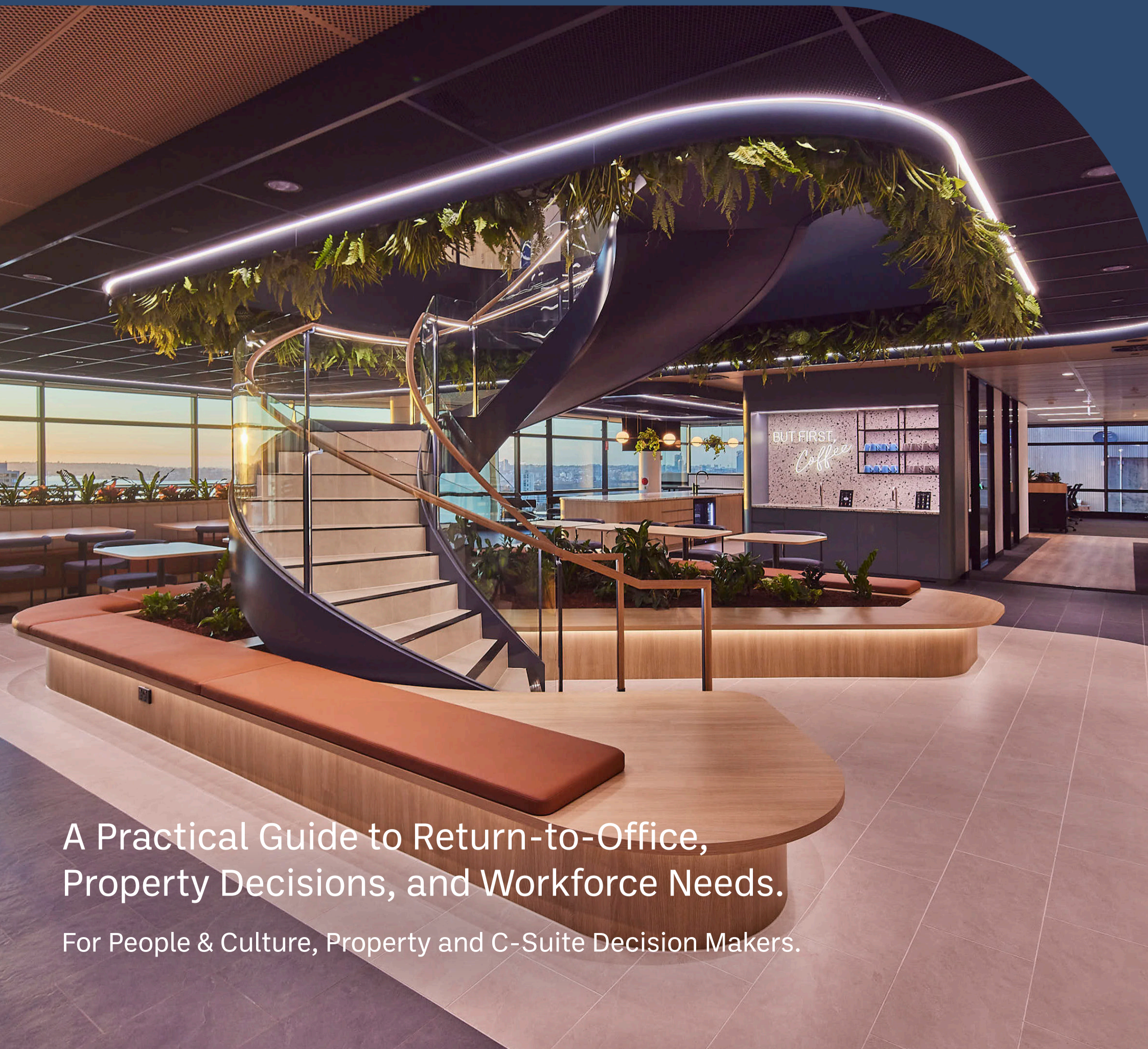




# Workplace Strategy in Action: 2025



A Practical Guide to Return-to-Office,  
Property Decisions, and Workforce Needs.

For People & Culture, Property and C-Suite Decision Makers.

## Introduction

# What is Workplace Strategy?

Workplace strategy is essential for organisations navigating complex decisions about their workplace. It focuses on aligning physical environments with business goals, workforce needs, and culture.

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# The Way People Work Is Constantly Changing

Business leaders are still facing the challenge of making the right strategic decisions regarding their workforce and workplace/s with confidence and conviction.

