How to Plan for Workspace Power with Confidence

By Chris Dawson, LightCorp

We often hear from dealers and designers that power planning is one of the most intimidating parts of a project. Even experienced teams admit they don't always feel confident navigating it, and that's understandable. Power can seem highly technical, full of variables, and easy to get wrong.

Here's the truth: once you understand the basics, power planning isn't just manageable; it's a design advantage. It affects everything from how people collaborate to how they feel in a space. When it's done right from the start, it saves everyone, especially your client, time, money, and frustration down the road.

This step-by-step workflow will help you guide clients through the power planning process with confidence. No electrical engineering degree required.

Start with Discovery & Programming

The most successful projects begin with asking the right questions. Before you even think about furniture or finishes, take the time to understand how people will use each of the spaces you are designing. It may even be worth a visit to the client's current workspace to observe traffic patterns and work behaviors. Basic queries include:

- **What types of work happen here?** Individual? Focused? Collaborative? Lounge-style? Small groups? Large teams?

- **Where is the work happening?** As more companies move toward unassigned seating, work is no longer limited to the traditional desk.

- **Are there existing power or data standards in place?** Many clients already have preferred systems or IT requirements.

- **What about flexibility?** Today's office spaces are all about agility and doing more with less. Can the project adapt to future layout reconfigurations or potential growth?

Framing power as part of how people work, rather than only how a space looks, positions you as a thoughtful, strategic partner.

Integrate Power into Space Planning

Once you understand how the space will function, it's time to think through how power will support it. Power distribution should align seamlessly with workstation layouts, collaboration zones, and circulation paths. Decide early how power will run, such as through the floor, wall, ceiling, or modular systems.
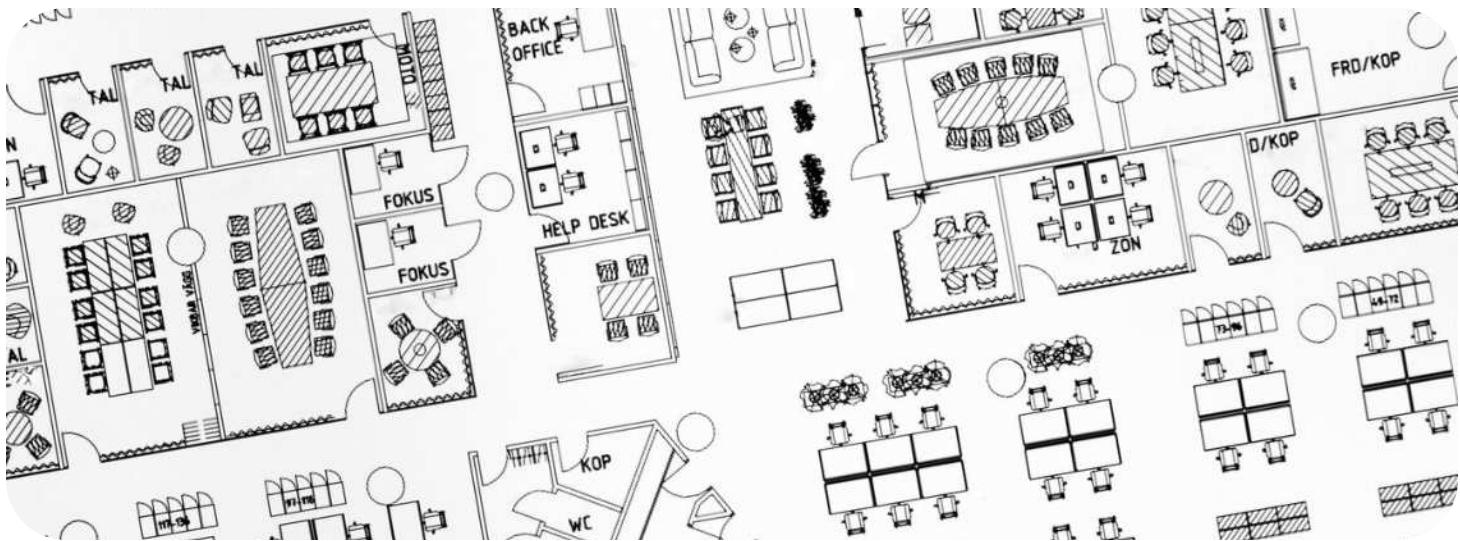
If you're designing flexible, multi-purpose spaces, remember that portability (and good cord management) is key. Modular and movable power options must allow furniture to be unplugged and reconfigured quickly and easily to accommodate changing needs.

