

The Change Report

A Report on Attitudes,
Perceptions, & Impact
of Workplace Change

Released in 2026



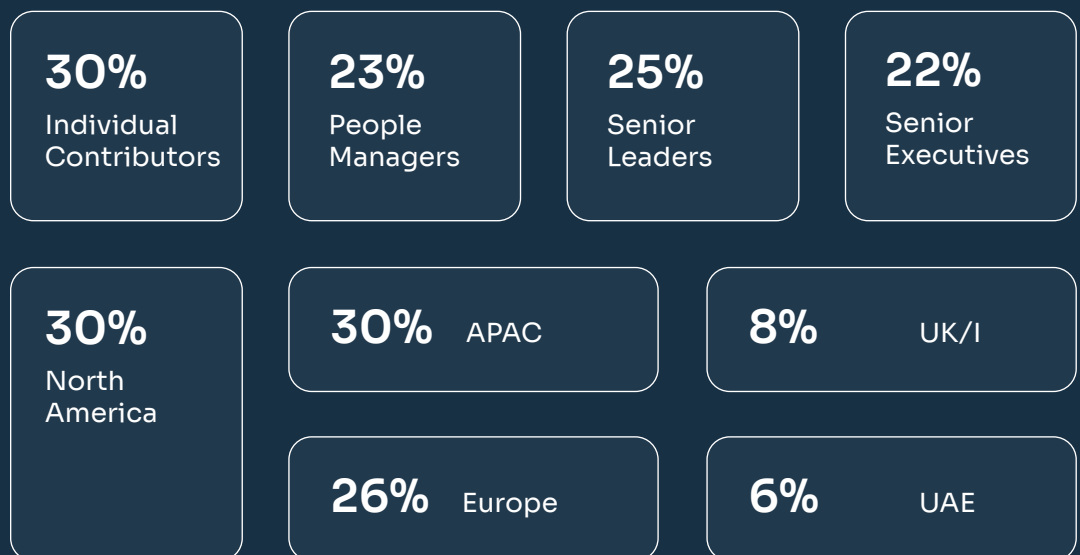
Each year, Sia examines the trends shaping workplace transformation and how change is experienced across organizations. In early 2026, we surveyed employees and leaders across industries, regions, roles, and organization sizes to better understand how workplace transformation is being experienced and managed in real time.

Survey respondents ranged from C-suite executives to front-line employees, representing organizations across North America, Europe, the Middle East, and Asia-Pacific, including a diverse cross-section of industries, functions, and workforce experiences.

Last year's report found that workplace change was increasing in volume, frequency, and pace, while organizations were managing change less effectively year-over-year. This year's findings show that the pressure has intensified even further. Employees are navigating increasingly interconnected and overlapping transformations, with AI accelerating the pace and complexity of change across the workplace.

This report highlights what we found, exploring emerging trends in AI, change capacity, leadership capability, workforce readiness, culture, and organizational adaptability—and what they reveal about how organizations and employees are navigating continuous transformation. It also offers practical considerations for leaders managing change at scale.

Of 1,450 Respondents



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Latest insights indicate that organizations are being tested in new ways when it comes to change

1. AI is accelerating change faster than organizations can absorb it

AI is becoming one of the primary drivers of organizational transformation, reshaping workflows, decision-making, and employee expectations in real time. While employees are already integrating AI into daily work, many organizations are still struggling to provide the clarity, enablement, governance, and operating models needed to support sustainable adoption and impact. This leaves employees feeling overwhelmed and without direction as they try to navigate new technologies and ways of working.

2. Organizations are failing at focus, not effort

Most organizations are not lacking ambition or urgency. They are struggling to make strategic trade-off decisions as transformation priorities continue to expand across the enterprise. Employees increasingly describe environments where too many initiatives compete simultaneously for the same people, attention, and resources.





3. It is not just change-overload—it is change-collision

Employees are no longer experiencing workplace change sequentially. AI implementation, reorganizations, new technologies, leadership transitions, and evolving workflows are increasingly overlapping and interacting simultaneously across the enterprise.

4. Change is being delivered, but not always sustained

Many organizations continue measuring success through rollout activity rather than long-term reinforcement and behavioral integration. Employees frequently describe environments where new tools, processes, and expectations are introduced before previous changes are fully embedded into everyday work. There is a 'lag' in adopting new ways of working that need to accompany large scale transitions.

