics emphasizes the significance of soft factors such as honesty, dignity, respect for freedom of

thought, academic autonomy, and integrity as driving forces of sustainable development. Within this conceptual field the university is understood as both an educational institution and a spiritual and cultural space in which moral continuity becomes the foundation of a shared identity. The ethical culture of the university is manifested in everyday practices of mutual recognition, in responsible speech, and in the readiness to act in accordance with internal convictions. The moral integrity of the university becomes the source of its long-term stability, since an institution endowed with moral meaning preserves public trust under conditions of change and uncertainty.

University traditions that sustain the virtues of cooperation, respect, and openness constitute a significant resource of institutional resilience and contribute to the consolidation of the moral unity of the academic community. Within the framework of humanomics social relations acquire cultural and economic significance because traditions institutionalize virtues that strengthen trust and ensure the reputational stability of the university [14]. The formation of values within the university environment appears as an act of moral creation grounded in dialogue, mutual respect, and trust. The humanomic approach interprets the participants of the educational process as subjects of ethical co creation whose interactions fill institutional life with moral meaning and contribute to the development of a culture of responsible engagement.

Within the context of aerospace engineering these virtues acquire a particular meaning connected with the intellectual capacity to assess risks under conditions of uncertainty and with the awareness of ethical responsibility for safety and for human life. The university brand of National Aerospace University “Kharkiv Aviation Institute” communicates these values through a culture that recognizes the right to make mistakes within the learning process and at the same time affirms zero tolerance toward negligence in real design practice.

The formation of university ethics within the framework of humanomics includes transparency in decision making, dialogical interaction, and moral leadership as a form of service to the common good. The leadership of the university appears as the bearer of administrative responsibility and at the same time as the embodiment of virtues and moral consistency that encourages the academic community toward self improvement. Ethical values of the university develop in interaction with social transformations while preserving an internal stability that sustains trust, unity, and the sense of moral belonging to the community [14].

Humanomics outlines a comprehensive model of ethical governance in which moral principles are integrated with managerial effectiveness. Its practical dimension is realized through ethical codes, educational programs, advisory institutions, a culture of integrity in everyday activity, and through practices of moral self assessment and the development of leadership grounded in dignity and mutual respect. Within this conceptual field the university is interpreted as a community in which humanistic principles determine the rhythm of intellectual life and form a space of moral trust, while management acquires a spiritual dimension and appears as an act of moral self affirmation and collective responsibility.

According to Deirdre McCloskey, ethical culture unfolds as a living process rooted in the everyday experience of the community. Its foundation is the internal disposition of the individual to act responsibly, the readiness to accept the consequences of personal decisions, and the ability to preserve dignity in interaction with others [13]. Institutional structures are capable of supporting this process and providing it with an organizational form, whereas a culture of trust and respect develops within the interpersonal space of communication. Humanistic management is realized in an educational environment characterized by openness, moral autonomy, and recognition of human dignity as the highest value.

Ethical conduct manifests itself in everyday practices that include the acknowledgment of personal mistakes, mutual support, and care for others. Informal mentorship, sincere interest

in the development of colleagues, and openness to dialogue create the living fabric of the moral environment of the university. Communication acquires the character of a trusting exchange of ideas within which a space emerges for emotional and moral reflection and for the recognition of the dignity of every member of the community. Within the context of the aerospace sector, associated with the exploration of new horizons of knowledge and technology, the humanomic approach emphasizes the importance of intellectual courage in the production of unconventional solutions and in their responsible justification. A university brand that supports the innovative courage of students and researchers forms the image of an institution capable of preparing specialists for responsible leadership in global projects related to the exploration of outer space and the development of environmentally oriented air transportation.

In this sense every managerial decision may acquire the character of a humanistic act when it is grounded in compassion, trust, and the aspiration to support others. Even actions of a limited scale that demonstrate moral attention and respect gradually shape a culture within which the truthfulness of expression becomes a stable norm and the university affirms itself as an institution rooted in moral resilience and ethical maturity. Under the conditions of the digital era characterized by the intensity of information flows, the capacity of the future engineer for meaningful and ethically balanced communication acquires the significance of an important professional competence. Humanomics emphasizes that the success of any project is connected with the ability of its participants to achieve mutual understanding on the basis of shared values. As a result, aerospace engineering appears as a field of heightened social responsibility.

In the light of humanomics the formation of university values is interpreted as a moral act of collective creation grounded in dignity, trust, and open dialogue. Every member of the academic community is recognized as a moral subject capable of actively co creating the ethical space of the educational environment. Expanded participation of the actors of the educational process strengthens the legitimacy of virtues and contributes to the establishment of a culture of responsibility. The moral environment is sustained through symbolic and practical expressions of respect and mutual recognition and through the example of humanistic leadership. As emphasized by Deirdre McCloskey, humanity should be understood as a form of being and a mode of existence [15, p. 126].

Within the managerial paradigm of humanomics key virtues acquire a concrete meaning within academic and professional dimensions. Justice as a component of academic and professional integrity constitutes the foundation of the ethical branding of the university because it presupposes objective evaluation of intellectual contribution, honesty of authorship, and transparency of scientific results. Within the sphere of aerospace engineering these principles determine the standards of professional conduct in which the reputation of the specialist is connected with adherence to high norms of scientific and engineering ethics.

