

# American Feng Shui Institute

*presents*

## FS227 – Professional Skills For Feng Shui Consultants



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# FS227 – PROFESSIONAL SKILLS FOR FENG SHUI CONSULTANTS

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# **FS227 – PROFESSIONAL SKILLS FOR FENG SHUI CONSULTANTS**

## **Introduction**

As a practitioner, living with feng shui in your own environment is a huge step toward understanding this practice. If you have already experienced it in your own life, it makes a big difference when giving your clients advice. It is best to have felt the changes that the remedies can make once they are in place. Then you can make authentic statements about the benefits of feng shui.

As you begin to share this knowledge, it is also important to understand the limits or extent of change that feng shui can make in someone's life. We are only able to affect a certain portion of a person's destiny with feng shui. The effects of a feng shui remedy are not always immediately apparent and dramatic. Changes can also be subtle, such as stabilizing a client whose finances or health have been on the decline for years.

A client will feel more comfortable if they know what type of information you will provide. Since there is so much misinformation out there, especially with all the "new age" practices, the average consumer is confused about what is involved in a reading. The content of your consultation will vary depending on your knowledge and background. The remedies and principles taught in the AFSI will provide you with what you need to provide the client with a consistent report that is held in high esteem among feng shui professionals.

### **Client Expectations**

Many clients decide they need feng shui because they feel there is something not right or lacking in their lives. The reasons can range from bad finances to bad relationships or illness. Some clients will have great expectations from you. A client who has a tight budget may be using what's left of their savings for your service. Whatever their expectations, it is best to protect yourself by explaining that you can help create a supportive environment for their success but you cannot guarantee the results.

Whenever you give someone advice it is up to them to apply it. If a client does not follow through on your suggestions or if they only place a few remedies, they may not be successful in improving their life.

Unfortunately many new consultants experience this when they consult for free or for a very low fee. It seems that something freely given is not valued and the client or friend will not take the information seriously.

### **Before Beginning Your Business**

Since the use of feng shui is new to the West there is no certification, licensure, or accreditation for consultants. We must monitor ourselves and take full responsibility for our profession.

To be qualified, students from the *American Feng Shui Institute* are advised to practice on many floor plans before starting their own consulting business. This ensures that we are working with integrity and with a real understanding of the principles, remedies, and their placement. If you are not sure of the remedies, placement, interpretation of qi, or the sitting and facing directions, you may not be ready to begin charging as a professional.

If you are just starting a consulting business and do not have all your notes memorized, do not take all your notes and reference books to a client meeting. If you are unsure, take in all the information at the first consultation and prepare your analysis at home. Then go back and present the results. This looks more professional than fumbling through charts and tables in front of the client.

This class is a basic overview of things that can be incorporated into your reading; it is meant to only be a guideline to the unlimited possibilities. As you continue to learn from the *American Feng Shui Institute*, more and more information can be added to your readings. You can be as specific as you like, including day selection or life partner selection. The amount that you charge for your reading can also be determined by the services you offer. You can increase your fee as you continue to learn and gain confidence.

**In this class you will cover these fundamentals:**

- Initial contact with a potential client, including discussion of your background and education, fees, type of consultation, need for a floor plan, etc.
- Onsite meeting with client:
  - ◆ What information you will provide the client
  - ◆ Dealing with residential properties
  - ◆ Dealing with commercial properties
  - ◆ Interview to ascertain the client's needs
  - ◆ Checklist for the exterior environment
  - ◆ Checklist for the interior environment
- Interpretation of the reading
- What to include in a reading
- How present the reading to the client
- What information should or should not be revealed
- Suggesting remedies, types of remedies
- Integrating the remedies with the existing décor
- Tips for drawing a floor plan
- Setting up a business

# Initial Introduction to the Client

Your first interaction with a client is usually on the phone or by email. At this time, you can explain your background and expertise in feng shui and your fees.

The onsite meeting with a client can take between one and two hours, depending on the services you plan to provide. As with a designer, architect, or other professional, it is advisable to “dress for success.” Even though feng shui may be thought of as “new age,” if you want your evaluation to be taken seriously you should present yourself as a professional. But be aware that the luopan reading can be distorted by heavy metal belts or jewelry.

The client may have specific needs to discuss and it is in this initial interview that you should discover their expectations and special requests.

There are different methods to present your analysis. Some advisors ask the client to take notes as they walk through the job site and some give their clients a written report. There is no set standard for your presentation of the analysis of the property. It is your choice whether to give the consultation in an oral or written form, but the method you use should be explained to the client before you start.

If the client tells you that he or she has no background in feng shui, it is best to explain the fundamentals:

- Feng shui is based on a science that integrates time with energy (qi), both of which affect the occupants within that space.
- Feng shui is not related to any type of religion.
- Since feng shui is based on an exact compass orientation and the time of construction, the qi layout for the building can be one of 216 possible patterns. We do not use the same pattern of energy for every building.
- The qi in a building can affect the occupants differently based on their birth information.
- The remedies are only from the five elements – fire, earth, metal, water, wood.

