



iPWC

THE WORKPLACE SPECIALISTS

ENHANCING YOUR WORKPLACE

A GUIDE TO CREATING FLEXIBLE OFFICES
IN A HYBRID WORLD

PURPOSEFUL CHANGE

WHAT PROBLEM ARE YOU TRYING TO SOLVE?

When our clients tell us they want more people in the office, we often ask, "What problem are you trying to solve?"

When we understand the reason behind the desire for more people to be in the office, the solution becomes approachable and often more bespoke.

One-size-fits-all approaches overlook the different ways roles and teams operate. When we know what we're solving for, we can ensure each team has an opportunity to thrive within a system that allows the organisation to be most successful.

We know there is value for people and organisations to have in-person experiences. We see in-person experiences objectively and anecdotally having multiple benefits including strengthening organisational, professional, and social networks and enhancing culture, efficiency, and loyalty.

Having been involved in workplace change programs for more than 20 years, we've learned that one of the keys to success is to have a clear vision for the company. The sharing of this vision should give explanation as to the purpose of the company with which employees and clients can connect.

Now more than ever, this vision should include a compelling narrative about "how we work" at our company. Clear messaging allows employees and clients to ensure values and expectations are aligned.

Sharing the common objective, aim, and vision empowers those impacted by change. Sharing this message frequently lets employees understand how to contribute and innovate in their roles. Employees need to understand the organisational and individual benefits of change, feel heard in their concerns and valued in their role-based knowledge.

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A LITTLE ABOUT iPWC

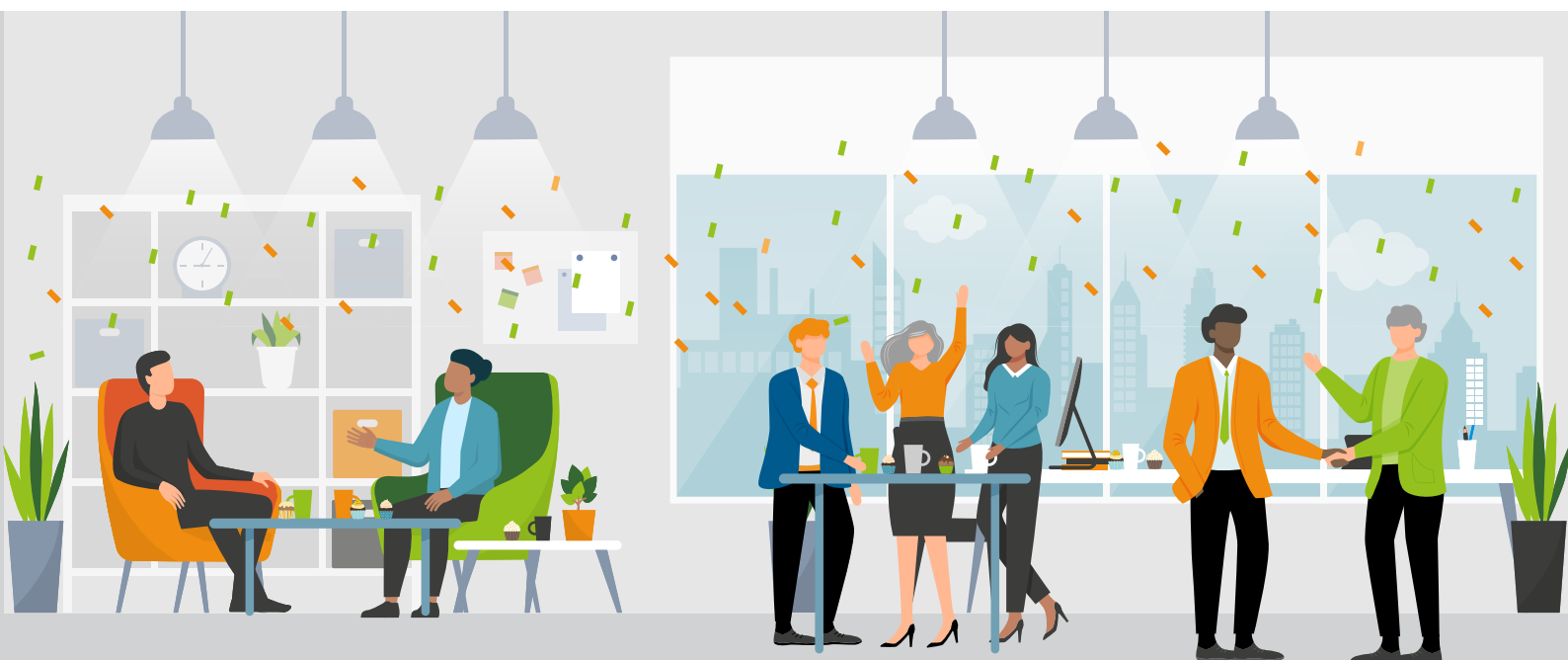
iPWC is part of the GRE-WEX Group of companies including CRUX Workplace, in the US. Established in early 2016, the GRE-WEX Group is built on more than 30 years of workplace and real estate experience of our founders David George and Mark Bradshaw.