Identify Technology Needs

Technology is now as essential as lighting—and it's evolving fast. Which leads us to the most important point in this article: If you want to ensure the project design effectively serves the client for years to come, make sure you have all the right players involved in the 'power needs' conversation.

While office managers are usually tasked with furniture selection, and the building and facilities team is responsible for ensuring the power strategy is practical, safe, and sustainable, it is I.T. that is keenly aware of the current and future tech needs.

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With ensuring accessibility and convenience for every user as the primary goal, discuss:

- What devices are used today and how (laptops, tablets, phones, monitors, etc.)?

- Where will people need access to power throughout their day?

- Where is technology heading for the enterprise in the future? (This is where I.T. involvement becomes invaluable.)
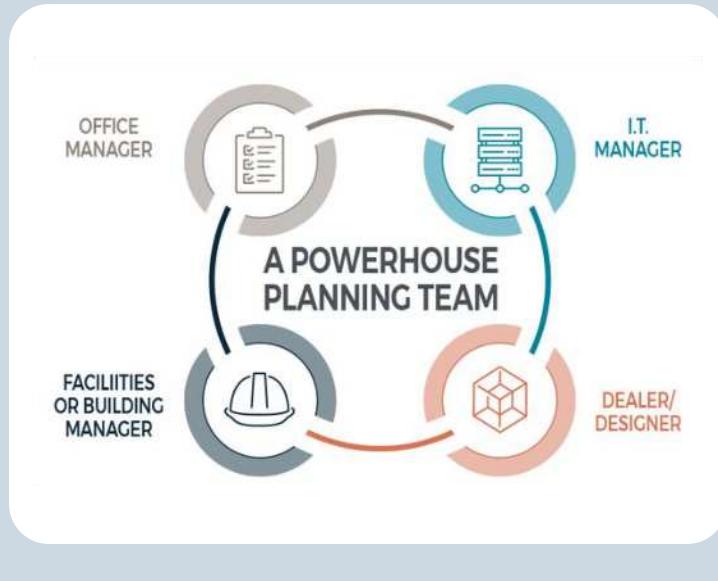
Coordinate with Electrical and Facilities Teams