After discussing the fees and services, you may find it beneficial to bring a contract or invoice to the meeting and request payment before beginning work. The contract can be worded to be paid upon presentation of the analysis. You will find it more difficult to be paid after the client has all your information and analysis.

If a client tells you he or she has had readings from other consultants and was not happy with the results, you may want to decline the job. Some clients who have readings from certain types of consultants expect a ritual or space-clearing as well as other types of remedies. These clients often have expectations that you may not be able to fulfill, so they will not be happy.

# Professional Fees

The more we act like professionals, the greater the charge for services the general public will accept. Because of the vast difference in fee scales on the market, some consumers are shocked at the price for a reputable consultant. Unfortunately some practitioners, especially those in the more “new age” type of consulting, are charging in the range of a psychic reading. This type of consultant usually charges a small hourly or one-time fee. It may be profitable if the business is based on quantity more than quality.

There are several ways to charge for your expertise. Most consultants offer a few different methods of calculating the fee based on the scope of the project.

## **These are a few different options:**

- *Fee based on square footage:* A square footage fee can be anywhere from \$0.20 to \$1.00 per square foot. You can also set a minimum fee to make your time worth while for apartments or small offices.
- *Fee based on an hourly rate:* An hourly fee is based on the onsite meeting and time spent for research and evaluation.
- *Fee based on the size of the project:* A project fee can be based on an apartment, office, home etc. with a set fee for each type.

Everyone charges differently depending on their experience and amount of time they factor into a consultation. If you start with fees that are very low with the expectation of raising them as you gain more experience, some of your referral clients will not be happy when they hear they cannot get the same price as their friend who referred them. It is better to start at a reasonable rate.

If you charge by the hour you may get some resistance from the client when you submit your last bill, especially if he or she feels the time was not adequately justified. Charging an upfront fee is the most efficient because you know you are covered for your time and you can submit the bill at the time of the appointment.

You can add a floor plan fee if your client does not provide you with the floor plan. This may be added at your own discretion in cases where it will take you several hours to draw one up accurately. Some clients will not be happy with the additional fee and may go to another consultant who does not charge for this service. Of course the fee is entirely optional, but if they do not provide you with a floor plan you may need to allow several additional hours for measuring and drafting.

Projects that require out of town travel can be based on a set fee per day plus expenses, or square footage plus expenses. Most consultants require a deposit or to be paid in full before accepting an out of town or large project. You can reduce the traveling expense by advertising that you will be consulting in a particular city and will take multiple appointments. Generally the client will be paying for the consultation, airfare, and hotel if necessary.

# Consulting for Large Corporations

Although there are no regulations or standards for feng shui consulting you may be held liable if you tell a client to add a remedy that is unsafe or very costly, unless you have a strict clause of liability in your contract.

Large corporations or developers may ask for coverage of a million dollars for liability insurance in order for you to work with their companies. This is the situation in the United States; of course other countries may have a different legal environment that is not as strict.

Liability coverage is most frequently required by clients who have large projects in development but not for existing buildings unless it is for a major remodeling. It all depends on the size and scope of the work.

Real estate and commercial or residential builders may require:

- a minimum of a million dollars for general liability
- a minimum of a million dollars for professional liability
- Workers Compensation if you have employees, whatever your state requires
- automobile insurance one half to one million dollars

These will be discussed below. Your fees for large projects should reflect this additional overhead cost so that you do not lose money.

## **General liability insurance:**

This insurance covers bodily injury, property damage or loss, personal injury and advertising injury. Advertising injury protects companies from charges of negligence that results from the promotion of its goods and services. The cost for this insurance varies according to the size of your business and whether you are also practicing feng shui in conjunction with another business. Annual premium prices range from \$1000.00 up.

**Professional liability insurance:**

Professional liability insures a person and/or entity, corporation, LLC, LLP, partnership, etc. against claims made by third parties (clients, patients, customers, etc.) alleging negligence in the rendering of or the failure to render professional services. If the contract is made under a corporation or LLC but the work or advice is provided by an individual, the claim can be made to include both the entity (corporation, LLC) and the individual.

The initial annual premium price quoted one design company was over \$5000.00. If you belong to a professional organization such as those for architects and interior designers, you will be able to find insurance at more reasonable prices. The quote will depend on the size and scope of your business. There is currently no insurance that covers the profession of feng shui consulting so you will need to describe your business as color and material consulting.

In this manner, the remedies you suggest will be covered as if they were for decorating purposes.

**Workers' Compensation Coverage:**

This is coverage bought by employers who are required to provide it for employees to pay for medical treatment or loss of wages due to work place injuries. Your client may require this if you have employees and they are onsite during any phase of your consultation. Every state in the US except Texas requires employers to purchase workers' compensation insurance.

**Auto insurance:**

Although autos and trucks do not directly apply to our services, damage to a driver, automobile, or property can occur onsite. This coverage is mainly for businesses with workers onsite or making deliveries onsite. One way to avoid the million dollar coverage requirement is not drive on the property. This additional auto coverage may not be required by all developers.

When working for large corporations, you may encounter many channels of paperwork and red tape. Your proposal will go through several levels of management for approval before they accept it.