David and Mark, together, have a wide-range of experience, most notably as leaders in workplace strategy, facilities management, real estate strategy and management, and construction projects at the BBC. David joined the UK's largest outsourcing company, in 2006, establishing a leading workplace team, where he led until founding iPWC in 2016 with Mark. In 2020, David expanded operations to the U.S. opening CRUX Workplace in San Diego, CA.

iPWC is your impartial workplace partner. Whether you are developing your new way of working post-pandemic, designing a workplace to support behaviours in response to new technology and flexibility, or evaluating your real estate strategy, iPWC is by your side.

“New ways of working” are not new to the iPWC team. Since 2002 we've helped a wide range of organisations enhance their workplaces and processes to support flexible work. We can offer you evidence-based best practices and methodologies in workplace strategy, real estate strategy, and workplace change management derived from more than 20 years solving similar challenges around the globe.

We also guide organisations and support clients in getting results that enhance the next chapter of their businesses. Whether we are briefing clients and architects or engaging with your employees to understand their work practices, we'll help your workplace, and your people transition to a new way of working.





GETTING STARTED

ENHANCING YOUR WORKPLACE

GETTING STARTED

Our experience has shown that organisations are most successful in adapting to more flexible operating models when their approach is tailored to their business.

Culture, work process, business vision, and employee preferences can shape your path forward, creating an outcome that enables your business to meet its targets.

We've seen companies of all sizes, industries, and locations make successful transitions using our methodology.

INVOLVING EMPLOYEES

Return-to-office solutions that are co-created with employees maximise acceptance. Understanding employee concerns, preferences, opportunities, and constraints can provide a roadmap towards creating tailored solutions.

We advocate for a phased approach to return to office, which allows the organisation to benefit from continual learning and development of solutions. Maintaining channels for employee engagement and feedback remains key to long term success.

Variations due to region/geography, statutory requirements, local customs, and cultures should be considered to ensure the organisation remains relevant in the areas where it operates.

FINDING THE RIGHT PACE

There is no need to rush or mandate returns to the workplace as this will likely lead to employee dissatisfaction and risks talent attrition. Ensuring your business and employees can cope with the pace of change reduces strain on resources during the transition.

Find our guide on the following pages to support your journey.

Whether you are self-guided or ready for support, we hope this guide can help you get started.



CHOOSING AN APPROACH

NEW WAYS OF WORKING

CHOOSING AN APPROACH

Culture, innovation, productivity; whatever your “why”, applying the right approach to workplace strategy can ensure your investment will achieve the benefits you are seeking.

TOP-DOWN APPROACH

Top-down approaches, focusing on the estimations of leaders or workplace/real estate leads, miss the mark on creating a workplace where employees can do their best work. Why? It is unlikely that they have the detailed knowledge of employee’s processes, work arounds, and pain-points.

