

# 5w's

BY ANITA LOPEZ

ADHERING TO FENG-SHUI PRINCIPLES CAN LEAD THE WAY TO SUCCESS AND PROSPERITY.

## who

A California native who grew up in the Silicon Valley when apricots were more plentiful than silicon chips, Marina Lighthouse was taught at an early age about Chinese history and philosophy by her father, Ben Marinovich, a native of Korcula in the Adriatic birthplace of Marco Polo.

"In my opinion the East is onto something," says Lighthouse. "Asian culture has a more encompassing understanding of things, appreciating how energy works, how it flows. They pay attention to both the seen and unseen realms.

They cultivate from the inside out rather than the outside in. Feng Shui takes this into account, and these days the West is becoming more and more attuned to that fact."

Studying the *I Ching* extensively, she also immersed herself in Christian, Buddhist, and Taoist theology. Lighthouse was introduced to Feng Shui in 1991 and had her first Feng Shui consultation with Katherine Metz, who later became her mentor. Metz's recommendations worked. "My career was flat, as was my husband's," Lighthouse remembers. "We barely had enough to get by. After we shifted things around, our workload tripled and continued to grow. Money came in. It was amazing!" She enrolled in the Shelter for the Soul Institute and was certified as a practitioner in 1996.

She met and began studying directly under H.H. Grandmaster Lin Yun Rinpoche, the spiritual leader of the Tantric Buddhist Black Sect Feng Shui, in 1995. They collaborated on a project to translate the precepts and theories of Feng Shui into a musical context. The resulting CD, *Feng Shui Tune Up*, was heralded as the first of its kind. They have since collaborated on a second CD, *Heart Sutra*, a blend of music and meditation.



## what

Feng Shui, the ancient Chinese art of design and placement, literally translates as *wind and water*. That seems only fitting as wind chimes and the soothing sounds of water are some of the transcendental cures used in its practice. It is concerned with the movement of energy, or chi, through a space.

The Black Sect School of Feng Shui is unique in that it takes into consideration physics, psychology, architecture, and design in its analysis.

While traditional Feng Shui relies on a compass, the Black Sect School considers the immediate environment to be more important because the chi (energy) flow of cardinal directions is influenced by so many factors of modern life—tall buildings, freeway structures, power lines, computers, televisions, etc. Black Sect practitioners study the changing dynamics of chi by examining the immediate surrounding exterior—landscape, conditions of nature, roads, neighboring structures, building design and interiors, room shapes, angles, colors, and placement of furnishings. "It's impossible to change the architecture of a building to open up the free-flowing of energy," says Lighthouse. "However, a transcendental cure could take the form of an object that wards off or reflects bad Chi."

## where

Feng Shui principles can be applied to any space to change the energy. In the workplace, the individual worker often has little input about the overall look and feel of the office. One's own area

can be improved though—Lighthouse says the first impression is important for any office environment. She asks herself the following questions: "Do I see a bathroom, a wall, or twists and turns to an office area? Is it dark or without life? When I arrive in the office, do I realize where I am? Do I have a comfortable feeling, or am I on edge?" She continues, "Cures for such circumstances are utilizing the environment to set the stage for what a person thinks of the company. It should be beautiful, comfortable, clean and tidy, and have name recognition. Someone should be in position to greet with a positive face anyone who enters. Any sharp angles that are of an extreme nature toward the entrance can have an adverse effect on the business, turning business away or making people entering the business feel defensive. The solution is plant placement to soften the sharp effect.

"The first thing I look for is the location of the office of the owner or manager in charge. This is critical to the first impression. If it's not a commanding position, this will have an adverse effect for the whole company. The solution is relocation of the owner or manager's office or, if this is not possible, placement of various cures for a positive solution," Lighthouse explains.

## when

"Organization of the office is key, but with creative people you have to be careful, and judge by their personality. If you strip their office/desk entirely, you can also strip their creativity. There must be a balance. A good rule is to create at least one shelf in the office—with nothing on it—that you can see from the desk. That way the mind can come to rest," she says.

San Francisco-based Primo Angeli Designs used Feng Shui throughout the company—from changing the location of Angeli's desk to the design of the entrance, where the finance sales department and creative teams were placed. Lush green plants suggesting growth in the business were placed at the entrance. "When you walk in you know you are in the 'primo' of design studios because the design is so grand and tasteful. It feels like a privilege just to be there," Lighthouse says. "There was an absence of the color red (fame and recognition) in the front lobby, so Primo had a rich red cherry reception desk installed—a subtle Feng Shui enhancement, but very effective. Large pillars were disguised (square pillars create blocked energies) with fabric, and on others colorful Wurlitzer jukeboxes (creativity) were placed. It's all about the way things look in the design business, and Primo had that concept down to the very last detail and presented a perfect environment."

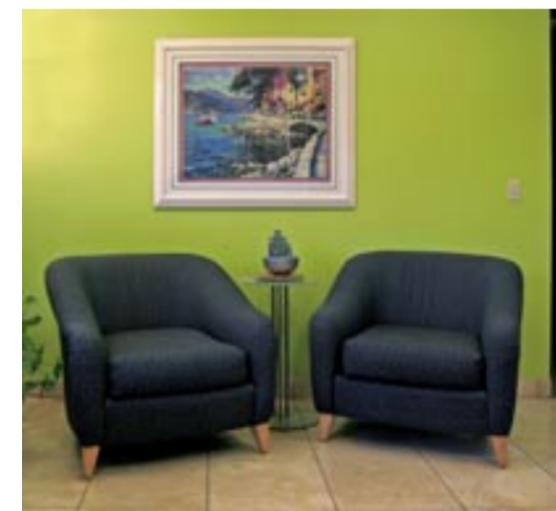
## why

When Lighthouse finds a home office located in a relationship area of the house, it is a tip-off that one or both people are having a greater relationship with their work than with the other person. "This is a negative process leading to possible divorce," she explains. "I have been asked many times 'Is it OK to have my desk in my bedroom?' I respond, 'Which is more important—your desk or your relationship?' The answer is simple: The desk should go. It is negative to be reminded about bills and work when you're in your bedroom. In certain circumstances such as a studio or a loft where there are limited options, it's best to use a screen or curtain to contain the energy."

A Feng Shui adjustment can align and redistribute the energy in your office or home and help you achieve your goals. ■

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