Here is a list of the usual paperwork submissions, from proposal to final billing:

- Prepare and submit a proposal, include fees and description of services
- Once the fees and service are agreed upon, submit a contract
- The company will draw up their own contract and terms for you to sign
- You will receive another authorization form to sign in order to begin work
- Submit documentation of the required insurance
- Once the work has begun, you can submit a partial billing for services
- After your service is complete you will sign a waiver release. This releases the corporation from any obligation or liability for unpaid materials or workers.
- Submit your final bill

Every company has their own requirements, but this seems to be the general format for real estate developers. Because of the extra expense to work with this type of company, it is important to calculate these costs into your original fee submission.

If all this sounds like too much work, you are better off working for individuals or small companies.

# What Should the Client Expect from a Consultation?

- **Explain the Information and Assistance They will Receive:**  
What is included in your consultation? This will vary depending on the information you plan to supply. It can include the remedies and their placement, placement of furniture, color scheme selection, overall potential of the building, yearly assessment of changes, and/or an astrological preview of the year for key personnel or family members.
- **Will They Receive an Oral or Written Report?**  
You must decide whether to use a written or oral format. If the presentation is oral, the client must be aware that they need to take notes during the session. You must have the floor plan available in order to grid the layout during the meeting or you must be quick at measuring and drafting a floor plan.

If you provide a written report, the client should know what information will be included and how long it will take to receive it. The report can include photos of different areas of the building and the surrounding environment with notes that describe the changes to be made.

- **What Areas of Their Life They Would Like to Improve?**  
Take the time to talk to the client and learn their background. What do they want to improve in their lives? This information can be valuable in assessing the qi layout and choice of remedies. Of course, getting background information is optional, but there are two reasons for obtaining this information: The first is that comparing this information to your reading will verify that you have the correct orientation and construction cycle. The second is that many clients have specific areas of concerns.

➤ **Educate Them in the Process of the Reading: Time, Direction and Environment:**

You can explain what aspects are used to calculate the reading, but it is not your job to teach them feng shui. A brief overview of basic principles can be provided: how qi interacts with the environment, elements, and time. But do not try to explain what the stars (numbers) mean. You are the expert. Too much detail will only confuse or scare them.

➤ **Personal Information: Trigram of Family Members or Key Employees:**

Provide personal trigram data for family members and key employees. This establishes the nature of the individuals and helps in the selection of remedies. Clients also appreciate knowing their best directions, colors, etc.

➤ **Best Sitting Direction for the Desks:**

In a work environment, placing the desks in the most active directions will improve productivity. At home, the desk placement is important for the students or for a home office. Besides the best direction to support the active qi, you must take into account any environmental sha around the desk area. Sha at the desk can make the person feel uneasy and unable to sit for long periods of time.

➤ **Best Areas for the President, Accounting, Sales, or Home Office:**

Placement of the decision makers, owners, sales people, or money collectors is important for the success of the business. The president's office, the main entrance, and collection areas should be in the most prosperous directions. The creative and sales departments should be in the areas with the qi of 4 green.

Avoid placing the cash register in retail businesses in the northeast, since the northeast represents the mountain (gen) and does not move, the money will also be stuck.

➤ **Best Sleeping Direction (Pillow Direction):**

The pillow direction is important for restful sleep. You may find that many babies will intuitively turn to their best sleeping direction. You may also choose to include the personal directions for wealth, lonely pillow, etc.

- **Architectural Assessment:**  
When you walk through the house, it is best to take notes on areas that have architectural or other types of sha. Examples: beams, corners, angles, stairs, doorways.
- **Environmental Assessment:**  
Always check the exterior surroundings and note the buildings, environmental sha, slope of the land, and areas where remedies can be placed.

## At the Initial Visit to the Building

- Walk through the exterior environment, take a compass reading from several locations, and check for environmental sha.
- Walk through the interior of the building, noting architectural features, lighting, air circulation, colors, etc.
- Draw a floor plan if one is not provided. Use gridded quarter-inch paper to help you draw the dimensions of the room if you are not used to drawing floor plans.
- Note the key locations: entrance, bedrooms, fireplaces, etc.
- Find out as much information as you can about the previous owners or occupants.
- Find out the history of the current occupants and length of time they have been in this space - this will help verify the orientation (sitting/facing).
- Take photos, if necessary.
- Ask their needs.
- Explain how you work, your fees, and what services you will provide.
- Find out the construction date. If the construction date is not available, try two different cycles and compare the history. If the building is very old and no date is available use the Intermediate Class method: the building trigram and the current year.

# Drawing a Floor Plan

It is always best to ask for a floor plan from the client or have them sketch one before your appointment. It can be very time-consuming if you are not accustomed to drafting or do not have a drafting program.

- Take the overall room measurements and draw them on a quarter-inch graph paper. Note the doors and windows.
- Most doors to the exterior are 36 inches wide and interior doors vary from 30-32 inches.
- The interior walls are usually 6 inches thick.
- Label each room.
- There are computer programs for drafting that are useful but may take time to learn.
- Sometimes your judgment of the sitting and facing will change once you see the floor plan.