Workplace Strategy is a structured approach focused on aligning an organisation’s physical environment with its business, commercial, people and cultural objectives. It is the best input to drive the robust conversations looking at the organisation holistically.

Before engaging with the commercial real estate market - whether due to lease expiry, global property strategy or right-sizing requirement - engagement with workplace strategy consultants like Kate and Karin at PMG, can alleviate additional workload and inform next steps. More than just layouts and design, workplace strategy creates environments that enhance productivity, connection, collaboration, and long-term success.

The right workplace strategy partner, who applies a tailored practical approach and avoids ‘death by workshop’, can help your organisation achieve the desired objectives.

By unpacking organisational, commercial, financial, people, cultural, ESG, and technological priorities, a clear roadmap emerges - one that accounts for change profiles and establishes guiding principles.

We understand the significance of your decisions and the impact they have on achieving your goals. Drawing on global and local insights from daily conversations about the return to office, hybrid working, and portfolio consolidation, we provide informed guidance to support your strategy.

While you focus on maintaining excellence in your business-critical roles, external expertise can provide valuable support. PMG streamlines this process, ensuring a smooth and effective outcome.

### Five Key Considerations:

#### Business Strategy

Align workplace with strategic goals.

#### Portfolio Mandates

Ensure real estate supports business needs.

#### Ways of Working

Adapt to current and future workstyles.

#### Culture

Reflect organisational values in the environment.

#### Change Appetite

Gauge readiness and plan accordingly.

Experiencing rapid growth, this renewable energy organisation needed a workplace strategy to maximise their lease, support evolving workforce needs, and align with ESG goals.

PMG provided data-driven insights, analysed space utilisation and worked with the leadership team on key business objectives. By integrating strategy with property selection and design, the organisation secured a future-ready space, delivered on time and on budget.



Renewable Energy Organisation, Brisbane



# Global Trends Shaping Workplaces.

Global Trends explores how workplace strategy is evolving across the US, Asia, Europe, Australia, and New Zealand. From shifting lease models to the impact of AI, sustainability, and hybrid work, we examine the forces shaping workplace design and decision-making worldwide.



JLL forecasts that 60% of European offices will be redesigned in 2025, prioritising collaborative spaces and flexible layouts to support hybrid work.

Businesses are adopting 'Anchor Hours' during the work week (IE 11am - 4pm) for teams to unite in the office for in-person meetings and collaboration.

USA

Recent research estimates that **25%** of US companies now offer full flexibility, **43%** operate under a structured hybrid model, and **32%** require corporate employees to work full-time in the office.

Companies embracing hybrid models are attracting top talent, particularly from organisations enforcing strict return-to-office (RTO) mandates. Studies indicate that rigid RTO policies often lead to attrition, especially among women and caregivers, as employees prioritise work-life balance.

UK & Europe

In the UK, recent research shows that **32%** of employers allowing hybrid work do not mandate a set number of office days. Meanwhile, **52%** require a minimum number of in-office days per week, and **13%** set a monthly minimum.

Across Europe, hybrid models are evolving faster than in the US, with many companies introducing “work-from-anywhere” policies. AI and immersive technologies are playing a key role in supporting cross-border talent attraction and workforce mobility.

Asia

Over **60%** of Asia Pacific companies report stable office attendance, with **73%** of employees working in-office at least three days a week. Tuesdays and Wednesdays see the highest attendance, while Fridays remain the least popular.

Workplaces are shifting from static layouts to modular designs, incorporating unassigned seating (hot desking) and activity-based zones. High-performing teams in the region are three times more likely to use tailored workspaces such as collaboration hubs or quiet pods.

Australia & New Zealand

In Australia recent data from recruitment firm Robert Half reveals a modest increase in employers’ in-office attendance requirements for 2025. A survey of 500 Australian employers indicates that the average mandated in-office days have risen from 3.43 in 2024 to 3.64 in 2025. Notably, companies such as Tabcorp and Amazon now require full-time employees to be present in the office every day.

In New Zealand, flexible hours and remote options are key retention strategies, with **72%** of employees preferring hybrid models. Companies that fail to adapt risk losing talent to competitors offering greater autonomy.

# Hybrid Work Models: Industry Examples.

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Gallagher, Sydney

An overview of how different companies are structuring their hybrid work models, highlighting industry trends.

