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INDIANA UNIVERSITY HEALTH *Neuroscience Center*

 Neuroscience Center
Goodman Hall

**Goodman Campbell
Brain and Spine —
Addressing Failed
Back Surgery Syndrome**

ARCHITECTURE INSIGHTS

- THIS ARTICLE AS PUBLISHED IN MD NEWS

FENG SHUI . . . How much of it is real?

Feng Shui (pronounced fung shway) is an ancient Chinese belief system used to bring about a balance in our lifestyle using the positive energies of the wind and water forces. While practicing my daily business as registered Architect conjuring concrete forms out of thin air or to be precise: from thin lines representing imagined shapes . . . people often ask me this question, to quote: "Is Feng Shui for real? Does it really work and how much of it is real? As an answer, I ask back a few of my own questions to provoke some serious thoughts. For example, have you wondered why the magnetic needle in compass points towards the Meridian North? Do you know we live on a giant magnet . . . one that we have named Planet Earth? Did you know that a satellite of our Earth known as the Moon pulls tons of water to cause low tides or high tides? Now did you know that our bodies are reflections of the eco-system we live in? Your body contains about 66% water and also iron or trace minerals similar in proportion to that of Earth's components such as the oceans and natural minerals?

Now let us put the two and two together. If Moon can impact Earth's oceans to rise or ebb, magnetized iron dances to the tune of earth's magnetic force fields, and we are a fledging representation of this massive earth body with the same proportionate amounts of water, iron, minerals etc wouldn't it make sense to believe our bodies in turn must be impacted by the same cosmic forces? Therefore, Feng Shui or the ancient East Indian equivalent science of Vastu-Shashtra (pronounced Vaas-tu-shash-tra or just Vaas-tu) or the placement of objects and forces has as much significance in our lives as any of the heavenly bodies and their interactions. Now how real is your body or the very spirits of your life? If they are real then Feng Shui and Vastu are just as real and do impact our lives in many ways. Whether you make conscious efforts to respect these forces or just ignore them to live our daily struggles with a popular motto of "business as usual", it is a choice many informed people make with the new found awareness. Feng Shui and Vastu are forgotten anthologies of the past cultures. Although these may appear to some as more of a form of ritual art, for a few like me who try to ponder these belief systems discover them to be a well researched science. Many individuals and businesses have benefited by following simple guidelines of these sciences and have enjoyed a more peaceful life and gratifying business success as results. We can introduce some basic applications of

Feng Shui or Vastu to see if they would indeed improve our work environment or benefit our career and personal lifestyles. The basic principles of Feng Shui rely on the flow of energy known as Chi (pronounced Chee) using wind and water as a channel to move through our micro universe. To allow the flow of these energies, Feng Shui consultants may recommend some of the following guidelines:

- De-clutter the work space or organize the work environment. Make a place for everything and have everything in its place. Have a specified extra cleaning day every month to de-clutter. Discard unnecessary objects, paperwork files and such to make room for lovely objects. Clear and happy spaces makes more smiley faces. This also invigorates your staff to stay motivated. Your team at work would reflect positive moods which would promote business and your patrons would feel at "home" or more than welcome in a more serene work environment.
- Add a few plants and flower pots where possible in the work place. Live plants such as bamboo plants, miniature bonsai trees or even tasteful silk plants blended with dried twigs or dried flowers adds a touch of pleasantries. Lively vibrant looking plants reflect a sign of health and well being.
- Play with colors and lights. By these guidelines, the Feng Shui practitioners recommend creation of positive moods using appropriate colors to enliven the human spirits and hence affect the Chi of the space. Indirect lighting, accents lights and lights that direct our vision to read the space or flow of space affect the way how people would interact with their visual senses while at work or at home. Colors and lights create a play of rhythm to harmonize your environment and aid to ease up your days work.
- Add water elements and chimes to further enhance your environment. Small table top water fountains, paintings depicting water, fish aquariums, wind chimes or even the sound of soft music boost the overall ambience of the place whether be it home or office space.
- Appoint Materials, symbols and objects that soothe the mind or rebalance and refocus our thoughts. It is said that certain stones and objects bring peace of mind. Say a statue of Jade Buddha in a meditative pose in the most visible corner may remind us to keep our cool even in the most heated moments of the day. These objects remind us to maintain our composure and calm through-out the day so we can meditate on our work at hand. The famous Yin and Yang symbol is another reminder that tells us that life consists of duality of naturally opposing yet complementary forces that allow a harmonious universe to exist. Nothing can be totally yin or yang; there will always be at the least a miniscule amount of one in the other. (See image)

In modern steel buildings, there exists other numerous forces such as those created by steel embedded in concrete, wireless network signals, electro-magnetic force fields and electro-static wave energy from numerous conduits and HVAC motors, fans, ballast, cellular phone signals, satellite TV waves, copier and computer noise all of which add up to the negative vibrations that are received by the human body (in light of the opening inquiries listed above). These factors lead to further degeneration of human cellular functions or manifestations of dormant genetic disorders or as claimed by some to even trigger cancerous cell growth, lowered immune system or dis-ease of spiritual well-being. In the face of these forces, Feng Shui and Vastu are designed to counter the negative vibrations and harmonize our environment so our mind and spirit can be at ease. In addition, conscientious practice of Architecture with awareness of these forces directs well informed architects to create homogenous intelligent designs and space plans that naturally reflect the positive Chi for the well being and success of its inhabitants and end users. Now you decide, would Feng Shui help you in your life?