# Information to Request for a Consultation

## Information to Request for a Residential Consultation:

- Year of construction
- Birthdates of the occupants
- Occupations
- Floor plan, if available
- Changes in the building since moving in that may not be shown on an older floor plan
- When did they move in?
- Events or issues since living there
- Which entrance is used?
- Is there a home office? Where?
- Money flow
- Health issues
- Need for creating new relationships

## Information to Request for a Commercial Consultation:

- Type of business
- Year of construction
- Birthdates of key employees
- Occupations
- Floor plan, if available
- Changes in the building since moving in that may not be shown on an older floor plan
- When did they move in?
- Events or issues since living there
- Which entrance is used?
- Location of president, accounting, sales, etc.
- Key issues, such as employee turnover, sales, bill collections
- Money flow, lawsuits
- Accidents or health issues
- Ability to add outside remedies
- Ability to make décor changes

# Checklist for the Environment

- **Street Location: Downhill Curves, etc.:**

The location on the street can determine the flow of qi that affects the building. If the street has a steep downhill curve, then the building may not be able to hold in the qi. This can affect the prosperity or the health of the owners. T-intersections and busy streets can also be sha, as well as buildings located below street level. Review all the basic principles for proper qi flow.
- **Surrounding Environment: Mountains, Ocean, etc.:**

The natural environment can be supportive or a sha depending on the location. A building on top of a mountain can be too exposed to the wind and may not have enough protection and support. Sitting too close to the mountainside can give a feeling of intrusion and heavy weight on a building.
- **Hazardous Elements, Electrical Transformers, Dumps, etc.:**

Electrical types of sha should be buffered with an earth remedy in order to ground the qi before it touches the building. Avoid occupying or living close to a cemetery or mortuary. Avoid areas of hazardous materials or machinery.
- **Type of Foundation: Stilts, etc.:**

Different foundations will affect the stability of the occupants. Occupants of houses built on stilt foundations may experience a feeling of instability in relationships.
- **Landscaping: Too Yin, Overgrown, Dead Vegetation:**

Observe the landscaping and note if it is well kept and alive. If the plants are overgrown or dead, the environment is too yin.
- **Locations for Outside Remedies:**

Note the areas where you will be able to add outdoor remedies.
- **Determining Sitting And Facing:**

Check the possible sitting directions against the floor plan. Assessing it from a quick walk through can be deceiving in some difficult properties. Note the architect's intent.

- **Buffering Sha from Surrounding Buildings :**  
Take note of any sha from surrounding structures and the environment. Determine if you can set up a buffer for them.
  
- **Location Close to Cemeteries, Hospitals, etc. :**  
Note the affect, if any, that negative qi such as this has on the occupants.
  
- **Location of a Unit Above Underground Parking:**  
When selecting a location for a client, avoid the floor directly above the parking. The sha from the moving metal, noise, and fumes is not desirable.
  
- **Outside Objects Blocking Path of Qi to the Entrance:**  
Note any obstruction to the qi entering the building. Straight direct paths to the entrance are also undesirable.

# Checklist for Interior Features

➤ **Entrance: The Location, Size, Lighting, and Exterior of the Entry Should be Open and Spacious to Allow Qi to Enter:**

The entry and doorway should be in proportion to the scale of the building so the qi can circulate properly. The roof line should not go lower than the door. This reduces the ability of prosperity qi to enter.

➤ **Interior: Balance of Lighting, Circulation of Qi:**

The interior should have a balanced of yin and yang for lighting, materials, colors, etc. The flow of the space is best when there are no rooms where you must step down to enter (this is not referring to a different story, just rooms at different levels) or staircases going down close to the entry.

➤ **Clutter:**

Advise the client that clutter can be a distraction because it is a constant reminder of things that need to be addressed. It can also harbor germs and dust, which are not healthy.

➤ **Sha: Beams, Corners, Soffits, Columns:**

Check the areas of the body that may be affected by these sha. This problem may necessitate moving furniture or reselecting rooms.

Soffits are the underside of a structural component, such as a beam, arch, staircase, or cornice.

➤ **Location of Doors:**

Note the door location for areas that may cause a misdirection of qi; for example, a bed or desk in direct line with a door. Most times it can be resolved by sleeping or working with the door closed.

➤ **Location of Beds:**

Place the beds in the best pillow direction for the occupants, especially if they have sleep disorders, illness, or excessive stress.

➤ **Stairway Location:**

Check for stairs leading down to the entry or tight spiral staircases. Use buffering plants to slow down the qi or avoid using that entrance.