Company	Industry	Hybrid Work Policy	Local (L) or Global (G)
Apple	Technology	Hybrid model: Employees must work in the office on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and a team-chosen day.	G
Airbnb	Hotel / Hospitality	Hybrid model: Employees choose which days they come into the office.	G
AstraZeneca	Pharmaceutical	Hybrid model: 3 days in the office, depending on role and local guidelines.	G
BHP	Mining	Hybrid model: Senior staff - 4 days in the office; teams by individual arrangement.	L
Commonwealth Bank	Finance	Hybrid model: At least four hours in the office each day to meet their attendance requirements of 50% of the month	L
Corrs Chambers Westgarth	Legal	Hybrid Model: minimum 3-4 days per week in office.	L
DELL	Computers	Office-based: 5 days per week.	G
Deloitte	Consultancy	Hybrid model: dependent on role.	G
Disney	Advertising / Media / PR	Hybrid model: 4 days in the office (Monday–Thursday).	G
IAG	Insurance	Hybrid model: Dependent on team, between 0–5 days in the office.	L
Microsoft	Technology	Hybrid model: typically 2–3 days in the office per week.	G
NSW State Government	Government	Office Based: 5 days per week requested. Teams by arrangement.	L
nbn Co	Telecommunications	Hybrid model: 1–2 days in the office. Must work an anchor day with the team plus one additional day nominated by the leader.	L
Salesforce	Technology	Hybrid model: Certain teams required to work in the office 4–5 days per week.	G
Tabcorp	Gaming and Entertainment	Office-based: 5 days per week.	L
Tourism Australia	Government Body	Hybrid model: 2 days in the office, including a nominated anchor day.	L



Discover more hybrid models



# Rethinking Workplace Strategy: A Smarter Approach for People & Culture.

HR and People & Culture teams are navigating complex workplace challenges - balancing hybrid work requirements, employee wellbeing, and organisational culture while meeting business objectives. A strategic approach can ensure the office supports engagement, retention, and productivity.

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# The Challenges: Workplace Design for an Evolving Workforce

## Hybrid Work Models: Managing Flexibility Without Losing Connection

One-size-fits-all hybrid policies are failing, and leaders must tailor strategies to workforce needs.

Workplace design needs to support individual focus and team collaboration, ensuring remote workers remain connected to the organisation and its culture.

## Aligning Office Design with Organisational Values

A recent survey found nearly 75% of employees would be more inclined to spend time in the office if the space reflected the organisation's brand, culture, and values.

Designing with the intention to embody these elements can align with employee expectations, deepen their connection to the company, and foster a stronger sense of belonging, ultimately creating a more memorable employee experience.

## Stakeholder Alignment: HRs Role in Workplace Decisions

HR leaders must collaborate with executives, IT, and property teams to ensure workplace strategy aligns with broader business goals.

There is a greater need for HR leaders to enhance their data fluency skills to track employees' attendance and adherence to return-to-office policies.

Gallagher needed a scalable workplace strategy, balancing consistency across 30+ locations with flexibility. PMG analysed space utilisation, developing a national framework that supports collaboration, brand identity, and adaptability.

Now rolling out across Australia, it's a model designed to evolve with the business.



# The Solutions: A Strategic Framework for Workplace Success

## Define a Workplace Vision Aligned with Business Goals

Use the physical office to reflect company values and culture. Integrate organisational values, messaging and storytelling into workplace design to strengthen employee connection.

## Leverage Data to Drive Workplace Strategy

Tracking office attendance, space utilisation, and employee survey feedback can reveal a lot about when people want to come in and where they want to work. Avoid assumptions, collecting real-time data ensures workplaces evolve with workforce needs.

## Designing for Diverse Work styles & Multi-Generations

Provide a range of spaces to accommodate different and neurodivergent workstyles. Quiet zones for deep work, social areas that encourage interaction, and wellness spaces for rest and recharge will help to meet different employee preferences.

Desk allocations should align with feedback and hybrid policy, balancing flexibility and business growth.

Organisations can create inclusive, engaging workplaces by integrating flexible spaces, accessible technology, diverse amenities, and environments that foster intergenerational collaboration.

## Future-Proof Through Smart Design & Innovation

Integrating workplace technology with business strategy enhances efficiency and employee experience. Thoughtful material selections, energy-conscious design, and sustainable furnishings contribute meaningfully to ESG targets, creating spaces that perform now and evolve for the future.

