THE CHANGEMAKER'S GUIDE
TO PROCESS EFFICIENCIES

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Change is part of everyday life, so why is it that promoting and instigating change in schools is so complex?

Our whitepaper delves into the concept of change, but specifically looks at those that are the driving force behind the change, the Changemakers!

Through in-depth external research, primary surveys and practitioner insight, we will investigate the different types of Changemakers and how change can be driven to overcome inefficiencies in the education sector.

On behalf of all of us at Every, we hope you enjoy reading.

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THE PACE OF CHANGE

Change is often considered a prerequisite for success. In the education sector, change is coming through thick and fast. The pace of change is accelerating to whole new levels. In a global survey, it was found that 89% of organisations recognise that as a result of last year's disruption, the need for a more scalable and agile IT infrastructure is becoming paramount.

The disruption of the past year has fundamentally changed how people, businesses and schools operate. Technology has become a major enabler, but the driving force behind change is people.

*Those that are embracing and adopting change are the **Changemakers** of the world.*
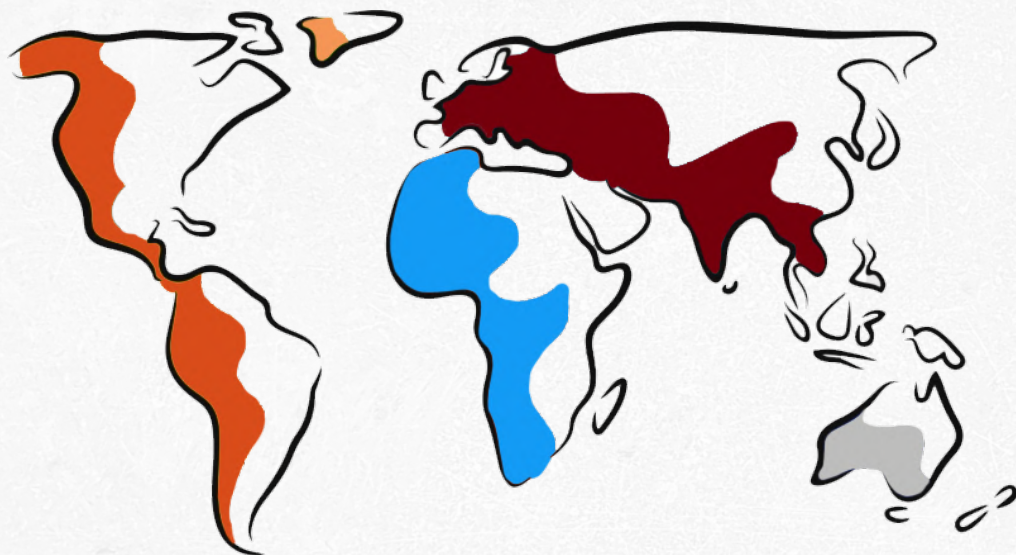
PERCEPTION OF CHANGE

Perceptions surrounding change can differ drastically and often employees can feel a range of emotions to the concept of change. Around 45% of employees would actually like to remain with the status quo, but is this because they're afraid of change or they are not effectively communicated with and led through the change process?

In our recent survey, completed by hundreds of specialists working in the UK's education sector, we found that 35% of respondents felt 'interested' by the prospect of change, 25% felt empowered. But there were still those that are frightened and nervous surrounding the idea of change.

Which word best describes how the prospect of change makes you feel?

- Empowered **23.53%**
- Exploratory **27.54%**
- Interested **35.56%**
- Nervous **10.16%**
- Frightened **3.21%**
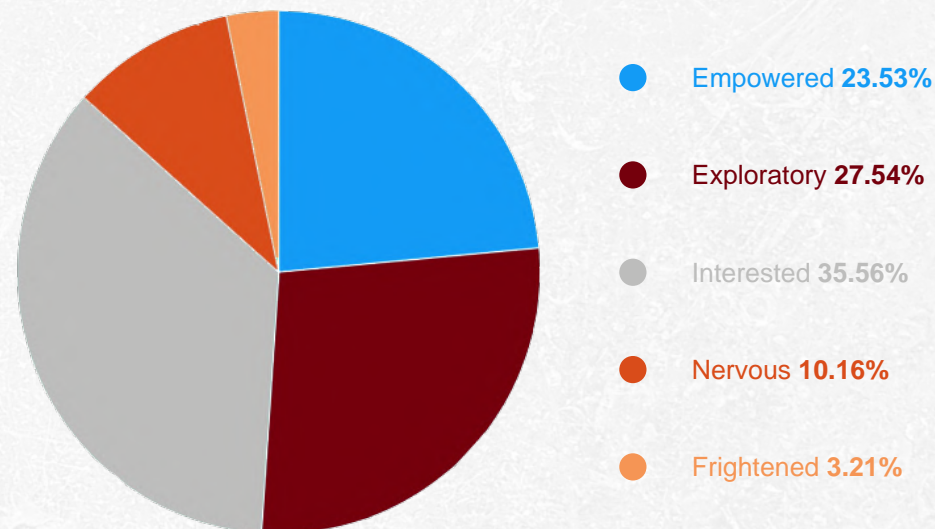
WHAT IS A CHANGEMAKER?

