

Transforming Mobilisation Through Technology and Empathy

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Speaking exclusively to FM Business Daily, Emma Armstrong, Founder of [Empro](#), shares her journey from a life-changing health crisis to building a female-led consultancy that's revolutionising how the FM industry approaches mobilisations and TUPE transfers.

After spending six months in hospital, paralysed and on a life support machine and tracheostomy, Emma Armstrong returned to work in January 2023 with a renewed sense of purpose. The experience prompted a fundamental question about her legacy and what she wanted to build in the facilities management sector.

"I thought, what do I want to do? How do you want to leave a legacy?" she said. "So I've been building Empro because I want to leave a legacy and build something worthy and fundamentally good."

That vision has manifested in a business focused squarely on improving the mobilisation experience for everyone involved, particularly the thousands of people who transfer between organisations through TUPE processes each year.

Digitising the Mobilisation Process

Emma's background is firmly rooted in mobilisations, having mobilised several major contracts over the years, including DWP in 2018. Throughout her career, she has helped approximately 60,000 people through the TUPE process, an experience that has given her unique insight into the pain points of the procedure.

"If you look back to around five years ago, we were using pen and paper, driving up the motorway and scanning the passports and sending emails to welcome people to businesses" she explained. "It's such a

long-winded way to do it. And I thought, there's got to be a better way to transfer."

The challenge, she noted, is that mobilisations are fundamentally different from standard business-as-usual onboarding processes. "It's hundreds, if not thousands of people joining a business on the same day, at the same time. And if they don't, then the business is in trouble because they haven't got the staff around to keep service continuity."

In response, Empro has built a platform that focuses exclusively on TUPE transfers, designed around the user experience. The platform recognises that in total facilities management contracts, different service lines (cleaning, security, engineering, workplace services) all have different processes and different types of people.

"We've digitised it; and we've put it all into one place," Emma said. "And because it's tech, you can change the language at the press of a button. So if you're a cleaner and you speak Portuguese and you don't really want to use English as a first language, you can just change it."

For FM providers, the platform is white-labelled to match their branding, and bespoke to each transfer and personalised to each employee and their role, providing a unique selling point for FM providers in tenders and work winning. The client-facing admin side offers solutions to analyse model organisational design changes, redundancy costs, salary increases and automatically identify differences between various versions of employee liability information and flag discrepancies, without manual comparison.

Proven Results and High Engagement

The platform has already demonstrated impressive results. Last year, Empro deployed it for a major mobilisation involving one main client and six suppliers, managing a TUPE transfer from two incumbents that had been in post for several years into a completely different model.

"Every one of the providers deployed their own version of the app. It was all branded specifically to their businesses," Emma explained. "So the experience for everyone was the same, no matter the business, role or language. You get the same style invite to the platform, with the same information, providing the same user journey."

The results were striking. A pre-transfer survey showed an engagement index averaging in the high range. From the point that employee liability information was provided to the point of transfer, within the 28-day window, the platform achieved a 94% transfer rate.

"We've just done a post-transfer survey, checking where everybody's at. We asked how useful did you find it? How are you feeling now? And again, we got really, really high results and excellent feedback," Emma said.

The success has led to repeat business, with one client already returning to request another version for a new project!

Addressing Key Pain Points

Emma identified several critical pain points that the technology addresses. First is the ability to see the entire journey in a digital format, whether transferring 50 people or 1,000 people, with clarity on exactly

where everyone is in the process.

“Some organisations are still using pen and paper. So you can imagine the amount of errors, data loss, GDPR, all of the potential risks that come with that,” she said.

She noted that failing right-to-work checks now carries an on-the-spot fine of £60,000. To address this, Empro has partnered with One ID to digitise all right-to-work and DBS checks, as well as bank verification, eliminating payment and payroll errors.

Having a digital platform that can communicate with hundreds of people across different sites in different languages addresses what she described as a “massive pain” in the mobilisation process.

Technology as Enabler, Not Replacement

“People get scared of tech,” she acknowledged. “Some of the feedback we’ve had is that companies still want to engage with people in person. And so the point of what we’ve done isn’t to take that away, it just takes away some of the process and admin. So you’ve got more time to have a conversation.”

“I think smaller organisations in particular can harness and adapt much quicker than some of the larger organisations because they’re so bureaucratic and they’ve got so much red tape,” she said.

Looking back at the development journey, she reflected: “We started building this solution two years ago and obviously it’s just been deployed in practice now. If I’d have started building this six months ago, I probably would have been able to have done it by now because technology has advanced that quickly.”

“If I was a bigger organisation, I would probably be wanting to look into unlocking some of that red tape. Otherwise, you’re going to get overtaken by cost leadership because these smaller organisations are going to be able to do the same better and faster,” she advised.

An All-female Team

Empro’s team is entirely female, which Emma acknowledged is “quite unusual in our industry”. However, she was quick to clarify this wasn’t by design: “It’s just an accident that the nature of what we do, it’s very in tune to a female leadership style.

After navigating a more challenging period in 2024, particularly between April and August when businesses appeared to be bracing for National Insurance changes, the company has experienced explosive growth since the late 2025.

“I feel so much more confident,” Emma said. “This year has been huge for us already. It’s down to the standard of work we deliver. We wouldn’t get callbacks and referrals if we weren’t doing good things.”

Looking Ahead

“Everything we do, whether it’s a consulting project, whether it’s recruitment or whether it’s the technology that we create, it’s all around transformation and improving the industry that we work in. Fundamentally our guiding purpose is about creating better experiences and attracting people into the sector,” Emma said.

With clear plans to grow the business organically and continue supporting more organisations through change, Emma's focus remains on delivering work that makes a genuine difference. "We want to continue to be different in the industry and deliver some really good work," she said. "If I can pass the baton on and help somebody progress their career and give them confidence, that's a lovely legacy to leave. To touch somebody's life like and make it a pleasant experience, what could be better?"