TECHNOLOGY APPROACH

Technology focused approaches which employ utilisation surveys, access control data and workplace sensors have their place in capturing current state, and post occupancy applications for tweaking work settings. However, data from these sources are unable to cast an accurate picture of the most effective future state, it doesn’t tell you *why people are there or what’s missing from the office*.

RECOMMENDED APPROACH

The recommended approach is to ask employees. While this may seem chaotic or untrustworthy, by utilising a range of tools and frameworks to gather information, you can use that data objectively to co-create solutions.

The benefits of engaging employees are far reaching, including, increasing acceptance and buy-in, while providing a bespoke roadmap to a workplace strategy that enhances your business.

Through thousands of stakeholder engagements, interviews, workshops and surveys, we have seen that human centric approaches to design yield the highest success rates.



EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT TOOLS

OUR INNOVATIVE ENGAGEMENT TOOLS SIMPLIFY THIS PROCESS

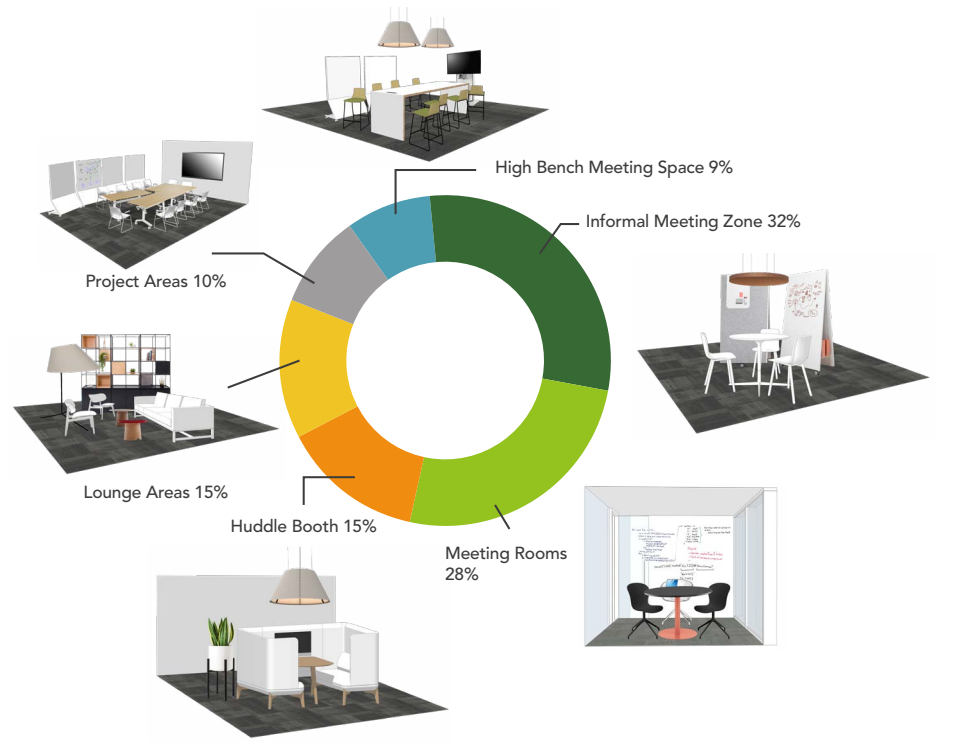
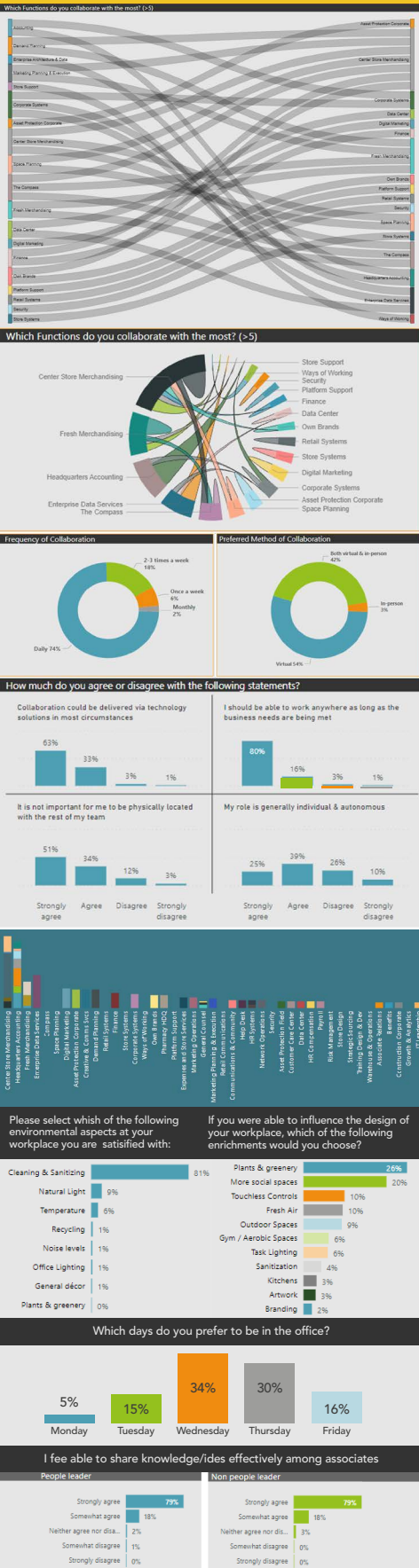
Through time-tested methodology, iPWC has the tools to develop a workplace strategy through effective employee engagement, no matter the size of your organisation.