To manage effective change within schools you need a changemaker!

The phrase 'changemaker' is becoming more commonplace, with the term used in so many different contexts, from those that are driving for social change or those trying to make changes to the environment. However, the one that we will be specifically focusing on is a digital changemaker who is a champion and driver of change within schools.

A changemaker identifies a problem and sets out to action a solution, being the central cog piece that puts the change in motion. They typically are a champion in their school or MAT that promotes change and helps others embrace the change. In relation to digital, they are the ones instigating the implementation of a new technology that will help streamline and improve processes within their school.
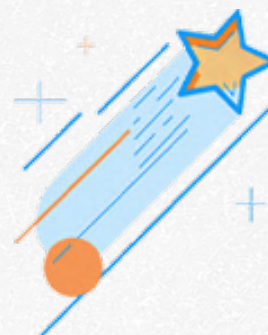
BE A
DRIVER
OF CHANGE

The complexities of delivering change cannot be understated and with failure rates cited as high as 70%, effective change management is pinnacle.

Being a driver of change is no small feat; a framework must be followed for an effective, people-centred change. Below are the core Every Change Pillars that should be the basis of implementing any site-wide change.

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02 Change **Agents**

03 Leading **People**

04 **Communication**

05 Overcoming **Barriers**

06 Report on **Change**

Having a Clear Strategy

Sounds simple, but it's often one that isn't always properly executed.

Change management affects your most essential asset, your people! When considering change, it should always come alongside a detailed plan of action that can drive an effective transformation.

Below are the core components that should be included within any change management plan:

- *Define the reason for change*
- *Establish a team of collaborators and those who will be impacted*
- *A detailed roadmap of the steps that will be required to complete the project*
- *A range of various activities that can promote collaboration*
- *Develop a communication strategy*
- *How to manage resistance*
- *Progress measures*

Each of these components will be delved into further detail throughout the paper to greater understand how you can achieve these within your change progress.

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Find your Change Agents

Change agents are critical to any movement. They are resilient people in your school who are able to overcome a large number of problems to push change through. In our research, we found that when making important group decisions, the majority of respondents were frustrated by others not being open-minded to change.

This is where the change agents come in!

An organisation that is filled with, or has a greater proportion of, change agents, will experience a faster rate of change than those made up of people resistant to change. You need to identify who are the change agents in your school; these are typically passionate individuals who can lead by example and are well respected, with others valuing their opinion.

You should aim to identify a change agent in each role area as change often begins at a very local level. You also need to determine if this person has strong personable skills to be able to influence others. They will be key to an effective implementation; you will work with them on developing and executing plans, your goals and how they are able to help aid a smooth transition and promote a positive mindset to change.

You are making an important group decision. You are most likely to feel frustrated with the process when:

People are refusing to be open-minded about changes	109
You feel like people aren't saying what they really mean	52
Decisions are being made without all the information required	49
You feel like only main players are making decisions	44
You don't understand the reasoning behind the decision	19

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Leading People

Change management is less about the actual technological and process changes; it's the people side of change. You can't make individuals change, but what you can do is influence and support your employees through change.

As part of this, you need to be able to equip, support and inspire people to take actions that are aligned with your objectives. Wherever possible, you want to be able to mitigate the negative effects of disruption.

When suggesting change, the first question everyone will ask is "why?"

- *Why can't we just keep going what we are doing?*
- *Why do we have to change?*
- *Why now?*

If we address the why and effectively communicate the reasoning, people are more likely to contribute and add value to the change process.

There are 4 key elements you must consider when instigating change:

- *Align - Have you aligned your objectives to what is expected from your employees?*
- *Equipped – Do they have sufficient knowledge, skills and resources?*
- *Coached – Have you coached them to change, providing feedback, guidance and reinforcement?*
- *Support – Have you designed your process to support them changing the way that they work?*

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Communication

Leading on from this, you can never underestimate the amount of communication that is required to support this change.