## The Outcome: A Workplace That Attracts, Engages, and Retains Talent

A strategic workplace approach isn't just about office design - it's about supporting people. By aligning space with organisational goals, HR and People & Culture teams can create an environment that enhances collaboration, wellbeing, and productivity, driving both employee and business success.

A well-known non-profit needed a workspace for diverse work styles. PMG designed quiet zones to enable deep focus, while open social areas foster collaboration and team-building. Integrated wellness spaces offer calming environments for rest and recharge, enhancing well-being and productivity. This balanced approach ensures the workplace supports both individual and team needs.

# Optimising Workplace Strategy for Property and Operations Teams.

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Property and operations teams must balance cost, functionality, and long-term flexibility while ensuring workplaces meet business needs. But what defines an effective space?

- How much space do we need?
- How do we assess stay vs. go feasibility?
- How do we refurbish or refresh our existing space?
- What types of spaces will drive productivity?
- How do we meet global directives to reduce footprint/manage property costs?
- How do we manage our future space requirements?
- How do we approach consolidation or co-location of properties across our portfolio?

# Key Challenges: Physical Spaces, Budgets, Complexity & Risk

A clear data-driven strategy is essential to support you and inform internal stakeholder decisions. Workplace demand fluctuates, and measuring real-time usage is the first step in creating a resilient, high-performance environment to support you and inform internal stakeholder decisions.

The effectiveness of your workplace strategy depends on accurately measuring how people use the space.

Managing office portfolios involves more than just securing leases and overseeing maintenance. Tight timelines, budget pressures and complex stakeholder demands that vary by location and site create a landscape where every decision carries risk for the broader business.

## The Pressure Points:

Aligning physical spaces with business priorities and hybrid work policies is essential to balancing collaboration, focus, and social connection. Navigating stakeholder complexity requires clear communication across teams to prevent decision paralysis.

Minimising project risk is critical to avoid cost overruns, delays, and quality issues. Transparent procurement and planning ensure workplace investments deliver long-term value.



# Practical Solutions for Property & Operations Leaders

## Build Confidence Through Data & Transparency

Workplace decisions on physical space utilisation should be based on measurable data, not assumptions. Leveraging workplace occupancy sensors, WiFi tracking, and booking data provides some clarity on space utilisation. Observations add another layer. Clear reporting strengthens business cases and C-suite decisions.

## Maximise Value Without Overspending

Budget constraints don't have to mean compromises. Cost-effective design and construction strategies like refurbishment ensure project feasibility while maintaining quality. A partnership with a firm that offers in-house estimation and cost forecasts can mitigate financial risk from the internal feasibility stage.

## Streamline Stakeholder Decision-Making

Multiple decision-makers can slow down projects. Clear governance structures, well-defined approval processes, and transparent communication help teams navigate internal complexities with minimal friction.

## Moving Forward: A Smarter Workplace Strategy

Optimising office space isn't just about cutting costs, it's about creating environments that enhance productivity and adapt to evolving business needs.

With the right data, reliable partners, and structured processes, property and operations teams can deliver high-performance workplaces while managing risk effectively.

A rapidly growing organisation needed a workplace strategy aligned with its lease, culture, and ESG goals

PMG analysed space utilisation to ensure the workplace met immediate and future needs. By integrating strategy with property selection and design, the organisation secured a future-ready space. Demonstrating that an integrated approach drives smarter property decisions.



# Rethinking Workplace Strategy for C-Suite and Leadership.

Workplace strategy isn't just about real estate - it's a business-critical decision impacting people, costs, risk, and long-term growth. With increasing financial pressures and evolving workforce needs, leaders must optimise space while ensuring flexibility for the future.

Adopting a holistic lens and utilising consultancy expertise allows for robust conversations, helping to unpack the reality behind the perception or narrative, ensuring that every decision is informed by a deeper understanding of both immediate and future needs.

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# The Challenge: Cost Pressures and Business Case Complexity

2025 presents a challenging landscape with rising costs, economic uncertainty, and stricter ESG requirements. C-suite leaders must navigate:

- Cost reduction vs. hybrid workforce– Cutting expenses without compromising attrition of staff and flexibility if hybrid policies change.
- Lease decisions – Aligning renewals or relocations with growth projections.
- Risk and compliance – Meeting ESG standards while mitigating financial exposure.

## The Solution: Smart, Strategic Workplace Decisions

A proactive approach to workplace strategy can reduce costs, future-proof investments, and support business goals.