- **Fireplace Location:**  
A fireplace is a concern if it is in an area where the occupants spend time and has stars that have a negative influence. Avoid using fireplaces in these areas or during times when the annual or monthly stars have a bad influence in order to prevent activating this qi.
- **Color Scheme, Complements Qi Negative or Positive:**  
Check the color scheme of the different areas to make sure it is supportive of the qi.
- **Ceiling Fan Locations:**  
Fans installed directly over a bed put pressure on the person sleeping below it. Fans can be good if the qi is positive but should not be on at night, especially if the qi is negative. The movement of the ceiling fan increases the effect of the qi, good or bad, in that space.
- **Bedrooms Over Garages:**  
Young children or babies should avoid occupying bedrooms over the garage because of the noise, fumes and moving metal.
- **Too Many Electrical Devices in the Bedroom:**  
Electrical devices can contribute to the fire element in rooms. They may be damaging to health in areas where the occupant spends a lot of time, like a bedroom.
- **Too Many Distractions in Bedroom: Exercise Equipment, TVs:**  
Distractions from a television, computer, etc. can be disruptive to relationships or sleep patterns. Mirrors in bedrooms are not desirable because they can create disturbing reflections in the night.
- **Location and Direction of Desk:**  
Note the best areas and orientation for desk placement.
- **Odor and Cleanliness: Poor Air (Qi) Circulation:**  
Odors are sha, as are dark, stuffy environments. Buildings with yin problems such as spirits, can benefit from creating a brighter, more yang environment.

# Analyzing the Reading

- Determine the sitting/facing direction and house type.
- Determine the center potential of the building
- Are there 20-year or annual locks?
- In a residence, what is the qi at the entry, master bedroom, home office, and children's rooms?
- In an office, what is the qi at the entry, president's office, accounting, sales, etc.?
- Compare the history of present and past occupants to your reading
- If you need to, check the AFSI bulletin board reference list for the interpretation of number combinations and remedies.

# Giving Results to a Client

## What to Include in an Analysis

Each consultant must decide what information they want to provide, and whether it is given verbally or in writing. The amount of information will depend on the classes the consultant have attended and their experience.

These are items that can be provided in your analysis:

- Overall potential of the house
- Annual potential
- Personal trigram information for all occupants or key employees
- Personal astrological information for occupants or employees
- Best personal directions for sleeping and studying
- Peach blossom information
- Remedies for exterior qi
- Remedies for interior qi
- Suggestions for architectural sha
- Suggestions for color scheme and furniture placement
- Best days or personal directions for consuming, weddings, moving in, starting a business, etc. (from the day selection classes)
- Best directions and rooms for prosperity, relationships, health
- Floor plan with noted remedies
- Photos of different areas of building or environment

The information must be easy to understand. Some clients easily find the information overwhelming or confusing.

The most important items are the exterior remedies and the interior remedies that enhance the prosperity, relationships and reduce dominations that affect health.

Including all the different personal directions is extra. This is much less important than remedying a reverse house or a 2-5 entrance. However, personal directions can be used for further reference should they decide to select a new home.

# How to Reveal Information to your Client

- Try to keep your information positive and use discretion in revealing your findings.
- Do not try to teach your client about feng shui. Your job as a professional is to do the reading and to give them advice for improvements.
- Do not make promises or guarantees for success. You cannot dictate how well they apply the remedies and the outcome.
- Be honest and be realistic about your ability to make changes with the remedies. Advise the client that the remedies can take as long as a month to show signs of improvement and that even these signs may be quite subtle. In some cases, especially when the client has suffered from devastating financial or legal problems, the result may be that he or she does not fall deeper in debt. It doesn't mean winning the lotto.

## Presenting Information to Clients

- **Improving Relations:**  
When discussing relationships with clients, they may not be forthcoming with the truth, or one person may be unaware of a problem. This is especially true when there are several areas with a 2-1, 4-1, 4-2, or 1-7, or the house is locked for people, or reversed. The best advice is to say that adding the remedy will bring more harmony to the relationship and it may keep the occupants more focused on whatever goal they are trying to achieve. You don't want to arouse suspicions between a couple by discussing the potential for peach blossom.
- **Reverse Buildings:**  
In situations where there is a reversed or locked house that cannot be remedied, the best thing you can do is to tell the client that this building is limited in supporting their success. We can improve the situation, but they may have an easier time with money and/or relationships in another location. This situation usually occurs in an apartment or office where it is impossible to add water or mountain remedies. Also, asking the client to look back on their experiences since they moved into this location may help convince them of the importance of the situation.

Since many clients come for help because they are struggling with finances, your fee may have been a great expense for them. If they are financially limited in making changes, you may occasionally want to offer to help them find another location for free. It is up to the consultant whether they choose to give extra help to a client.

➤ **Improving Chances for Peach Blossom:**

Move the client into rooms with a 4-1 or 4-2, and add a water feature. If there is an annual 2 or 5 the fountain should be metal. There is also a peach blossom remedy using flowers and a vase, taught in the case studies and day selection classes.

Improve the décor in the bedroom: remove clutter and distractions like a computer or television. Integrate textures, fragrances and colors that will enhance a romantic environment and mood. Move the bed from under beams and away from corner sha.

➤ **Addressing Clutter:**

Never insult a client by telling them their house is a mess or dirty. Tell them they will feel less stress, more organized and healthier without the clutter. Clutter does not attract new relationships and can create health problems.

➤ **Improving Success in a Home Office:**

The office should be in the best section for prosperity. Orient the client in their “A” direction or make a mini grid and place the desk in the best direction.

Avoid placing the occupant with his or her back to the door. This can be distracting.