The WEX Engagement Platform is our interactive toolkit, which provides a clear view into the needs of your workforce. We assess interactions, preferred and most productive in-office and remote activities, and the work settings that best support them. We also know how much time employees will spend in the office and on which days. Our collaborative mapping function allows us to plan team neighbourhood adjacencies that facilitate serendipitous and planned interaction.

By understanding who will be in, when, what they are doing, and who they are collaborating with, you will have the tools to create the workplace strategy and develop team relationships over time.

On this page you will see a sample of about 5% of the WEX Engagement tool dashboard output.

Want to know how we can guide you along the journey using our innovative WEX Engagement Platform?





LOCATION
INDEPENDENT WORK

LOCATION INDEPENDENT WORK

HYBRID AND AGILE WORKING

Location independence has been in the headlines, inspiring terms like “Hybrid Working”. In organisations that embrace this evolution of work, employees have a choice to access a mix of work locations to perform their role. Whether it is mobility in the office, home, business centre, co-working spaces, or a coffee shop; a strategic approach must be executed to ensure employees have a seamless experience as they move from one location to another.

Business leaders are focusing on how their employees will work in the future and how that will impact the business. Remote working imposed by the pandemic has disrupted habits, accelerated advances in technology, and allowed organisations to reconsider where work could be done.

A location independent way of working is more accessible than ever for many office-based workers. Choice and flexibility empowers employees, creating an environment that fosters meaningful productivity, efficiency, attraction, and retention. This opportunity has never been more obvious than it is today.

Technology has released employees from the confines of the traditional office desk or cubicle, opening a world of places to work. To be most beneficial for your employees and business, it should be a frictionless experience.

This approach is not new. This flexibility is a long-established approach known as “agile working”.

“Agile working is about bringing people, processes, connectivity and technology, time, and place together to find the most appropriate and effective way of working to carry out a particular task. It is working within guidelines (of the task) but without boundaries (of place and of how you achieve it.)”