Courage and intellectual boldness appear as virtues necessary for activity in a field oriented toward the exploration of new horizons of knowledge and technology. The humanomic approach emphasizes readiness to propose innovative solutions, to defend them through reasoned argument, and to assume responsibility for their implementation. A university brand that supports the innovative courage of students and researchers forms the image of an institution capable of preparing specialists for responsible leadership in global projects related to the exploration of outer space and the development of environmentally oriented air transportation. The traditional bourgeois virtue of moderation and inner balance reflects the capacity to combine innovation with ethical reflection. In aerospace engineering this virtue manifests itself in the responsible assessment of the impact of technologies on the environment and society, in the consideration of

the long-term consequences of technical decisions, and in the awareness of the limits of technological intervention. An ethical university brand formed within the framework of humanomics represents the modern engineer as a professional capable of integrating technical competence with a profound moral understanding of professional activity. Such an approach strengthens trust in the institution and reinforces its social significance.

The gender dimension of humanomics is particularly significant within the context of this study. Deirdre McCloskey, a transgender woman and economist, embodies humanomics as a life project in which equality is not identical with sameness but is expressed through symmetry of moral status and through the right to be heard, recognized, and involved in collective creation. The humanomic approach, grounded in the recognition of the unconditional dignity of the person, naturally presupposes the overcoming of gender bias within the professional environment.

Humanomics proposes a value-oriented vision within which the individual is interpreted as a moral subject endowed with dignity, the capacity for empathy, and responsibility. Such a perspective contributes to the transformation of the institutional environment toward overcoming established hierarchies and hidden limitations, including the phenomenon of the glass ceiling that restricts the professional advancement of women in high technology sectors [16, p. 86]. A university community oriented toward humanomic principles cultivates practices of ethical sensitivity, mutual recognition, and support, thereby creating conditions for the full visibility and realization of the potential of every member.

Within the context of engineering education this orientation presupposes systematic efforts aimed at eliminating structural barriers to career advancement and ensuring equal access to research and managerial positions. Ethical branding of a technical university in this dimension is connected with the formation of an inclusive environment in which intellectual competence, professional integrity, and leadership qualities determine trajectories of success. The axiology of contemporary aerospace engineering presupposes consistent recognition of the contribution of women to the development and management of complex engineering projects and to other critically important domains [16, p. 87]. Attention to this dimension may be considered one of the most significant indicators of the ethical maturity of a university brand.

In conclusion, it should be emphasized that the humanomics of Deirdre McCloskey proposes a systemic ethical renewal of thinking that supports the formation of a positive image of the university as a community that adheres to moral and social standards. Its conceptual goal lies in the recognition of the dignity of every person, which creates the foundation of social trust and reflects the ethical maturity of the institution. Humanomics creates opportunities for building the reputation of the university on the basis of integrity, mutual respect, and moral coexistence. In conditions of sociocultural change, the university functions as a center of knowledge and also as an institution capable of demonstrating high moral standards, maintaining public trust, and shaping a positive social image.

Ethical governance oriented toward values encourages motivation and active engagement of participants in the educational process and supports the development of a culture of trust that becomes a key element of the university's image strategy. Academic integrity, moral leadership, a culture of virtues, and open dialogue function as criteria of the quality of educational and research activity and form the principal components of the institution's reputational capital.

Humanomics also serves as a methodological foundation for overcoming instrumentalism in branding and supports the development of an authentic ethical brand of the university. Within this model the university brand develops through the mechanism of honest and persuasive dialogue and relies on a system of fundamental virtues. Each virtue functions as a source of social trust and strengthens the competitive capacity of the university. In this context the university

appears as a moral ecosystem and as a living symbol of ethical culture in which the stability of development and the attractiveness of the institution in society rest on the harmonious integration of intellectual competence, ethical principles, and social responsibility.

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АКСІОЛОГІЧНИЙ ВИМІР БРЕНДИНГУ УНІВЕРСИТЕТУ ЦИФРОВОЇ ДОБИ В КОНТЕКСТІ ГУМАНОМІКИ ДЕЙРДРЕ МАККЛОСКІ

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У статті досліджується етичний потенціал гуманоміки Дейрдре Макклоскі у контексті формування морального іміджу університету та ціннісно орієнтованої інституційної культури. Гуманоміка розглядається як філософський підхід, який інтегрує інституційну рефлексію з традицією етики чеснот. У цьому ключі університет постає як моральна спільнота, у якій виробництво знань невіддільне від розвитку етичної відповідальності та поваги до людської гідності.

Робота розкриває роль чеснот у формуванні етичного бренду сучасного технічного університету. Зокрема, досліджується філософський зміст мужності, розсудливості, поміркованості, справедливості та солідарності у професійному становленні інженерів і науковців. Гуманоміка забезпечує концептуальні засади для розкриття етичного виміру інституційної репутації та інтерпретує університетський бренд як прояв моральної культури, втіленої у щоденній академічній практиці. Особлива увага приділяється гуманістичним засадам інклюзивності та гендерної рівності. На прикладі Національного аерокосмічного університету «Харківський авіаційний інститут» демонструється, як принципи гуманоміки впроваджуються у діяльність технічного університету, поєднуючи освітні, наукові та виховні процеси в цілісну систему ціннісного брендингу. Академічне середовище постає як простір моральної комунікації, де цінності довіри, відповідальності та діалогу структурно інтегруються у всі аспекти освітньої та дослідницької діяльності.

Дослідження показує, що етичний імідж університету формується через поєднання інтелектуальної компетентності, моральної рефлексії та соціальної відповідальності. У цьому контексті університет функціонує як культурна інституція, що виробляє знання і водночас культивує етичну свідомість у суспільстві. Гуманоміка стає філософським та методологічним ресурсом для осмислення моральних підвалів сучасних академічних інституцій і концептуалізації університету як живої етичної екосистеми, заснованої на чеснотах, довірі та спільній відповідальності, що реалізується на практиці через інтеграцію освітніх, наукових та виховних процесів у єдину систему ціннісного брендингу.

Ключові слова: гуманоміка, етичний брендинг, довіра, освіта, репутаційний капітал, цифровізація, чесноти, імідж, комунікація.

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