When it comes to guiding your employees through a period of significant change, clear and focused communication is one of your most powerful tools. You need communication for both the change agents and the change adverse; the latter will typically require more communication and positive-orientated messaging.

The human brain is hardwired to dislike uncertainty and often equates it with danger. Research has found that people would rather know that something bad is going to happen over having to face uncertainty.
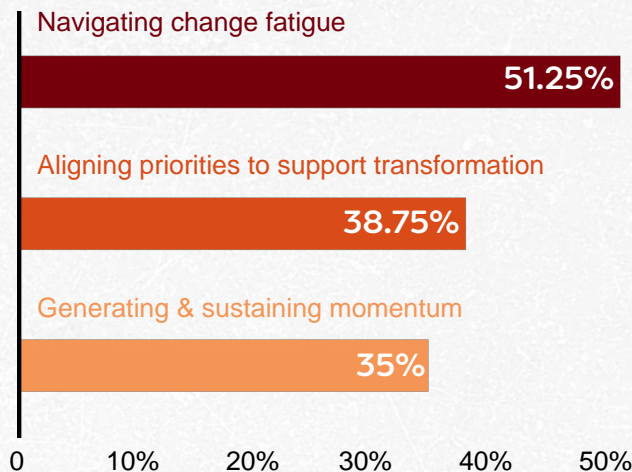
For those who may be resistant to change, you need to relay messaging about what changes they can expect, the benefits of this change to them personally and how it will make their workflows simpler and easier.

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Overcoming Barriers to Change

A successful transformation is a social movement, one in which employees are engaged and collaborative. However, changemakers are sometimes faced with barriers, one of the core ones being change fatigue.

In your work driving business transformation, what describes your most common frustrations?

Navigating change fatigue
51.25%

Aligning priorities to support transformation
38.75%

Generating & sustaining momentum
35%

0   10%   20%   30%   40%   50%

The biggest challenge I anticipate in driving business transformation over the next 5 years

Employees will become disengaged and exhausted
48.75%

Our organisational structure and systems will be a constraint to our success
41.25%

Our culture will not encourage the behaviours necessary to stay ahead of the curve
41.25%

0   10   20   30   40   50

Keeping employees engaged and involved is critical, and a lot of this involves inspiring employees in this era of ongoing transformation. It's important to always keep the ongoing change on employees' radar but make sure that the conversation has a positive perspective.

As mentioned earlier, the perception surrounding change can quite often be negative, so the beginning of any change process must involve shifting the way people view change and ensuring their view aligns to your school or MAT's goals. In our survey, we found that a lot of people struggled to find others who were as enthusiastic as them, but this could be down to how that change is being communicated. Those involved with managing the change need to drive it with positivity in mind.

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Overcoming Barriers to Change

What challenge is the one you typically face the most when working with change?
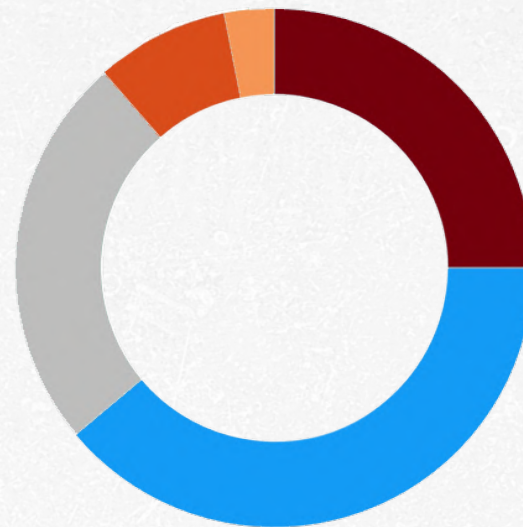
- Managing the implementation **38.89%**
- Finding others with the same enthusiasm to change **25.00%**
- Juggling understanding new processes **24.69%**
- Getting to grips with a new way of working **8.33%**
- Feeling a bit left behind **3.09%**

Many people may be unaware they are resistant to change, and it is often more deep-seated with a subconscious resistance. To shift this mindset, you can employ a technique known as 'Laddering'. This technique involves engaging employees in interviews such as role playing, posing hypothetical questions and prompting storytelling. This encourages people to reflect on their deepest motives and assumptions and hopefully uncover the true reasoning as to why they are untrusting of change. Once employees are aware, they can work to overcome it.