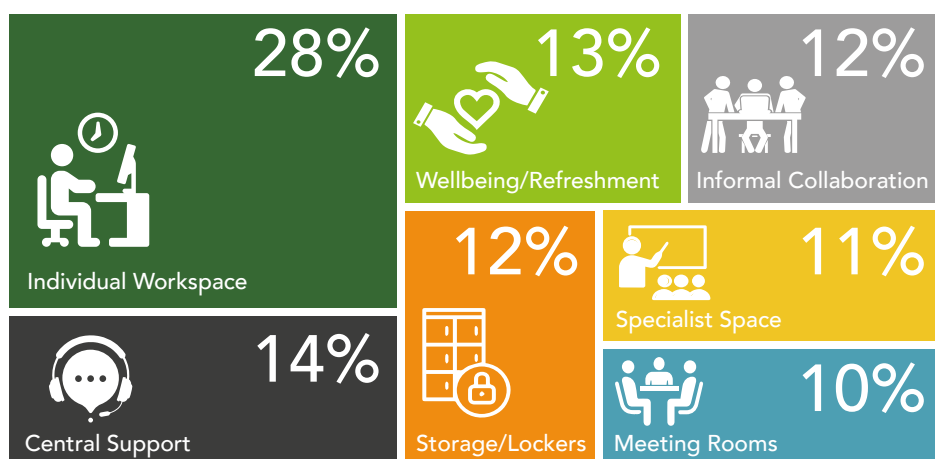
The Agile Organisation

ACTIVITY BASED WORKING

Hybrid (agile) working is enabled in a workplace by applying Activity Based Working* design principles that ensure that the various tasks being undertaken are best supported.

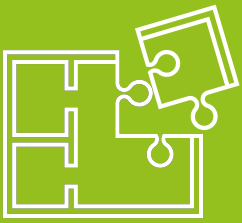
Applying Activity Based Working design principles to the workplace configuration are key to the success of the office when supporting Hybrid working arrangements. While most focus or general process tasks are best suited for remote working, away from interruptions of other people.

The most successful workplaces are those that allow employee choice and flexibility of hybrid working, as well as modifying their processes and procedures to facilitate asynchronous working. We use our deep dive WEX Engagement tool to simply and quickly capture and report all this data.



**Activity Based Working is a workplace model which offers employees the flexibility, choice, and autonomy to work in the best work-setting for a specific task. The workplace is designed around a range of work settings strategically placed throughout the floor to offer variety, ambiance, and the functionality required for a particular task, from informal/formal collaborative and open settings for team-based tasks, to focus booths or closed spaces for individual tasks and so on.*





WORKPLACE DESIGN

WORKPLACE DESIGN

To develop the most appropriate way of working and workplace design for your business there are some key steps to follow, each one supported by intentional communications.

- 1. Employee Engagement** - The information that can be gained from employees is critical to the success of the workplace design. It is important to understand, at a granular level, the preferences of your employees across a whole range of metrics including activities/tasks, location, work-setting, collaborative relationships, time, and technology needs. These preferences, along with insights into culture and social needs are gained through engaging directly with employees. Engage with your team leaders in interviews to understand their preferences for their team, and to identify challenges, opportunities, and upcoming changes that need to be included.
- 2. Worker Personas.** Based on the information received from employee engagement, identifying typical employee personas is helpful at this stage. Grouping your organisation into personas; ranging from focus to collaborative style workers, allows you to understand the needs of different types of activities. Capturing their level of locational preference (remote/in office), by persona, allows you to know how many people are in the office at any one time. This tool of categorisation recognises that "one size does not fit all" for an organisation and is beneficial to the change management and implementation processes. Key to the success of real estate planning, personas can forecast how many people will be in a building on a typical week. (Our WEX tool does this automatically.)
- 3. Workplace as a Venue.** Your workplace should be somewhere your employees want to be, a hub of resources, amenities, brand, and culture. It should foster creativity, inspire your employees, and provide a different workplace experience to working from home.
- 4. Workplace Design.** Employee preferences and culture plays a major role in successful workplace design. Through engaging your population, you can get a picture of the types of settings that are most supportive of the day-to-day activities carried out in the office. Empowered with this information, your new way of working will be human-centric and more attuned to your workforce. Physical changes to the workplace will likely be required to meet employee needs. Including various work settings configured to offer the variety, ambiance, and functionality required for a particular task; from informal and formal collaborative and open settings for team-based tasks, to focus booths or closed spaces for individual tasks, video conferencing, and one-on-ones, in the ratio determined from employee engagement will enhance the workplace. The workplace can no longer be a place of standard features, it needs to not only be functional but also an attractive place to work. From a design aspect, the move is towards more of a "residentialised" or hospitality feel to the spaces, with softer less obviously corporate styling.
- 5. Neighborhood Strategy.** When employees come into the office it is usually to collaborate, (focus work being successfully completed at home) they want a base that they can come back to, to be with their own team. These neighbourhood spaces are shared with their team at the core, and as you move further from the core spaces, they are shared with surrounding teams, facilitating spontaneous interaction and collaboration.