5. The workforce is willing, but under-enabled for change

Many employees remain open, optimistic, and ready to adapt, but willingness alone is not enough. Across regions, employees report needing clearer priorities, stronger manager support, practical training, and greater transparency to navigate transformation successfully.

6. Leadership capability remains a critical differentiator

In environments shaped by continuous disruption, leadership becomes a stabilizing force. As AI rollout accelerates, leaders are increasingly expected to balance experimentation and empowerment with the guardrails and direction needed to create clarity and protect the organization. This tension is difficult to navigate without strong alignment at the top.

1. AI Is Accelerating Change Faster Than Organizations Can Absorb It

Organizations are rapidly introducing AI into everyday work, often while employees are still adapting to ongoing transformation across the business. Many employees report excitement around AI, but also uncertainty around expectations, training, and how AI will reshape their work over time.

“

Employees are often adapting faster than organizational systems are”

Employees are already adapting to AI. Many organizations are still catching up.

Employees across regions are already integrating AI into daily work faster than many organizations are establishing the structures needed to sustainably support it. AI is increasingly viewed as both a productivity opportunity and a source of uncertainty around expectations, governance, and the future of work.

23%



of employees are already experiencing major **AI, Data, or Analytics-related transformation**

→ One of the fastest-growing categories of workplace change

But many organizations are still operating with processes, approval structures, and ways of working designed for a slower pace of change.

AI is reshaping expectations around how work should happen.

Employees increasingly expect faster decision-making, streamlined workflows, and more efficient ways of working as AI becomes embedded into everyday tasks. As those expectations evolve, organizations are being pushed to rethink not only technology adoption, but how work, collaboration, and decision-making happen across the enterprise.

The result is growing tension between how quickly employees are adapting to AI and how quickly organizations are evolving to support it sustainably.

Note

/ **APAC respondents** were more likely to describe AI as an opportunity to improve speed, productivity, and innovation.

/ **North America respondents** more frequently raised concerns around workload expansion, unclear expectations, and how AI may reshape roles over time.

2. Organizations Are Failing at Focus, Not Effort

Employees increasingly describe workplaces where everything feels urgent at the same time. As organizations continue accelerating transformation, many teams struggle to maintain focus while balancing competing priorities and constant reprioritization.

“

The organizations moving fastest are not always the organizations moving most effectively.”

Transformation priorities are expanding faster than organizations are narrowing focus

Many organizations continue introducing new priorities without removing existing demands. Employees increasingly report feeling pulled across competing initiatives, while managers are often left navigating difficult tradeoffs without clear direction.

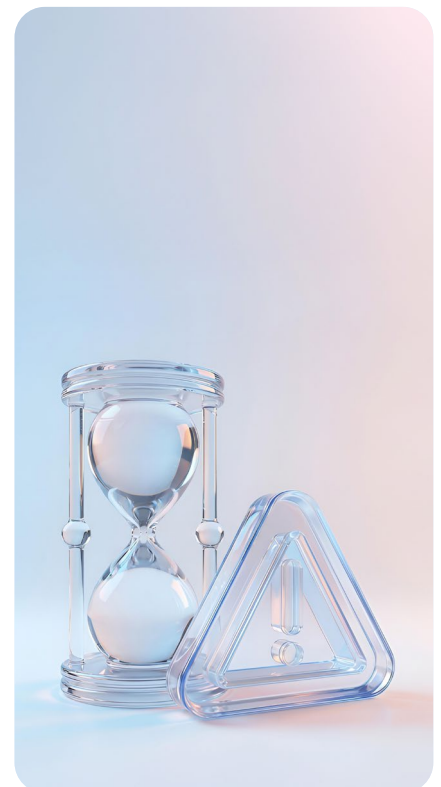
41% say their organization tries to “do everything at once”

22% say initiatives are actively paused or delayed

21% say teams are left to figure out tradeoffs on their own

Transformation capacity is becoming a strategic resource.

Organizations are no longer competing only on speed or innovation. They are increasingly competing on their ability to focus attention, sequence priorities, and sustain workforce capacity over time.



Note

/ **EMEA respondents** reported some of the highest levels of frustration around prioritization and competing initiatives, while **UK&I respondents** frequently referenced insufficient recovery time between changes.

3. It Is Not Just Change Overload—It Is Change Collision

Employees are experiencing workplace change as overlapping and interconnected rather than separate initiatives. AI implementation, reorganizations, new technologies, and evolving workflows are increasingly happening simultaneously across the enterprise.

“

The challenge is no longer managing change volume. It is managing change interaction.”