In addition, another barrier that changemakers come up against is 'managing the implementation process' and this is where developing a framework for others to follow becomes pinnacle. You need a clear plan that is devised by multiple team members and has clear activities for each of these to follow. But this plan needs to be adaptable; things change, and you need a plan that can move with the changes but still keep the end goal a priority.
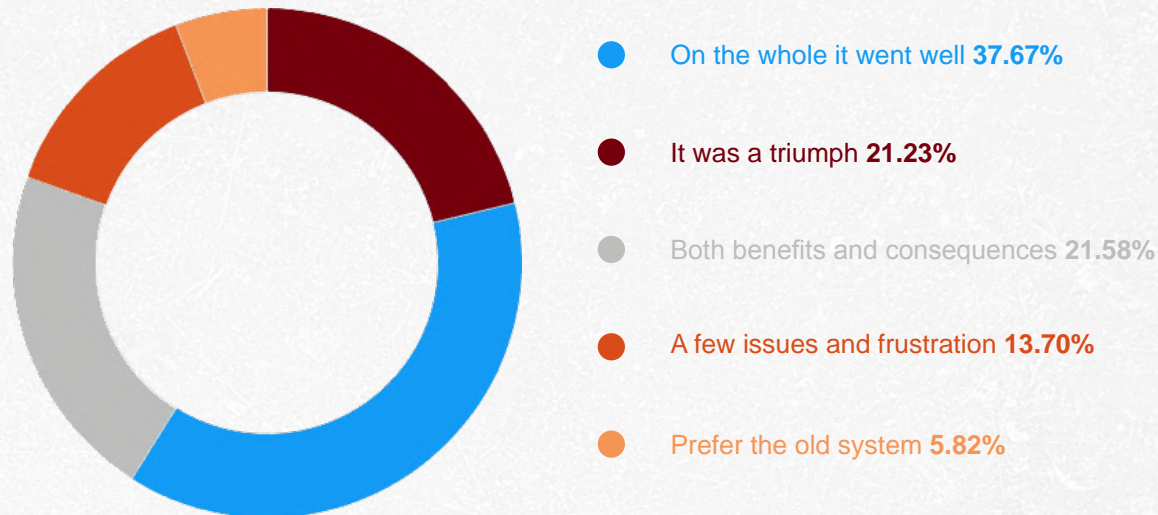
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Report on Change

Reporting on your change process is a critical component to creating long-term successful implementations. You need to identify areas of improvement so that every change in the future will be better than the last.

When asking those in the sector how their last digital implementation went, nearly half felt it wasn't up to the standard they had expected.

How did your last school or MAT-wide digital upgrade or change go?

- On the whole it went well **37.67%**
- It was a triumph **21.23%**
- Both benefits and consequences **21.58%**
- A few issues and frustration **13.70%**
- Prefer the old system **5.82%**

For these people, it would be critical to review what took place and identify those key problem areas so that mistakes are not repeated in the future. And even those that were considered a triumph, you need a recipe to replicate, and to do that, you must review your process.

To measure the performance of change, you should consider the following techniques:
- *Adoption metrics*
- *Feedback from employees*
- *Usage reports*
- *Employee engagement and participation*
- *Issue reports*
- *Awareness and understanding of the change*
- *Employee satisfaction survey*

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LEARN FROM THE CHANGEMAKERS

Change varies in many different scenarios, so we gained first-hand insight from those right in the thick of change management in MATs.

Mo Millar, Trust Estates Manager at Acer Trust, speaks to us about her MAT's current change process and how she is driving change. The Trust consists of seven schools that operate collaboratively.

When Mo moved to Acer Trust they had just signed a new contract for a technology solution used to manage internal processes. Upon reviewing the system after three years' use, they found it wasn't quite delivering what was required to manage their estates comprehensively. Most importantly, they needed complete visibility across their entire Trust, with data in a central location that can be cross-referenced and reported on. Much of the vital information at that point was only stored in one place: people's brains. It wasn't being shared, so a major aim of the change process was to get as much of this information as possible into one central system.

Change had to happen

To co-ordinate and manage this change, Acer Trust created a working group made up of business managers, site managers, and finance team members. The first point of call was to determine what would be the best solution to replace the current system. They compared three core systems, investigating how well the solution meet their needs and initially taking cost out of the equation.

"We wanted the decision to be made without being dictated by cost. We understood that budgets were really tight, particularly in primary schools, and cost could sway the decision too much. We needed to assess each solution's ability to meet the needs of the schools and Trust, independently of the cost in order, to take an unbiased view of which solution was best fit."

