

Real Estate Strategies

Does Your Office Have the Right Feng Shui

BY PETER REISS

IF ALL THINGS ARE EQUAL, WHY DO SOME PROPERTY OWNERS HAVE MORE TROUBLE RETAINING TENANTS OR ATTRACTING BUYERS THAN OTHERS?

Maybe it's the *Feng Shui*. (Pronounced fung shway).

On the West Coast, Feng Shui is old news. In New York, it's an absolute requirement in some circles – just ask Donald Trump. In other parts of America, this ancient Chinese art of placement is making quiet inroads.

Feng Shui is a tool used to help bring harmony and prosperity into life and business. Combining ancient wisdom with modern science, it's a way of looking at space and studying how energy flows through it (or doesn't flow through it). Think of it as macro-ergonomics.

This seemingly mystical art has many practical applications.

In Feng Shui, the front entrance is ultra important—it's how energy enters into your building. So the best way to pull that energy in is being dissolved.

Let's examine the case of an agency named after its two principals. The entrance to their offices bore a custom doormat with a beautiful logo made of the partners' names that had over the years been worn away straight down the middle, separating them symbolically just as they were separating in real life.

Remember Location? Next time you're on the road take a look at the buildings at the top of a busy "T" intersection. Do you notice the barriers and day-glo traffic markers? They have to be there because there is a real danger of

own energy dealing with that "assault" and not enough dealing with building your business.

What can you do about it? In Feng Shui we use many tools like lights, plantings, and fountains, singly or in combination. What you should use in a specific setting would depend on both practicality and aesthetics. Feng Shui is logical so many people find solutions naturally. That's why you see houses with wall of evergreens protecting the front. A good solution in commercial applications is a large fountain in front of the building.

How about location inside the office? It's just as important. The best spot for the CEO's office: the rear left corner of the building (as you're standing in the front door. It's good Feng Shui and common sense at the same time. The further the office is from the door the greater protection and access control. Plus that corner is the "Wealth" area in Feng Shui.

The best place to put your desk? Place it facing the office door from a corner diagonally away from the door. That's the "Commanding Position". You're out of the flow of negative energies and aware of any incoming threats. It also

someone driving right through the front window. In Feng Shui terms we call that a Poison Arrow or "rushing" chi (energy).

Being the target of that arrow is not a comfortable feeling. If you live in a house set like that you know that being a target of that arrow is, at the very least uncomfortable. At the worst it can be downright dangerous. In business you can wind up spending too much of your



decreases distractions from the hall and helps keep your work confidential.

The same principle works for everyone in the office. Ever wonder why there's such a high employee turnover in telemarketing, and customer service people? Yes, the pay isn't great and the work is frustrating but you can say that about jobs that don't have half the

turnover. The difference is how these people sit. We put them in tiny cubicles, all facing in with their backs to the aisle.

That leaves them feeling unsupported and unprotected. It's tough keeping people in those conditions.

Feng Shui is going to be popping up more and more as a concern for companies. They'll be looking at space with a new "Feng Shui eye", determined

to get the best in energy flow for the people and the profits.

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