

A man in a black t-shirt stands on the left, presenting to a group of people seated at tables in a modern meeting room. A large screen in the background displays a city street scene with a network of lines and numbers overlaid. A whiteboard on the right shows a diagram with nodes and arrows. The room has large windows and modern furniture.

STRATEGIC & EMERGING RISKS WORKSHOP

HOW TO PRE-EMPT WHEN PLANS WILL GO WRONG



The **Strategic & Emerging Risks Workshop** supports decision makers and leaders in lifting their gaze and identifying potential failure points in their strategic and operational plans before they occur. By bringing together the diverse perspectives within a decision-making group through a constructive and collaborative process, the workshop provides insights into the operational and strategic risks that require ongoing monitoring and exploration.

WHO IS THIS FOR

- Councillor groups
- Executive leadership teams
- Boards of directors
- Decision-makers at all levels

WHY THIS WORKSHOP

Experienced leaders understand that uncertainty makes effective long-term planning more difficult. All plans are based on a set of historical assumptions, but in a rapidly changing world, these assumptions are often out of date before the plan is even published.

This Strategic & Emerging Risks Workshop brings leaders together to identify and map the “drivers of change” that may challenge the integrity of the plan, either now or in the future. By identifying, prioritising, and monitoring key strategic risks, leaders can preempt these challenges before they occur and allow time to develop appropriate contingencies.

BENEFITS & OUTCOMES

- **Develop a Strategic Focus** – The workshop is designed to lift people’s gaze, move beyond busywork, and take stock of the organisation’s strategic landscape.
- **Map Key and Emerging Risks** – The workshop enables participants to gain clarity on operational, strategic, and emerging risks, and identify where ongoing monitoring and deeper exploration are needed.
- **Create Shared Understanding** – Through facilitated conversations, participants build deeper connections and a shared understanding of the operating environment.
- **Align Leadership Activity** – With greater shared understanding and clarity on operational, strategic, and emerging risks, leaders are better able to align activities to meet decision-makers’ future expectations.

EXAMPLE WORKSHOP STRUCTURE

This workshop can be delivered in either a short form (half-day) or long form (full-day) format. The long form version requires five hours of contact time, split over two sessions, with participants required to commit 30 minutes to an environmental scanning exercise in between sessions.

1.

STRATEGIC AWARENESS SKILLS (GROUP LEARNING)

Delivered either in-person or online, this session gives participants the tools and techniques they need to build their strategic focus.

2.

SCAN THE ENVIRONMENT (INDIVIDUAL REFLECTION)

Participants spend 30 minutes of their own time capturing the signals of change they're observing around them.

3.

INFORMATION SYNTHESIS (CONSULTANT LED)

Our team synthesises the environmental scan information into strategic themes to be used in the final session.

4.

PRIORITISATION WORKSHOP (GROUP ACTIVITY)

Participants reconvene for a face-to-face workshop to prioritise the strategic themes for planning, monitoring, and further exploration.

WHEN SHOULD WE BE DOING THIS?

There isn't necessarily a 'right time' to be strategic but there are certain triggers that would indicate a workshop like this would be useful:

- Councillor or Board level conversations about strategic, emerging and long-term risks
- Annual strategic plan reviews
- Prior to making high-value, strategic decisions
- Refocusing leaders from a planning to strategic mindset

Please get in touch if you'd like to discuss how this approach might be valuable to your leaders and key decision-makers.

'Doing strategy' is a process for creating a plan. 'Being strategic' is how we preempt when a plan will go wrong.

-Simon Waller

ABOUT SIMON

15 years ago, Simon was one of the founding members of Rio Tinto Iron Ore's internal scenario planning team. The team was tasked with developing long-range scenarios to help the leadership team understand global iron ore demand over 10+ year time horizons. This information was used to guide billion-dollar investment decisions, including the construction of new mines, railroads and port facilities.

Over the last decade, Simon has applied his extensive real-world experience in scenario planning and futures thinking to become one of Australia's leading strategists, and a sought-after conference speaker. Along the way, he has also worked with countless business leaders to address their significant business challenges and help them make better big decisions.

Simon also recently published his third book, *The Scenario Planning Guide: How Scenario Planning Can Be Used to Align Thinking, Stimulate Ideas, and Overcome the Inertia of Uncertainty*.

TESTIMONIAL

“

Simon did a brilliant job of finding the balance between challenging and reassuring us, enabling us to be comfortable with being uncomfortable – to rise to the task of leadership in times of high uncertainty. ”

ANGELA SAVAGE

CEO, Public Libraries Victoria



A person with dark hair, seen from behind, is sitting on a sandy beach. They are looking out at a calm ocean under a grey, overcast sky. The horizon is visible in the distance.

SIMON WALLER

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ENQUIRY PROCESS

Get in touch to confirm Simon's availability
and make a time to discuss your event.