PROCESSES AND PROTOCOLS

6. **Formal Meeting Protocols.** Many businesses find that for formal meetings which would previously have been held in a meeting room, a “remote first” strategy gives everyone equality of participation; not favouring an onsite group of employees in a meeting room. It is a protocol where everyone joins the meeting from their own laptop, regardless of location. For those in the office, that means providing small booths with good acoustic properties. As organisations are building out new meeting spaces, attention to layout, acoustic design and technology of new spaces ensures an equitable experience no matter location, allowing in-person employees to be in a common location.
7. **Workplace Protocols/Neighbourhood Guide.** Employees need to be clear about how to use the new work-settings. We recommend creating a neighbourhood guide about the spaces and how they can be used to support new behaviours. It also explains safety in the workplace and new features or technology that they may not be familiar with, such as booking and entry systems. Guides and clear protocol communications allow employees to make an informed choice of the work setting that is most effective for the task. This guide is best co-created in conjunction with team change champions.
8. **Human Resources.** Most employee contracts stipulate a location (office building) for work along with core hours. These need to be reviewed when introducing hybrid working to allow the optimal level of flexibility.

Managing a dispersed, remote, or hybrid workforce is a new skill that will need to be strengthened through learning and development. Proximity bias is a concern; businesses need to be sensitive to this phenomenon and ensure that their managers are not giving preferential treatment to employees who are more frequently in the workplace, than remote workers. New processes and policies that treat each fairly need to be created.

Managers will require training and support in changing their approach to output/ outcome management. It may be useful to check out the leadership and managers hybrid working assessment tool at www.theknightindex.com





IMPLEMENTATION

IMPLEMENTATION IDEAS

NEED SOME TIPS FOR IMPLEMENTATION? TRY THESE.

- 1. Change Management.** It is natural for employees to express concern about change. Departures from what they have become used to and the transition to a new way of working, can stir anxieties. New practices, which might include sharing of desks and work-settings, may be new to them and should be communicated carefully to reduce stress and fear-based resistance. The first rule of change is that those impacted want to know “what’s in it for me?” This should be addressed early on.

A comprehensive change program needs to be developed to engage employees from all levels of the organisation. From the boardroom to the front line; leadership skills, manager training, and change champions and aligned action is needed to uncover embedded knowledge to ensure success. This is especially helpful for teams who have been formed remotely due to geographical restrictions and now require support to create a common team spirit and increase a sense of belonging. Coordinated with a structured communications plan, changes are swiftly adapted – contact us for a change route map to plan your activities. Learn more about our change management services here.

- 2. Pilot Project.** Creating the right solution takes time and iterations. A pilot project can focus on a single team, department, floor of a building, a building, or a geographic region of employees. Consider it a “bite sized” approach to get you started. Initial ideas for workplace and technology interventions will be developed along with a review to identify any changes required to employees’ contracts, guidelines, procedures, etc. As willing adopters are more likely to be supporters of change and provide constructive feedback, invite early adopters to occupy the pilot project spaces.

This approach will confirm viability and scalability while enabling proposed designs, processes, and procedures to be tested. It will confirm the appropriateness of any new tech tools proposed as well as make sure that working practices comply with statutory standards. Pilots also enable the benefits to be tested and a more reliable investment appraisal to be created for the main project (see more on this below).