The Change Reaction

"I think the first response we get when we announce we are going to change something is often one of nervousness and reluctance. Ironically, the education sector is one of the most reluctant to change, but at the same time, it is where the most change is happening. There are curriculum changes, the recent Covid-related changes, and an array of DfE changes. So, the sector is constantly changing and evolving. Historically, the culture in some schools has been 'this is the way it has always been done'; this has made it harder to adapt to enforced changes such as reducing budgets and Covid-19 restrictions."

"To overcome this, we focused on making the decision and change process as collaborative as possible, rather than just making a decision and enforcing the change. It was all about getting key people involved in the solution, which ultimately allows us to reach the best outcome. We aimed to cover all of the different departments and teams that would be using the new software and have a balance of input across the different schools."

Effective Change Management

For the change to be effective there needed to be focused management and clear communication. To achieve this, Mo, the Trust Administrator, and COO developed a plan to follow, each with their own areas of responsibility. They conducted regular interval meetings to monitor progress, reporting back on their divisions. It was the COO's responsibility to make sure that the Executive Group discussed the implementation regularly in their meetings and to make sure consistent messaging was filtered down.

For the change process, they chose to implement one software module at a time, ensuring this was being effectively used before moving onto the next.

We implemented the first module at the start of September. This was one that we already had all the correct data ready for, so it could easily be imported into the system. That meant we could hit the ground running, and everyone was given dedicated training on the system. We explained that we would be presenting the compliance data matrix to the Executive Group one month after the training to help demonstrate levels of compliance across each school.

Promoting Change

"We identified volunteer champions within each of the schools as well, as part of the implementation process. For the business managers, the implementation now has become a standing point on their monthly agenda; understanding how things are progressing and how effective the change is. Therefore, it's constantly being talked about and promoted from within. Whilst some of the steps we have had to take are smaller than we might have liked, the 'changemaker team' of the Trust Administrator, COO, and I are always very enthusiastic. The thing is, we can't always bring people along at the same pace because of conflicting priorities."

"I think what is fundamental within schools and trusts is to get the backing of the headteachers. They need to have a strong enough understanding of the benefits of the solution and what it can achieve, so that they can encourage and lead staff in embracing the technology."

Barriers

No change management is plain sailing and any changemaker will face barriers.

"I think I am one of those people who is always looking for ways in which things can be done better. If something is taking too long or is overly complicated, I want to find a better way of doing it. I appreciate that not everyone thinks this way and that they may be more inclined to maintain processes. I think some people do find change very scary; if you are going through a change process, it's important to identify those fears within

the group to see what you can do to help people feel better, guiding them through the change process. We have found that some people have found the pace of this change, alongside other changes, challenging, and they are stressed because they are not reaching a position where they can stand still."

"For us, it was the training and getting the change moving at the right pace. Some people were happy to be champions were chomping at the bit to get going, but we wanted consistency across the Trust. This required a more equal level of adoption and collaborative conversations around the software to explain how we wanted to use it. We provided a framework first, rather than jumping straight in, which does require more time. We need consistent information going into the system to get out the information we need."

It was really about finding that balance between those who wanted to take their time in adopting the solution, and those wanting to use it fully from the very first day.

"I think another barrier we have come across is people's understanding and expertise when it comes to technology solutions. You can train staff on how to use the software, but they still need to

have a certain level of understanding themselves. They need to join the dots to realise how the solution delivers what they personally need it to. It's difficult to train everyone on every nuance, so there was a lot of follow up to see how people are getting on. It's important when you see someone struggling with the software or not using it in the most effective way, so we re-train and demonstrate how to use the solution in a particular scenario."

Overcoming Challenges

"An important factor is to make sure is that the person responsible for the change has been given enough time and resources to be able to effectively manage it."

Aside from this, a major barrier to overcome is hesitance, which is often the first reaction to change. Mo discusses how her Trust works to solve this.

"The first point is to bowl them over with enthusiasm, offering lots of training and support. Working with a strong collaborative approach rather than a top-down approach of simply just giving instructions. The Trust has a collaborative approach, so we work to get each of the schools on board, using more of a matrix management style. In this instance, that included highlighting those that are really driving value from their software and are demonstrating best practice with their use. People want to be seen to be performing well amongst their peers, so that is a big driving factor that we can capitalise on."

The Benefits of Change

For change to be effective, there must be true value at the end of the journey.