Reduce clutter and add remedies to increase fame, creativity, and prosperity.

➤ **Suggestions for the Exterior:**

Paint the house the color of its trigram or the color that is productive to its trigram. These same colors can be used for landscaping and trees or flowers.

Add remedies for the house type or locks.

Trim landscaping that is too yin or overgrown and buffer areas that have environmental sha, such as electrical transformers.

Avoid landscaping that blocks qi from reaching the main entrance, or pathways that are too straight.

➤ **Feng Shui for Pets:**

Pets are helpful to stir the qi in the house. They can be affected by the qi in the areas where they sleep so remedies can be added for them.

➤ **Improving Health:**

Place the remedies for a house that is reversed, double facing, or locked for people. Avoid using areas with a 2 or 5.

Remedy areas, especially bedrooms, where there is a domination. Do not over-use an element that dominates the trigram of an occupant. Example: do not add large amounts of metal by the bed of a xun or zhen occupant.

Check the sitting of the house and sleeping areas for architectural sha: overhead beams or soffits, wall corners and doors. Add buffers between the occupant and exterior environmental sha.

Example: place a tree or large boulder between the bedroom and electrical transformer.

Make sure the bed is not placed between two different sections of the grid. This not only causes health problems but can cause a split in a couple's relationship.

➤ **Addressing Alcohol or Drug Addiction:**

There are many clients who will not divulge this type of problem. If there is a person with alcohol or drug addiction, these behaviors can be triggered with the wrong remedies. Be cautious with using water in areas of 1-5, 1-7, especially when combined with an annual 5, or in a house that is reversed or locked. Wood may be the best remedy in this case to reduce the 1.

# Remedies

## Suggesting Remedies

- Explain the nature of the remedies to the client.
- Provide a floor plan marked with the location of the remedies or place them yourself.

Some consultants purchase the remedies for the client or bring them with them to place during the meeting.

- Purchasing remedies: most items can be purchased at the local hardware store but if you cannot find them, it is advisable to look on the internet.
  - *Home Depot* or other hardware stores carry fountain pumps, plants, plastic ponds, or rocks.
  - *Lamps Plus* carries upright fixture cans that can be placed on the floor for fire element. They also carry the red bulbs.
  - Livestock stores carry metal rectangular water troughs which hold approximately 80 gallons of water. This type of container is inexpensive and takes little room. It is good for a small area.
  - If there is no outdoor electrical outlet, you can find a solar pump on the internet.
  - In very cold climates it may be necessary to have a heater as well as a pump for the fountain.
- It is not advisable to recommend candles for the fire element. Besides the fact that the fire must be on constantly, candles are a fire hazard. Clear gel candles are especially dangerous because the wick can collapse causing the wax to spill over and catch fire.
- Adding a water feature such as a horse trough is faster and more economical to install for quick results than waiting to build a pond or pool. Clients may put off adding a necessary water feature for a reversed or locked house because of the cost.

- Keep remedies affordable and add them only to important areas: keep it simple. The entry, master bedroom, home office, and children's bedrooms are key locations.
- Implement the exterior remedies first, such as mountain in front, water in back, or water to remedy a locked house. These are the most important.
- Check the occupant's personal trigram to avoid domination when adding the remedies to important areas like the bedroom.

# Remedies for Feng Shui

When implementing a feng shui remedy, the goal is to blend the remedy into the environment.

The actual element can be used or the color that represents it. I have found that using the actual element is more effective, especially when metal or water is required.

➤ **Fire:**

You may use a light with a red bulb or a red shade. This light must be kept on constantly. The alternative is to use the color red or purple. It is best to use it as an accessory or fabric that can be removed and is not permanent. If you use fabric or a painting, red or purple must be the dominant color.

We do not recommend using actual fire or candles since they must burn constantly and can be a fire hazard.

Note that the fire in a fireplace can activate qi so the client should be advised not to use a fireplace in areas where fire will activate sha. This includes areas with 2-5, 5-7, 5-9, or the annual 5.

➤ **Fire/Earth:**

This requires a fire color on an earth material, usually used for a combination of 3-7, 4-7, 3-6, or 4-7 when the 6 or 7 metal should be enhanced for prosperity. Example: red or purple ceramic pot or vase.

➤ **Earth:**

This can be a ceramic, clay, or stone container or object. If you use a ceramic container it can contain a plant; this will not change the energy. When using earth objects in a building to buffer electrical sha, they should be large and have enough mass to absorb the qi. It is not advisable to use many small stones. It is better to place one large boulder.

➤ **Metal:**

Actual metal is the best remedy when metal is required. The metal must be in proportion to the size of the space. It must have significant mass and should not be covered by any material or painted so that the metal is not exposed.

The best metal is decorative; it blends in and enhances the décor. However, metal remedies can be placed under a plant or behind furniture. Examples of inexpensive metal can be found at sporting goods stores. Round, doughnut-shaped metal weights can be purchased for around \$3.00 for 10 pounds. Another inexpensive metal remedy is to place several pounds of loose coins in a vase or container. The color white, light taupe, or grey can be used on the walls or on furniture.

