

KEY AREAS OF FOCUS:

Growth prospects

CEOs around the globe are optimistic about growth prospects in the short to medium term but economic pressures remain a concern.

79%

optimistic for next 3 years but inflation and interest rates could prolong a downturn

Generative AI & cyber security

Technology disruption is top of mind as CEOs navigate the pros and cons of AI and its role in cyber security.

56%

in Australia see gen AI as number one investment priority (compared with 70% globally)

78%

see AI bolstering cyber security – with a similar number worried about its potential as another avenue for cyber attack

ESG strategy & governance

CEOs are not where they want to be in terms of ESG progress – they are investing in governance as a priority.

80%

say their progress would not stand up to stakeholder scrutiny

Return to office

Will employees head back into the office full-time? CEOs say yes – hybrid and remote will not be the norm in three years.

Societal issues

Should business take over from government when it comes to issues like climate change and social justice?

44%

say business should lead the way in social issues (compared to 64% globally)

GROWTH PROSPECTS



26% of Australian CEOs predict growth over 5% (more confident than global peers)

22% predict staff cuts of up to 5% over next 3 years

64% confident about local economy

84% see cybercrime as a threat to growth

GENERATIVE AI & CYBER SECURITY



56% see gen AI as number one investment priority

67% are concerned about AI ethical challenges

62% worry about lack of AI regulation

69% say AI might help fight cyber threats

41% say they are under-prepared for cyber attack

ESG STRATEGY & GOVERNANCE



51% are prioritising governance models and reporting

64% have embedded ESG as a means of value creation

75% are ready to meet new ISSB reporting standards

12% are changing ESG 'catch-all' language to focus on specifics (compared to 35% globally)



RETURN TO OFFICE

67% predict full return to office in 3 years

74% say they will reward employees who return with raises, promotions and better projects



SOCIETAL ISSUES

54% think Inclusion, Diversity and Equity is moving too slowly (compared with 66% globally)

46% say they are prepared to take a stand on contentious social issues (compared with 61% globally)

54% said they would be willing to divest well-performing but socially contentious parts of their business (compared with 71% globally)