Employees are no longer experiencing change sequentially—they are experiencing it simultaneously.

Workplace transformation is becoming increasingly interconnected as changes overlap continuously across systems, teams, leadership structures, and workflows. Employees frequently describe environments where priorities shift before previous changes stabilize and expectations continue evolving in real time.

85%

are currently experiencing at least one workplace change



30%

are experiencing 3–5 simultaneous changes



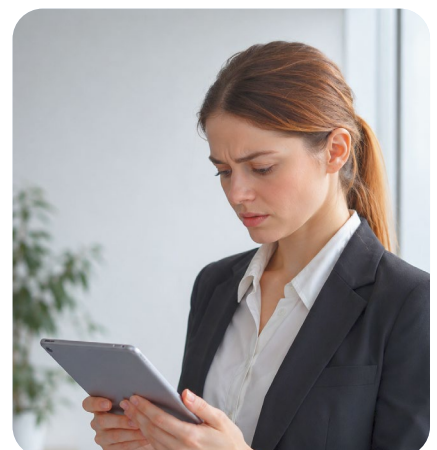
Note

/ **North America** remains one of the highest-pressure environments for overlapping enterprise change, while **UAE respondents** reported some of the fastest-moving transformation environments globally.

Change collision is reshaping how employees experience work day-to-day.

Employees are increasingly navigating environments where priorities shift before previous changes stabilize, decisions made in one area create ripple effects across others, and teams struggle to maintain alignment as transformation accelerates simultaneously across the enterprise.

Instead of experiencing change as a series of manageable initiatives, many employees now experience transformation as a constant state of operational disruption.



4. Change Is Being Delivered, But Not Always Sustained

Organizations continue moving quickly to launch new systems, technologies, and transformation initiatives. But employees frequently report that reinforcement, training, and long-term integration lag behind implementation.

“

Launching transformation is easier than sustaining it.”

Implementation is moving faster than reinforcement and long-term adoption

Employees frequently describe environments where changes are launched successfully, but organizations struggle to reinforce new behaviors, retire legacy processes, and sustain adoption over time.

18%

Only, say their organization handles outcomes and sustainability “Extremely Well”

35%

Say their organization handles outcomes and sustainability only “Adequately”

32%

Say communication and employee experience are handled only “Adequately”

11%

Say communication and employee experience are handled “Poorly”

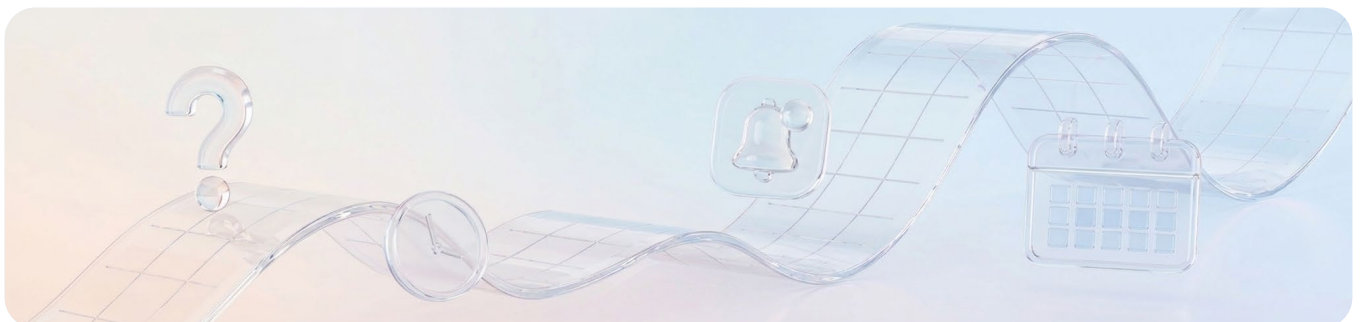
Implementation does not guarantee integration.

Technology and systems can scale rapidly, but workforce confidence, reinforcement, and sustainable behavior change develop over time.

Organizations that move too quickly without reinforcing change appropriately risk creating costly, temporary activity rather than lasting transformation and ROI.

Note

/ **UAE respondents** reported the highest levels of confidence in organizational change effectiveness, while **APAC respondents** showed stronger optimism around long-term adoption and integration.



5. The Workforce Is Willing, But Under-Enabled for Change

Many employees remain optimistic about innovation and the future of work, but report needing clearer priorities, stronger support, and more practical guidance to navigate continuous transformation successfully.

“

The workforce may be more ready for transformation than organizations themselves.”