At this stage, communication is everything. Share your power layout drawings with the client's facilities and electrical teams. Confirm where floor cores and wall outlets are required and that electrical loads meet compliance standards (e.g. number of circuits). When everyone's aligned early, you avoid last-minute change orders and ensure a smooth installation process later.
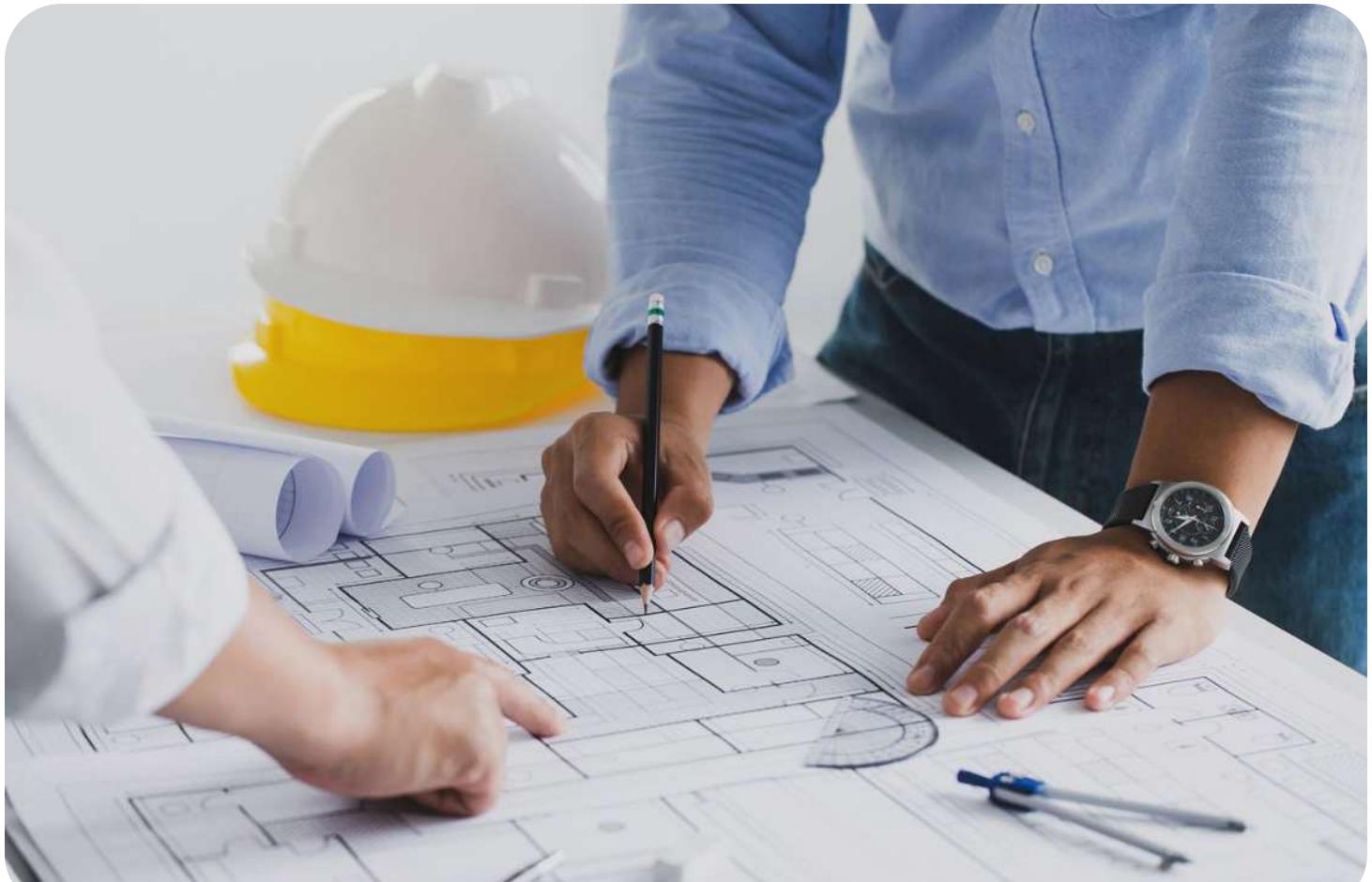
Choose the Right Products

Once the plan is clear, it's time to make product selections that support both design intent and function. Consider:

- **The right mix of outlets and ports:** 120V, USB-A, USB-C, data, or wireless options.

- **Finishes and forms** that harmonize beautifully with your furniture selections and offer flexibility in application.

- **Products that streamline cords**, because who wants to ruin the design vision with a bunch of cabling?

- **UL-listed, code-compliant solutions** for peace of mind.

Here is where LightCorp excels. As a North American manufacturer, we provide thoughtfully designed, customizable power solutions that work seamlessly within the furniture systems you already specify. Our made-to-order products, from in-surface outlets to freestanding modules, are designed to fit your client's workflow and aesthetic, with fast turnaround and dependable service.

The Key Takeaway

Power isn't an afterthought—it's part of the design story from day one. When you lead your clients through this process early and intentionally, you enhance the functionality, flexibility, and future-readiness of every space you create. Because when you get power right, productivity and good energy flow naturally.

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