- 3. Continual Development.** The change journey is a continuum, and there will be a need to make changes and develop new solutions over time. Your business will need to continue to monitor performance and effectiveness of the new workplace design and protocols and make the necessary tweaks to enhance performance. Technology can help with this along with periodic surveys and engagement with employees.

WHY SHOULD YOU CONSIDER A PHASED IMPLEMENTATION?

A phased approach to implementation benefits from continual learning and development of solutions; allowing for regional variations due to compliance requirements, local customs, and cultures. There should not be a rush or enforced re-occupation as this will risk employee dissatisfaction and talent leaving.

Phase 1 or Trial Phase

A trial is a small-scale implementation planned before the main rollout of the new way of working. It enables the project team to test product supply chain, vendors, logistics, communications, stakeholder management plans, and the effectiveness of any rollout tools. It also enables deficiencies in project team briefing, training, and skills to be ironed out before the main rollout begins.

It may also include a number of temporary interventions across all workplaces as an interim solution addressing the new ways of working, until such time as roll out can be implemented in each location.

Phase 1 deliverables include:

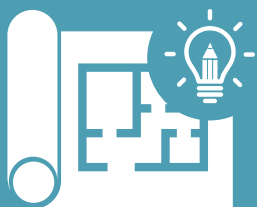
- Increased accuracy of budget
- Refined plan for the main rollout
- Review of benefits in the light of practical rollout experience

Subsequent Phasing

Subsequent phases can be implemented on a business needs basis. For instance, aligned to lease breaks, availability of capital, any merger or acquisition plans, and/or scaled depending on the existing workplace design/ways of working in each location. This means that the work can be scaled appropriately across the real estate portfolio and employee base.

Depending on the nature of the solutions that emerge from the pilot project there may be a broader real estate strategy piece (such as rationalisation) that will influence the implementation rollout.





PILOT PROJECT

PILOT PROJECTS

WHY IS A PILOT PROJECT IMPORTANT?

A pilot project can focus on a single team, department, floor, building, or a geographic region of employees. The project begins with a deep employee engagement program consisting of:

- Employee Experience Surveys
- Activity Analysis Surveys
- Leadership Interviews (Two Levels)
- Visioning Workshops
- Observational Studies (Where Appropriate)

Initial ideas for workplace and technology interventions will be developed, along with a review to identify any changes required to employees' contracts, guidelines, procedures, etc.

The pilot project will confirm viability and scalability of proposed designs, processes and procedures through testing. It will confirm the appropriateness of any new tools proposed and ensure any new working practices comply with statutory standards. When it is time, the investment appraisal for the main project will be more reliable.

The purpose of this stage is primarily to prove viability, not deliver an agreed outcome. As pilots hold a high degree of uncertainty, an aligned growth mindset is important for all stakeholders. Pilot projects are best supported by a control structure that allows for potential radical changes in scope and direction, if required, to accommodate lessons learned as they emerge during the live occupation/implementation of the pilot project stage.

Deliverables would include:

- Workplace design interventions required for project
- Technology changes
- HR Policy and processes requiring change
- Change Management Road Map
- Robust lessons learned, risks and issues logs
- Benefits assessment
- Viability report and recommendation
- Route map for implementation
- Revised investment appraisal and project plan

Benefits

- Lower costs
- Speed of Change
- Opportunity to trial new products
- Opportunity to trial new protocols
- Ease of iteration
- Psychologically safer place to make mistakes
- Test where, when, and how employees work

PLANNING WITH PURPOSE



WORK IS NOT A PLACE. WORK IS WHAT YOU DO.

Whether you're about to start the journey, or part way along it, feel free to reach out for some advice or guidance from our trusted advisors.

Through hybrid, flexible or agile working, we help businesses like yours create high performing workplaces using our suite of tools and services.

We're based in the South-East and North-West of the UK, but we 'walk the talk' with flexible operations that allow us to work on projects anywhere.

Contact our team or visit www.ipwc.co.uk





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