Employees are not resisting change as much as organizations assume

Many employees remain open to innovation, AI, and evolving ways of working. But organizations are not always providing the support systems needed to help employees build confidence and capability during continuous transformation.

33% Identify as Enthusiasts toward workplace change



15% Only, are identify as Champions



28% Identify as Skeptics



24% Identify as Bystanders



Adaptability requires more than motivation – it requires organizational readiness.

Across regions, employees consistently report needing stronger support systems to navigate transformation successfully—including clearer direction from leadership, practical development opportunities, greater visibility into how decisions are made, and clear governance and guardrails that help them confidently navigate change.

Organizations that build these foundations while investing in workforce capability and employee confidence will be better positioned to sustain adaptability and long-term transformation momentum.



Note

/ APAC reported some of the highest Champion scores globally, while **North America** showed higher levels of Bystander behavior and disengagement risk.

6. Leadership Capability Remains a Critical Differentiator

In environments shaped by continuous disruption, leadership becomes a stabilizing force. As AI rollout accelerates, leaders are increasingly expected to balance experimentation and empowerment with the guardrails and direction needed to create clarity and protect the organization. This tension is difficult to navigate without strong alignment at the top.

“

Culture is shaped by what leaders prioritize, reinforce, and model every day.”

Leadership capability is becoming organizational infrastructure

Managers are expected to translate strategy into operational reality while helping employees navigate continuous disruption. Yet many still lack the context, visibility, and support needed to lead transformation effectively.

20%

Only, say leadership and manager enablement is handled “**Extremely Well**”

33%

Say leadership and manager enablement is handled only “**Adequately**”

11%

Say leadership and manager enablement is handled “**Poorly**”

Managers are increasingly becoming the absorbers of organizational complexity.

Employees look to managers first for clarity, stability, and direction during uncertainty, yet many managers are navigating the same pressure, ambiguity, and competing priorities as their teams.

As transformation accelerates across the enterprise, managers are increasingly expected to translate organizational disruption into actionable guidance for employees while maintaining alignment, engagement, and day-to-day performance.

Note

/ **EMEA respondents** reported stronger leadership confidence overall, while **APAC** respondents showed higher concern around leadership strain and communication consistency.



Advice for Leaders

Seven Actions for Leaders Navigating Continuous Transformation.

1. Redesign work—don't just deploy AI

The organizations creating the greatest AI impact are rethinking how work gets done, how decisions are made, and how teams operate together. Technology alone will not transform organizations, operating models, leadership behaviors, ways of working and workforce habits will.

2. Don't treat every initiative like a top priority

One of the biggest risks organizations face is not lack of ambition—it is lack of focus. Employees are increasingly being asked to absorb too many competing priorities at once. Leaders must make difficult tradeoff decisions, simplify where possible, and create clearer organizational direction.

3. Protect the people carrying transformation

High-performing employees and managers are often the ones repeatedly asked to absorb, lead, and stabilize change. Organizations that fail to protect capacity risk creating burnout, disengagement, and declining adaptability among the very employees they depend on most.





4. Turn managers into transformation leaders

Managers are no longer simply overseeing work—they are translating uncertainty into action for employees every day. Organizations should equip managers with visibility, context, communication tools, and decision-making clarity so they can lead confidently during continuous disruption. The ‘magic middle’ are key drivers of productivity and agility, however, they need the clarity, direction and tools to execute effectively.

5. Reinforce change long after implementation

Transformation does not succeed when systems go live—it succeeds when new behaviors become embedded into how work happens every day. Leaders should focus more aggressively on reinforcement, adoption, and long-term workforce confidence.

6. Build organizations that can adapt continuously

The future belongs to organizations that can evolve without losing clarity, trust, or momentum. Adaptability is no longer a temporary transformation capability—it is becoming a defining organizational advantage. Leaders should build collaboration and problem-solving norms that help teams move faster and respond more effectively in business-as-usual environments.

7. Lean into human experiences

In a high-tech, AI-first world, in-person human experiences matter more than ever. When leaders and employees connect face-to-face, they engage more deeply in shaping the changes they are part of and the outcomes they are working toward. These moments can strengthen trust, alignment, and commitment in ways digital interactions often cannot.



Optimists for change

Sia is a next-generation, global management consulting group—born digital, augmented by data, enhanced by creativity, and driven by responsibility. We partner with clients to resolve challenges and capitalize on opportunities. We believe that in today's world of change and disruption, optimism is a force multiplier.