

## Background

### Feng Shui in your place of work

Feng Shui is an **ancient** art from China. It believes the design of a room helps you and your company become **successful**. Many business people already use Feng Shui in their workplace. Here are some **rules** for the location of your company and your office.

#### At the entrance

If you are choosing a location for your office or factory, then it is often better at the corner of a road. The entrance needs to be **attractive**, so paint it and have a large company sign. Put plants in the reception area with comfortable sofas. Employees and visitors should feel positive when they walk in.

#### Your own office

If you have your own office, firstly, try not to sit near the door but sit opposite it where you can see the whole office. This is very important for managers and people in charge because it shows you **control** the area and you can see who is coming into the room. Make sure there is a wall behind you and definitely not in front of you – you don't want to look at a wall. If there is a window in the room, sit in front of it. If you can see tall buildings out of the window, that's even better because it shows visitors you are important. If you have to look at a wall, put a picture

on it – for example, a picture of a long road or a river.

The north or west part of your office is good for creativity, so if you do a **creative** job this is a good location for your desk and computer. If you always deal with money or accounts, then the south-east part of your office is better. One important part of Feng Shui is not to have unnecessary objects or **untidy** areas. For example, you don't want to see power cables from electronic equipment. Put books on shelves and use the filing cabinet. Anything natural represents positive energy and this is good for clients to see. Plants take negative energy and water is especially good in the workplace – perhaps a small fountain or a water tank with fish. If this isn't possible, then a picture of water is also positive.

#### On your desk

Again, it needs to be tidy. For objects you need – pens, files, stationary objects – choose colours like blue, purple, and red. Black is the **symbol** of money in Feng Shui so, for example, a black laptop is the best choice. A picture of your family or friends is a good idea, but it should be on the right of your desk.

At the end of the day, always **tidy** your desk and put things away. Answer any emails before you leave.

## Exercises

### 1 Discuss in pairs.

- 1 Do you like the room you work in?
- 2 Do you have a large desk?
- 3 Where do you sit?
- 4 Describe the colour and objects in your office.

### 2 Read the text quickly. What is the aim of the text? Choose answer 1, 2, or 3.

- 1 To describe the workplace.
- 2 To give advice about your workplace.
- 3 To move your workplace.

### 3 Does the writer of the text think the ideas 1–8 are good advice or bad advice? Read the text again and write a tick (✓) or cross (X).

- |   | Good | Bad |
|---|------|-----|
| 1 Work in a building on the side of a road.                           |      | X   |
| 2 Put plants and sofas in the reception area.                         | ✓    |     |
| 3 Sit next to the door that goes into your office.                    |      |     |
| 4 Sit in front of the window.   |      |     |
| 5 If you deal with finance, work in the south-east area of the room.  |      |     |
| 6 Always show you are busy with lots of extra objects in your office. |      |     |
| 7 Have an object with water in the office.                            |      |     |
| 8 Only have objects for your job (e.g. pens, paper).                  |      |     |

### 4 Discuss in groups. Which good advice is true in your workplace? Which bad advice is also true.

For example: *My company is on the corner of the road, but we don't have any plants or sofas in the reception area.*

### 5 Match the words in bold in the text to definitions 1–9.

- 1 to have new ideas and imagination: \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 to put things in the correct place: \_\_\_\_\_
- 3 to be in charge of: \_\_\_\_\_
- 4 very old: \_\_\_\_\_
- 5 things not in the correct place: \_\_\_\_\_
- 6 it represents something: \_\_\_\_\_
- 7 nice to look at: \_\_\_\_\_
- 8 list of things you must or mustn't do, e.g. at work, on the road: \_\_\_\_\_
- 9 able to achieve what you want to: \_\_\_\_\_

### 6 Work in pairs. Look at this list of topics and underline the word that is true for you. Tell your partner and explain your answer. For example: *My desk is always untidy because I never have time to tidy it.*

My desk: *tidy / untidy*

My job: *creative / not creative*

My company's idea about business: *ancient and boring / modern and exciting*

The building I work in: *attractive / ugly*

Rules at work: *a lot / not many*

How I do business: *honest / dishonest*

### 7 Look back at the text and choose three words that you could use in your day-to-day work.

### 8 Work with a partner. Discuss these questions.

- 1 Do you believe in Feng Shui? Why / Why not?
- 2 How can you improve your office or workplace?