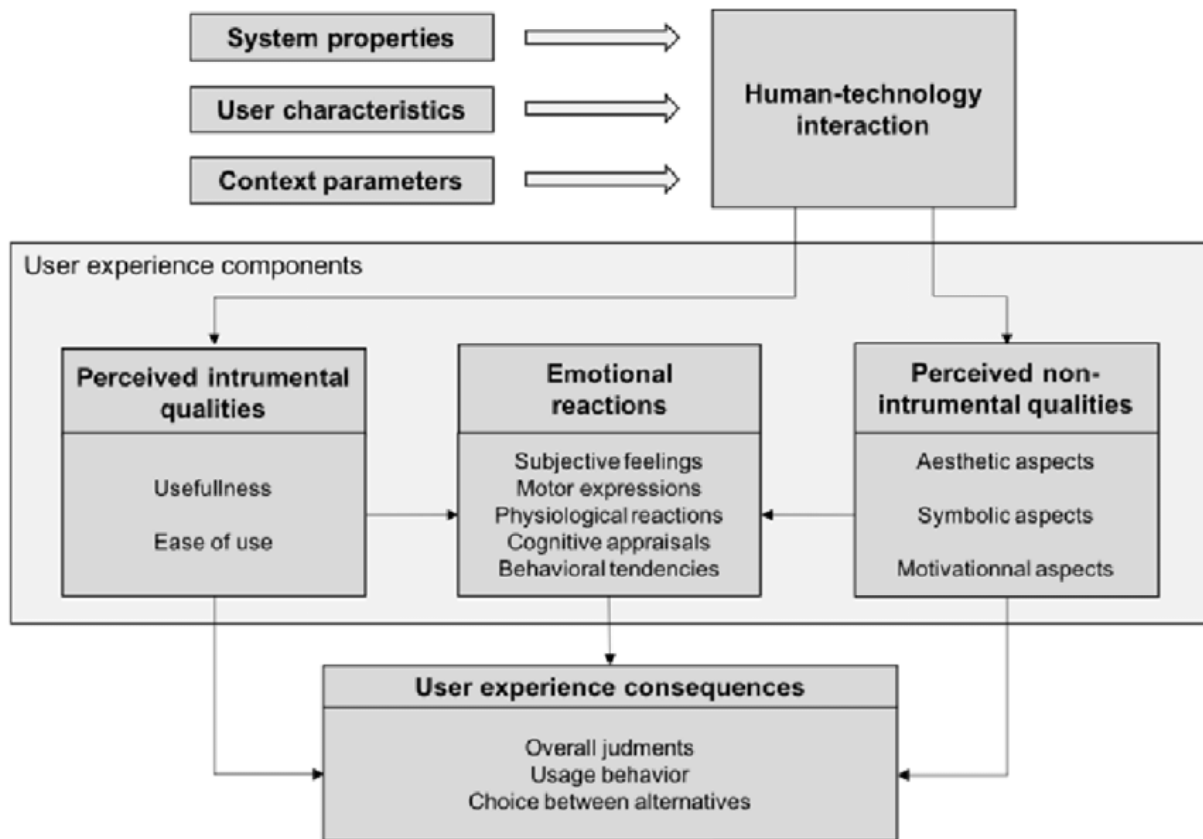As a Project Manager, what might be your response to manage the emotional reactions of a customer?

The CUE model (Van der Linden *et al.*, 2019) emphasises the importance of emotional reactions to the overall user experience.

The emotional intelligence of a project manager is critical in managing the emotional reactions of a customer as they need to be able to emphasise with customers in order to be able to predict how they may react to a given situation such as an unforeseen issue occurring causing a project to be delayed.

A project manager can gain valuable feedback from customers from a variety of sources such as surveys. This feedback can then be used in future iterations of a project to improve the user's experience.

Empathy, emotional intelligence, communication skills and problem-solving skills are critical for a project manager hoping to maintain a positive relationship with their customers

The importance of emotional intelligence is backed up in Wiliam Jacob LaMarsh's dissertation (LaMarsh, 2009) where he concluded there is a relationship between an IT project manager's emotional intelligence and the customer's perception of success.

Since organisations ultimately need to be profitable and there is a relationship between customer trust, and customer retention (Sarwar et. al., 2012) it is vital that project managers take steps to actively gain the trust of their customers.

There has been plenty of research into the role trust plays in user satisfaction such as the research by McKnight, Choudhury & Kacmar (McKnight et al., 2002).

The value that can be gained from good communication with customers can be measured using the PCVScore formula created by Nicoleta Valentina Florea and Anisoara Duica (Florea & Florea 2017).

In conclusion the emotional reactions of a customer can be handled by validating and emphasising with the customer prior to offering a solution to their problem. Additionally, a project manager should communicate openly and honestly to manage the expectations of the customer in order to manage the emotional reactions a customer could experience when a project suffers a setback.

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