➤ **Water:**

Water is the best remedy to attract and contain qi for prosperity and romance. The amount of water should be proportional to the size of the space or building. A basic amount of 5% of the square footage can be calculated, but this is not definitive. Water should be added until the feeling of water is acquired. The water must be clean and moving. A metal container is best for water (rather than stone) if the container only holds a limited amount of water. The colors blue or black can be used when water is not available, but this is not as effective.

➤ **Wood:**

Wood must be live green plants or trees. Live plants not only buffer the qi but can absorb it. Trees or plants are also used as buffers for corner sha and should be eye level if sitting or standing. The color of the container should be taken into consideration to support the qi of the space.

## **Integrating Remedies With The Existing Décor**

Be sensitive to the client's existing décor. It is best to try to blend the remedies into the room. A color used as a remedy should be relatively neutral if it is permanent. As time goes by and the qi changes, the color you selected needs to continue working in harmony and not activate negative qi that may arrive in a later date. If the client's walls are a brilliant yellow or red, they can be reduced and toned down by applying another color over the existing one as a wash. Painting a room in whites or neutrals can add life to an area that is too yin.

Advise clients to add remedies that are large enough to be in proportion to the size of the space. They should also be decorative if possible and not obviously look like an remedy. A remedy should not look out of place. Remedies can also be placed behind other objects if they are not decorative. Example: metal barbell weights for a metal remedy can be placed behind a piece of furniture or under a potted plant. The remedy does not have to be seen but it must be exposed to the qi of the space, so it cannot be in an enclosed drawer or closet.

If a client has symbols or decorations that he or she feels have some healing power or bring luck, do not discourage them or make negative comments. It is not necessary to remove them unless the room looks too cluttered or they contain an element (like fire) that activates sha. It is usually better to say that the remedies you will be suggesting will not interfere with their other decorations.

# Setting Up a Business

## Tips for Starting up Your Own

### **Consulting Business** (explained below):

1. Establish a name, corporation, or LLC.
2. File a fictitious name statement or DBA to claim your name
3. Set up a bank account in your business name
4. Apply for a business license in your city or county
5. Apply for a EIN or Federal Tax ID number with the IRS if you have any employees
6. Apply for a seller's permit or resale license if you plan to sell retail products
7. Check with the city or county to verify that your business is in the proper zoning.

All of these are discussed regarding the United States and the State of California. It is impossible to discuss the requirements of every state and every country. You must be sure you are in compliance with all laws regarding businesses in your area. The penalties for non-compliance are often steep.

If you have information regarding the regulations in other countries or starts, please feel free to post them on the bulletin board.

This section is not meant to be all inclusive. It is just a guideline to point you in the right direction. If you need to, please consult a lawyer, accountant, or other professional. Laws may change. It is your responsibility to follow the laws in your area. This section is not meant to be legal advice.

#### **Establish a Name, Corporation, or LLC**

If you have established a legal incorporation or LLC, it is not necessary to file a DBA ("Doing Business As," also known as an FBN "Fictitious Business Name"). If you are sole owner and your business is using a name other than the owner's surname or the nature of the business is not obvious by the name, you need to file for a DBA.

For example, doing business under a name like John Doe & Associates or John Doe & Sons would require a Fictitious Business Name be registered, even though the surname of the owner is stated, the words following the surname suggest other owners that are not specifically named. However, doing business under a name like John Doe Feng Shui Consulting would not require a Fictitious Business Name be registered, because the owner (John Doe) is conducting business under his legal name.

A Fictitious Business Name is a declaration by an individual or other business entity stating that they intend to conduct their business under the name they have chosen. It is illegal in some states to do business under any name which has not been registered with the county in which the business resides and published in an adjudicated newspaper in the same county.

For example, in California, any person who regularly transacts business for profit, under a fictitious name, is required to file a Fictitious Business Name Statement with the Recorder/County Clerk, within 40 days of first transacting business.

### **File a Fictitious Name Statement**

Filing a fictitious name or DBA will guarantee that the name is legally yours. By filing a DBA, you are protecting your business name in the county in which you do business. (There are many ways and levels at which you can protect your business name. You should check with an attorney for details and further protections.)

Conduct a search to look for conflicting business names or trademarks. This will eliminate legal trademark infringements and violations of a competitor's legal rights to the name. Check with the county clerk to see if the name is already on a list in your county or state. The same applies for an incorporation or an LLC.

You can go to the County Recorder's Office to locate the correct form and fill it out. (Be careful... Sometimes the county is very picky and might reject your form due to small errors, in which case, you will need to fill out another form and stand in line again!)

Find a newspaper of general circulation in your county and publish your DBA. After the fourth week of publication, a proof of publication form from the newspaper needs to be recorded again at the County Recorder's Office. You can also find companies on the internet that will take care of this process for you.

### **Set Up a Bank Account in Your Business' Name**

When you open a bank account under a business name, you can write checks for your business and accept checks written out to your business name. Banks will not open a business account for you without proof of your DBA filing.