### A Data-Driven Business Case

Decisions backed by data gain executive and board buy-in. A solid, practical workplace strategy can leverage:

- Space utilisation analytics to optimise footprint and reduce excess costs.
- Market insights to benchmark costs against industry standards.
- Financial modeling tools to forecast workplace expenses and ROI.

### Mitigate Financial and Compliance Risks

Workplace investments carry financial and reputational risks. A structured risk assessment ensures:

- Compliance with ESG reporting to align with investor and regulatory expectations.
- Scalability to adapt to workforce shifts and economic fluctuations.

## Ensure Flexibility for Future Growth

A rigid workplace can hinder adaptability. Strategies include:

- Flexible future fit partition solutions.
- Multi-use spaces that support both collaboration and focus work.
- Technology integration to enable hybrid work without redundancy.

## The Outcome: A Future-Ready, Cost-Efficient Workplace


C-suite leaders who rethink integrated workplace strategy through data, risk mitigation, and flexibility will drive long-term financial and operational success.

The right approach not only optimises costs today but also positions the organisation.



A renewable energy company partnered with PMG to align its workplace with ESG values while managing risk. The strategy integrated sustainable materials, energy efficiency, and flexible leasing to cut long-term costs.

This met investor expectations and reinforced sustainability commitments.

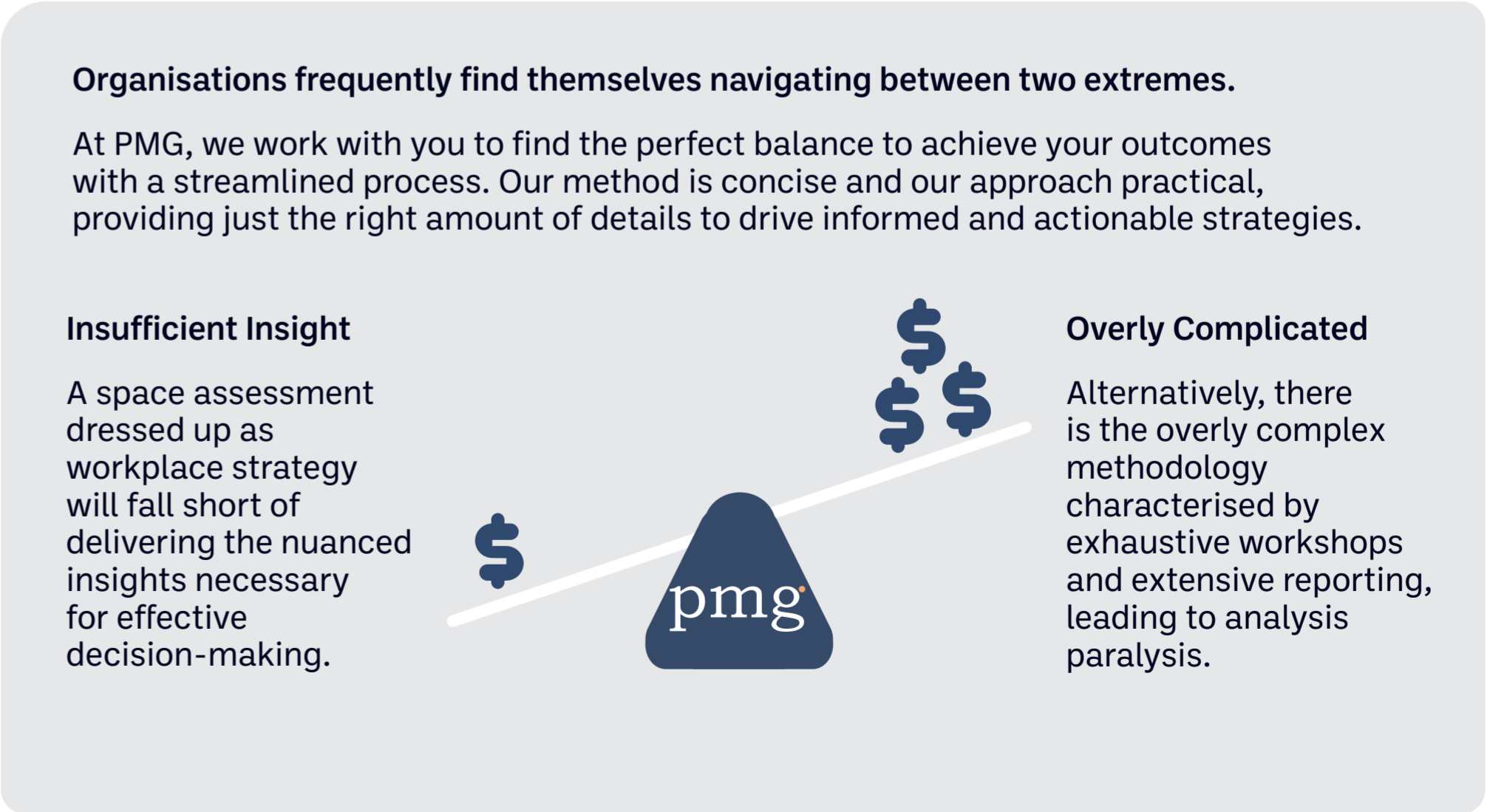
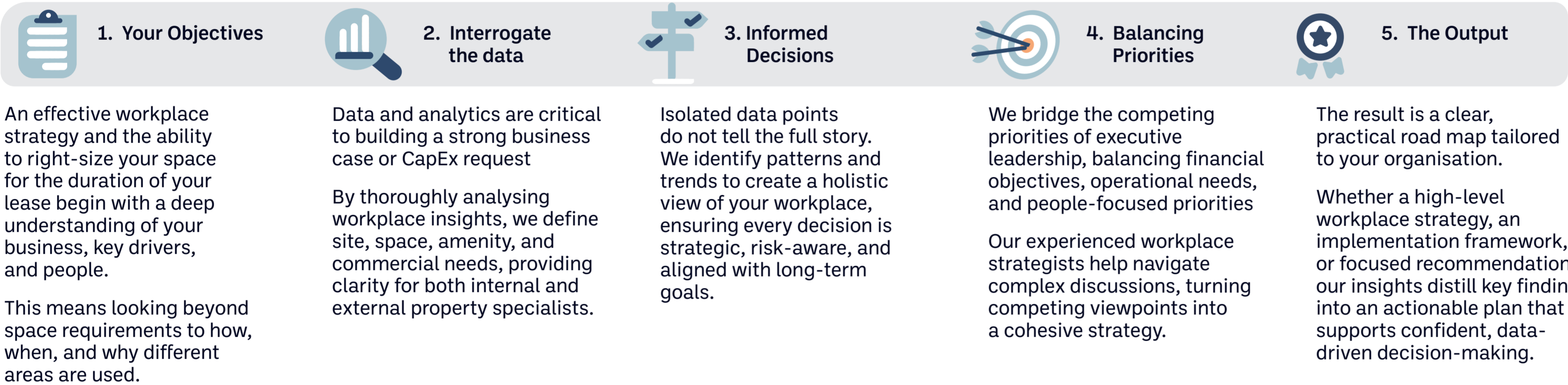