For business managers at the Trust, the value they required was a system that gave them the information they needed to be able to make informed decisions.
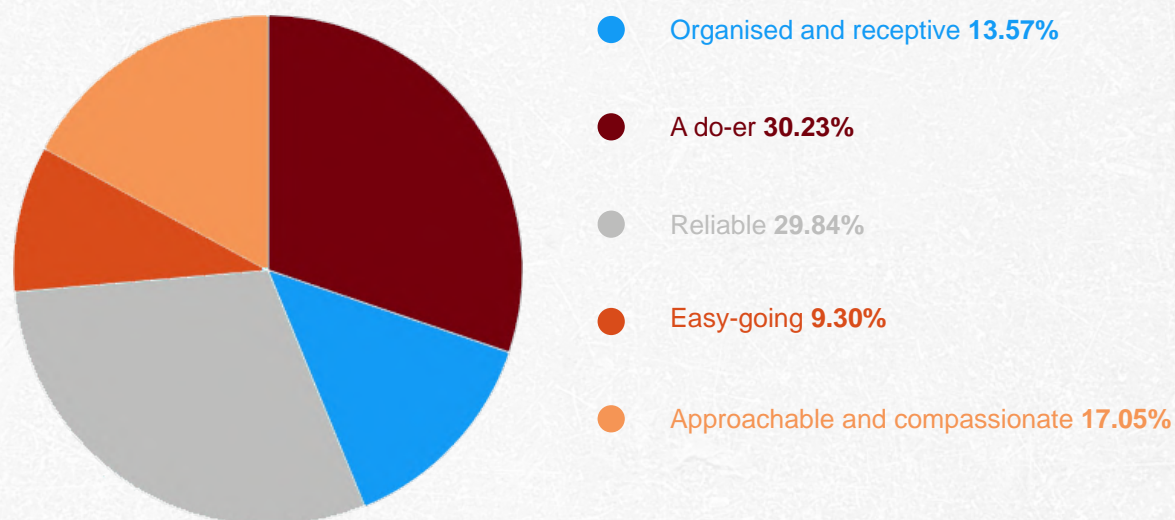
As budgets get tighter and tighter, you need to be able to prioritise. You need something that will enable you to manage your estates effectively, understand what is failing, and which contracts are due for renewal. You want and need the ability to share this information across the Trust.

WHAT CHANGEMAKER ARE YOU?

Not all changemakers are the same; each has their unique approach. Not everyone will jump for joy at the idea of change, but everyone has a critical role to play when it comes to implementing change. One type of changemaker may want to jump in all guns blazing at the first idea of change; others may want to sit, think and develop a detailed plan before considering change.

As part of our survey, we asked respondents to choose an answer that best matches how their colleagues would describe them. We found that most are considered a 'do-er' or 'reliable' but there was a strong mixture between the various personalities.

Your colleagues describe you as:

● Organised and receptive **13.57%**

● A do-er **30.23%**

● Reliable **29.84%**

● Easy-going **9.30%**

● Approachable and compassionate **17.05%**

Below are the key types of changemakers we've identified within schools:

THE TRAILBLAZER

This changemaker is their school's version of Mr Motivator... Perhaps without all of the spandex, but definitely with all of the excitement! They're a deeply inquisitive individual always seeking new information. They're eager to implement new practices, processes, and systems to help their workplace run as smoothly as possible.

Key personality traits:
- Always eager to improve knowledge
- A consistent idea-generator
- When confronted with a problem, they seek a solution. Or two, or three…

THE INNOVATOR

They're clued up on the who, the what, the where, why, AND how, and they work best when they have a full picture of details. They love asking questions to gain deeper insight and truly want to understand any answers, too. They're not afraid of the unknown, and they're one of the first to get on-board with alternative methods!

Key personality traits:
- Inquisitive, with a finger always on the pulse
- They make it their responsibility to fully understand anything and everything
- Skilled at taking detailed notes to gain the fullest overview of new systems and processes

PROBLEM SOLVER

When confronted with a problem, this changemaker doesn't shy away. There's never an 'i' not dotted or a 't' uncrossed on their watch! They're looked up to and respected by their colleagues highly.

Key personality traits:
- Loves to work to seek solutions, whether through collaborative or individual approaches
- Always investigating how things could be improved
- Massively aware of the benefits of having the full-picture before making any final decisions

THE COLLABORATOR

This individual creates change by working with their colleagues, filling them with confidence through the calm of collaboration. Unity is in their nature, and they gain far more when they work with their colleagues than working alone.

Key personality traits:
- Observant of change
- A strong communicator
- Truly want their organisation to achieve brilliance and want to be a real part of it

THE STALWART

This person is the backbone of their organisation's community. They're known for enjoying current processes inside-out, and they always take pride in their work. They like to get things done to the good standard they've set themselves, and their colleagues appreciate their reliability.

