

# TAKE CONTROL OF YOUR OFFICE

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The ancient Chinese custom of Feng Shui can help enliven your office space, creating a prosperous environment for your home-based business.

It is said that our environments mirror our inner selves. What does your office reveal about you as a home-based entrepreneur? Are you successful or overwhelmed? Prosperous or lacking?

The ancient practice of *feng shui* can help entrepreneurs who want to gain control of their offices and their businesses. Simply defined as “arranging environments to enhance life,” *feng shui* is as relevant today as it was thousands of years ago in China, because it offers practical methods for creating environments that support our needs and desires.

The harmonious and balanced flow of *chi*, the vital energy that is essential to all things, typifies an environment that “feels right.” Even when we can’t put our finger on it, we know that the

right space has a certain something that appeals to us. When we live and work in these spaces, they affect our inner well-being in positive, uplifting ways.

However, offices can quickly begin to show the wear and tear of everyday business – stacks of papers, books and magazines, folders to be filed, notes to oneself, equipment lying about, or several works-in-progress that take up desk space.

## The Office is Alive with Chi

Objects that lift our spirits and affirm us conduct powerful, healthy *chi* our way, with the result that we are more productive and happy. Objects that have no meaning to us, or that are broken, or dirty, or take up valuable space, do not attract *chi*: they lead to stuck energy, another way of defining clutter. Since our environments represent our inner selves, rooms full of stagnant energy can lead to stagnant business. There are many ways to attract positive *chi*, including:

- Anchor your office with items that symbolize what you want, be it confidence, new clients, creativity, increased cashflow, or tranquility. Decorate with red or a pyramid motif to add fire energy and enhance your reputation. Display photos of inspiring people to attract new clients. Choose colorful flowers or artwork to enhance creativity. Be sure that everything has a meaningful association.
- Use colors that support your work style: blue and green are soothing, calm colors; red, yellow, and orange wake up a room.

## Getting Connected to Your Chi

We often believe we can compartmentalize our lives – the office is dedicated to work, the home to family. Yet, inevitably, chaos in one area of our lives affects other areas. Those working in home offices are particularly vulnerable to encroachments from the home, affecting focus and productivity. To strengthen your business, create an office that enhances your professionalism at every turn.

- Dedicate an area to your work. If you must share a room, use plants or a screen for privacy. Schedule office hours.

- Work safely. Have a clear view of the door from your desk. This command position symbolizes power in the workplace and protects you from being startled or distracted. If you can’t move your desk, use a mirror to give a sense of movement behind you. To absorb radiation from electrical equipment, place a plant such as a peace lily nearby.
- Work comfortably. Sit in a chair that provides excellent back support. Choose furniture that has rounded edges, or cover sharp, protruding edges with a cloth. Have adequate lighting for each activity. Place equipment where it is most useful.

## Constantly Changing Chi

Since change is inevitable, *feng shui* welcomes it. Think back to a time when you returned to your office from a lengthy trip. Often, the first thing we see is an object that we’ve merely tolerated for so long. We may wonder why we even have it. As we change, it is important for our environments to change along with us so they don’t pull us back into old patterns.

- To work effectively, clear up papers, books, and objects at the end of each workday. Give everything a home and create space for the next creative idea or project to flow into your life. Consider hiring a professional organizer to create a filing system that works best for you.
- As your business grows, be sure your office reflects and honors your successes, drawing in even more abundance. Display new products, photos of important clients, and awards that you have received.

These are just a few of the ways that *feng shui* can help you become more productive, prosperous, and confident. Create a dynamic, working partnership with your office, and begin “taking control.” EW