### **Apply for a Business License**

Counties or cities require that just about all businesses get a business license. The business license can be obtained at your local courthouse or city clerk's office. The cost of license will vary from city to city and will depend on the type of business, volume of sales, and number of employees. The fees are generally minimal.

### **Apply for an EIN (Employer Identification Number) or Federal ID Tax Number**

You can obtain a federal ID number from the IRS through the mail, online, or by fax or phone. The Federal ID number is a nine digit number used to identify your business on government forms and documents. You can determine whether you need this and find other information about filing it at: <http://www.irs.gov/businesses/small/article/0,,id=98350,00.html>

### **Wholesale Seller's Permit**

Wholesalers or retailers of taxable goods will need to obtain a wholesale license or seller's permit from the State Board of Equalization. If you sell water fountains, books, etc., you need to collect sales tax, but when you buy goods from a wholesale seller, you will not need to pay tax to them.

You can find the nearest office online. Here is the web page for California: <http://www.boe.ca.gov/info/reg.htm>

The State Board will require you to list several vendors that you will be purchasing from and your account status. The payment for the sales tax will be quarterly or yearly depending on the volume of business.

In addition, please be sure you keep up with all other tax requirements, such as income tax.

### **Zoning Requirements**

There may be zoning requirements you need to comply with for the address of your business. Make sure the space that you own or lease is zoned for that type of business. Condos and planned communities may have restrictions that could affect your ability to do business from your home.

See also the information under *Consulting for a Large Corporation*, above.

# Marketing Your Business

## **Internet**

With the help of the internet we are able to reach thousands of potential clients. Developing a website to promote your business will save advertising costs and distribute your information worldwide. Give your background, schooling, and a list of services and fee structure. Many consultants will not post their fees unless you send them an email inquiry. This has good and bad aspects. Some people are hesitant to commit their name because they are afraid they will start receiving more spam. Others may prefer this method because they want contact with the consultant.

## **Seminars and Classes**

You can offer seminars or classes to private organizations, stores, community groups or schools. It is best to pick a specific subject within feng shui rather give a general talk that could last more than two or three hours. Many attendees want specific information in an easy to use and understand format. A class should be a reasonable length of time and include some printed material. Allow at least 20 minutes for a question and answer session at the end of your lecture.

Some speakers will bring products to sell at the end of their talk. If you do sell products you will need to be set up with a credit card payment system. It is easier to have someone with you to sell these products so you can answer questions and develop leads for new clients.

Offer seminars in stores that carry fountains, new age accessories, book stores, home decorating stores, outdoor accessories and landscaping, or spas. You can schedule seminars on a regular basis in the same store. Women's groups and health organizations are always looking for speakers.

## **Conventions and Trade Shows**

Home shows and conventions is a good way to meet the public. You can participate in a trade show in two ways:

- Offer your service as an expert for a seminar. You will receive some publicity at the show but the attendance is not guaranteed.
- Pay for a booth to sell your services. This can be an expensive way to advertise. The booth cost is determined by the size and location. You will also need printed material to handout and a commitment of time to man your space. It is advisable to combine your business with another consultant or business to share the costs and time required to man the booth. If you rent a space you will have more opportunity to give a seminar. Check with organizers to see how much competition there will be in your specialty before signing up for a space.

Demographics are also important to consider when renting a booth: What type of products will be featured at the show and will the people be able to afford a consultation or will they be only looking for quick tips.

## **Mail Advertisers**

Printed flyers or brochures can be mailed to new homeowners and businesses. You can obtain lists of new homeowners through companies that specialize in demographic lists. These lists are specific to household income, age, gender, cost of home and geographic area. The cost of the list will vary according to the specifics required.

## **Books, DVDs, and CDs**

Self promotion by authoring a book, DVD, or CD can help you establish yourself as an expert. A book can be self-published or published as an e-book on the internet.

# Conclusion

Finally it is up to the individual consultant to decide what he or she will charge and how to provide the information to the client. This class is designed to prepare someone starting a business with guidelines to include all the necessary steps of a consultation and to feel confident charging for their expertise.

The *American Feng Shui Institute* online bulletin board, at [www.amfengshui.com/bb](http://www.amfengshui.com/bb), is a valuable tool for students and those starting their own business. It is a valuable source of information from the instructors and senior students who, by sharing their experiences, help give insight into the practical aspects of the adding remedies. It allows you to verify information and get feedback for solving difficult situations, but it is not a free service to check all of your readings for your paying clients.

Performing many, many readings is recommended before taking on paying clients. Unfortunately there are students who are too eager and take one class after another without fully digesting the material. Then they forget the basic principles and mix too many fancy techniques to try to get maximum results. This creates a lot of confusion and they often end up giving the wrong advice. Remember that clients, like most people, can be lax in their effort and may not want to pay attention to the direction they enter, sit, or sleep in order to support their money or avoid the lonely pillow direction, consuming door, etc. So give them advice that they can use consistently and is within their budget.

Also, with every rule there are exceptions. These exceptions are taught in many of the case study or advanced classes offered by the AFSI. It is advisable to keep current with the new material. New classes are constantly being offered online.

Work from integrity and wherever you go, try to leave it better than the way you found it.