Key personality traits:
- Prefers tasks they can work with others on, and likes to reach a quick solution
- More risk-averse than others
- A 'thinker' rather than a 'do-er'

IDENTIFYING AREAS TO ACTIVATE CHANGE

To become a changemaker, you first of all need to spot an area that requires change. These are typically areas where a lot of challenges or inefficiencies lie, and where transformation would deliver positive change and improvement. Aside from this, it is often critical to understand the pain points of your colleagues, what issues they face in their role and how their role could be made simpler.

Establishing the Core Challenges

Schools are often faced with multiple, complex challenges on a daily basis. Below are some of the core ones that our experts have identified as common problems found in schools and MATs.

Lack of visibility

A lack of visibility is a very common problem across many schools and MATs. With hundreds of teachers and students and thousands of assets, it can easily become difficult to keep track of everything.

Some of the core areas where visibility often becomes a problem are:
- Staff absences
- Read receipt trail of critical documents
- Asset management

Staff absences

Staff absences cost UK schools and academies over £1bn every year, so not tracking absences effectively can stem into a major cost for schools or MATs.

Read receipt

Schools always have important documentation that needs to be properly reviewed by members of staff, e.g. Keeping Children Safe in Education from the DfE. Without a proper system in place, documentation has to be manually distributed, then chased manually to ensure read confirmations of some sort. This can also happen via spreadsheets and/or emails, but when audits come around, you don't have any central visibility over who has or hasn't read the required document(s).

Asset monitoring

Most schools have thousands of pounds worth of assets, but even with so much value being held, there is quite often a lack of visibility of where these assets are at any one time. The pandemic and remote working have only amplified this.

Lack of consistency across schools

MATs face the same problems as schools but often on a much larger scale. When joining together multiple schools that have their own ways of workings and processes, consistency can soon become an issue.

Workforce census

Often schools have outdated information, gaps in their data or a mammoth amount of data to collect, which makes preparing for the Workforce Census a time-consuming headache.

Tracking staff development

A school's best asset is its staff and it's pinnacle that those best performing staff are highlighted so that they progress and make an impactful difference in a school. However, without a central place where appraisals and objectives are hosted, which both parties can view, neither side is aware of their progress in relation to objectives, meaning impressive employees sometimes are overlooked.

Paper, paper, paper

In the age of digital, why is so much information still stored on pieces of paper, hidden away in filing cabinets where it is never to see daylight again? Data is gold dust, and it needs to be used. Paper means information isn't accessible to all and isn't utilised for insight.

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THE SOLUTION
FOR EVERY CHANGEMAKER

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What does our solution deliver?

Want your workflows to be simpler? Want your processes to become more efficient? Wish you had extra hours in your day?

Then we have the solution for you!

Well technically we may not be able to do the last one, but we can sure save you hours by removing the unnecessary.

If you could change one of the following about your school software, what would it be?
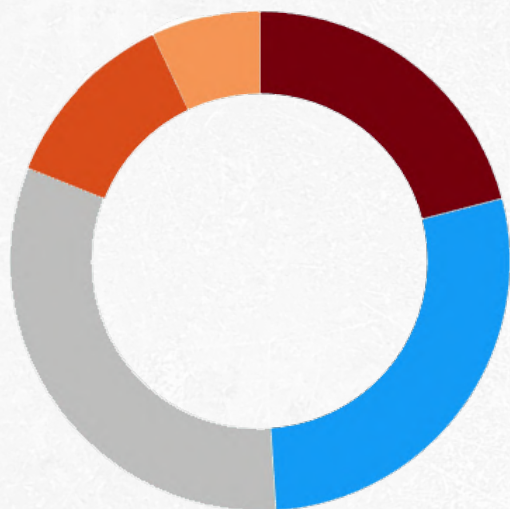
From our research, we found many of those working in schools and Trusts have software that isn't quite meeting their needs. We found major priorities from their software would be to lessen the admin burden, have all of their core HR processes in one central location or have one that offers a range of benefits (even ones they didn't know they needed).

We have developed a technology solution designed around the common problems that schools and MATs face and revolves around making those critical changes so that you can streamline your processes and implement effective change.

Quick and easy access to data

Often schools have data held and updated in a manual format, and these are usually in various locations. So, when it comes to preparing for the likes of the School Workforce Census, it can soon become a monumental task, sourcing data from various locations, having to ensure it's all up-to-date and has no gaps.

