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DOCTORS DOING WELL, BUT TEACHERS BOTTOM OF THE CLASS WHEN IT COMES TO HANDWRITING

Benefits Outweigh Computers as Handwriting Set to Stay

The UK's doctor's and accountants are the professions with the neatest, best-developed handwriting, whilst teachers have the most under-developed, according to a new study by printer manufacturer Lexmark.

And despite deteriorating standards due to the dominance of computers, most people believe that handwriting will continue to play a positive role in the workplace over the next fifty years.

The study combined research surveying the UK's workforce about the quality of, and their attitudes to handwriting, and an analysis of samples by handwriting expert Dr Rosemary Sassoon.

Results in brief:

- Over a third (36%) of teachers believe their handwriting is not up to scratch, whilst accountants and doctors have the UK's most well formed hand writing
- Three quarters of UK workers (74%) think writing by hand increases their productivity
- 78% say handwriting will still be part of their jobs in fifty years

Teachers Must Try Harder

While teachers develop the handwriting in our children, the research saw 36% admit that their own handwriting was not up to scratch. This was borne out by the analysis from Dr Rosemary Sassoon who suggested that from the sample "teacher's, more than any other profession, illustrate they have not been taught the essentials of handwriting."

Amazingly, despite their reputation for having poor handwriting, a fifth (20%) of doctors described their handwriting as 'calligraphy'.

"Doctors look for speed first when writing prescriptions. These are only for pharmacists and mostly comprised of mutually understood icons – designed to do a job, not win awards," said Dr Sassoon.

Handwriting Effects Productivity

Despite the prominence of computers, three quarters (74%) of people believe writing by hand actually helps them to perform better at work. However 45% alarmingly pointed out that their handwriting was steadily deteriorating in the workplace.

Teacher's (79%), accountants (75%) and retail workers (78%) all pointed to better performance when writing by hand. Even 28% of IT workers – those most dependant on computers – believed that using their handwriting was more conducive to better practice in the workplace.

Despite the deterioration, 78% of the UK's workforce thought that writing would still form an important part of their job in fifty years time.

"We undertook this study as part of our commitment to better understand how our customers produce and use documents," said UK General Manager, Giovanni Giusti. "Our prime focus is to make the printing process easier. However, with the development of our multi-function technology, we place an equal importance on our customer's ability to copy, fax, scan and digitise all types of documents, including those that have been hand written."

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For further information

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Notes to Editors:

About The Survey

The research targeted 500 professionals that included accountants, IT managers, retail workers, teachers and doctors. It asked a series of seven questions about use of and attitude to handwriting.

The Sample Used

Respondents had to provide an example of their normal writing, a signature, plus the following in their best handwriting:

"In a hole in the ground there lived a hobbit. Not a nasty, dirty, wet hole, filled with the ends of worms and an oozy smell, nor yet a dry, bare, sandy hole with nothing in it to sit down on or to eat: it was a hobbit-hole, and that means comfort."

About Lexmark

Lexmark International, Inc. is a leading developer, manufacturer and supplier of printing solutions – including laser and inkjet printers, multifunction printers, and associated supplies and services – for offices and homes in more than 150 countries. Founded in 1991, Lexmark reported approximately \$4.8 billion in revenue in 2003, and can be found on the Internet at www.lexmark.com.

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