# **Our Methodology for Workplace Strategy.**

**Our approach to workplace strategy  
is designed to cut through circular  
conversations and drive clear,  
actionable outcomes.**

# With a tailored step-by-step process, we help clients define their goals, align stakeholder priorities, and create a workplace strategy that supports both current needs and future growth.

By combining data-driven insights with practical solutions, we move projects forward efficiently, ensuring your workplace is optimised for productivity, collaboration, and flexibility.



# Conclusion.

## How PMG can support you.

**A well-executed workplace strategy is more than just a plan - it's a powerful tool to align your space with your organisation's goals, culture, and future growth.**

By leveraging data, external expertise, and a structured approach, you can make informed decisions that drive both commercial and cultural success.

Whether staying or moving, a well-planned approach ensures the office remains a strategic asset, not just an expense.

The right decisions today will define how effectively businesses adapt and grow in the years ahead.

At PMG Group, we bring practical insights to complex workplace challenges and turn them into clear, actionable strategies.

### **What outcomes can you expect working with PMG?**

- A streamlined process - no unnecessary workshops or lengthy reports.
- Data-driven insights to inform workplace decisions.
- Clear, objective support for your business case.
- External expertise to bring clarity to internal discussions.
- Concise, actionable reporting for efficient decision-making.
- Accurate space assessments to optimise utilisation.
- A workplace aligned with your organisation's vision and goals.

**For more information contact us:**  
**[hello@pmggroup.com.au](mailto:hello@pmggroup.com.au)**

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# Next Steps?

At a stalemate with your internal conversations and not sure where to start?

Schedule a no-obligation chat with one of our workplace strategists.

Gain practical insights and a fresh perspective on common workplace challenges.

**Let's start the conversation.**



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