Our solution automatically collects data from the employment portal, inputting it into a format that can be submitted to the DfE.

What's more, we remove the chasing process leading up to that point, by sending automatic reminders to all employees that have not updated their data in a certain time period or have gaps in their personal data.

Remove non value-added tasks

Time is valuable and it shouldn't be sent chasing emails or manually filling in spreadsheets. When these are removed, you can dedicate your time to more valuable tasks that will help you move forward and run your school or MAT to the best of its ability. Having access to a central platform that hosts all relevant data, and is easily updatable, alongside the capability to send automatic emails to distribute policies or reminders, can remove hours of unnecessary work out of your week.

- Takes away more admin tasks **27.98%**
- All HR processes in one place **20.99%**
- Discover wider range of benefits **32.10%**
- You generally like how the system works **11.93%**
- A simpler, more user-friendly layout **7.00%**

Nurture those top performing staff members

Employees are your best asset and to get the best out of them, managers need a clear and effective way to manage objectives and progress. Our Performance Module is just that.

Our HR solution enables managers and schools as a whole to identify those that are excelling beyond expectations, all based around specific skillsets. Aside from this, it can become a key tool to motivating your staff. Very few people want to remain stagnant in their career; they want to progress and be praised when they are performing well. Having a central location that stores their entire employment history, their short and long term objectives and progression over the years really helps employees see their growth, motivating them to continue to perform well. The employee portal means employees can access their own objectives at any time and become more in control of their career growth.

Accurately track staff absences

Staff absences soon become a major cost for schools and MATs. Not only that, poor staff absence all begins to impact the performance of a school, and the level of teaching that is delivered to children. Our system enables you to see all staff absences in a central calendar and develop reports and trends. Automatic alerts will be sent when an employee reaches the adequate threshold for absence, so that the disciplinary procedures can be followed effectively to nip any issues in the bud. In addition, you will receive a full overview of absences in a school or multiple locations so that you can start to identify trends that may indicate a larger issue that can be tackled. For example, there may be a considerable spike in absences at a certain time of the year or within one particular department. Reasons behind these can then be investigated.

Self-service portal

There is nothing more annoying than when you are mid-workflow, and someone interrupts to ask you a non-urgent question, or turning on your emails and seeing a bombardment of leave requests to organise. We aim to make your life easier and have developed an employee portal where a variety of activities can be completed without any interruption, so (hopefully) you can have some peace and quiet.

Employees can...

- Request leave
- View outstanding training
- View assigned tasks
- Read mandatory documentation and send a read receipt
- Update personal details

Scalability

We have experience working with individual schools and Multi-Academy Trusts across the UK and our solution is designed to be organisation-wide (no matter what size that may be).

For those who manage multiple academies across the country, it can be difficult to know what is happening within each individual site at any one time. The multi-site dashboard allows you to have an eagle view of key information with the ability to drill down into the detail.

What this means is….
- *You can have access to employee data from any academy from a central location*
- *You can see absence data across multiple locations*
- *You can develop consistent policies across all sites that are automatically distributed to employees and*
- *update on individual sites.*

There is no limit to the number of employees you can add to the system. If you choose to add another academy to your MAT, the system can easily cater for this growth.

An effective audit trial

It's easy to understand what is expected of your school or academy in terms of compliance, but the execution not so much. One major area that often leads to gaps or is time consuming to achieve is a full audit trail of activities. Our HR solution enables you to distribute policies within the platform, where employees can tag read receipts which are automatically collated in the platform. So when an audit is taking place, you can pull up a full record of read receipts for all employees, in a few simple clicks.

THE every® WAY

BECAUSE PEOPLE DRIVE CHANGE

Every is all about making your role easier through practical and easy to use software, alongside professional support. We want to empower you to make a more efficient way of working.

The education landscape is changing, and to ensure your site has the most streamlined, efficient processes, you need to adapt to the latest changes. Our technology enables change, but the change must be driven by the:

- **Changemakers**
- **Change agents**
- **Change champions**

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

ADAM WATSON

Adam has over 20 years of experience in software and the education sector. This extends back to the late 90s, providing teaching equipment to schools and supporting those seeking conversion to specialist status. Since then, Adam has been providing both software and services to schools, local authorities and diocese bodies.

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Ian has over 20 years' experience in developing software in the construction and education sector. After originally training as a structural engineer, Ian moved to CSC UK Ltd, delivering software solutions to companies in the design and construction field around the world.

GET IN TOUCH
TO LEARN MORE ABOUT OUR CHANGEMAKING SOLUTION

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