### General Information

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### Description

Business leaders in the United States are adopting Feng Shui in the hope of increasing revenue.

### Keywords

Culture, Feng Shui, Chinese, China, Decorate, Decoration, Design, Relationships, Home, Setting, Asian, Business, Donald Trump, Skyscraper, Luck, Mirror, Symbolism, Experts, Buddhist, Buddhism

### Citation

MLA

Transcript

Feng Shui in America Properties

STONE PHILLIPS, Co-host:

Having trouble at home? Kids misbehaving? Work not going as well as it should be? Would you believe the answer to these everyday worries may be as simple as moving the couch or putting up a few mirrors? Well, for 3,000 years, that's just what the Chinese have been doing to solve all kinds of problems. And though it may sound strange, it's catching on in America. Here's John Larson.

JOHN LARSON reporting: (Voiceover) Mark Webb is a high-powered San Francisco lawyer; Harvard degree, former federal prosecutor. He's a buttoned-up kind of guy, except every once in a while, there's that chanting outside his office. That's when three specially trained Buddhists drop buy to move the furniture around.

(Webb; Webb with Buddhists, chanting, throwing rice and moving furniture)

LARSON: So what's going on? Well, it's a 3,000-year-old Chinese ritual called Feng Shui. The Chinese believe the orderly way in which you decorate your home or your office can actually make you happier and more successful. I've never really subscribed to it.

Mr. BARRY GORDON (Feng Shui Expert): Feng Shui is based on a principle that you're not only affected by, you know, what you eat and what you think and the relationships you have with other people, but actually the home you live in, the office you work in, the natural setting you live in.

LARSON: (Voiceover) And as more Asians invest money in the US, Feng Shui is moving out of America's China towns and into the mainstream; so mainstream, that even New York real estate legend Donald Trump plans to build a skyscraper using Feng Shui.

(City buildings; Trump)
Mr. DONALD TRUMP: It was really recommended very much by Asian buyers. People would come in all of a sudden, and they were asking about the principles. And I said, `Well, I'll tell you what, folks. We're going to start looking into this,' because so many people started asking.

LARSON: (Voiceover) And when you apply the principles of Feng Shui to a typical American home, here's what you find. The Chinese say the master bedroom is the most important room. Parents can only rule the home if their bed is in the command position, kitty corner in the back with a good view of anyone who walks in. Twin beds for parents are not good, but neither is a king-sized bed. The idea is for mom and dad to sleep close together. Children, meanwhile, shouldn't be off in some other part of the house. Their bedroom must be near the parents' to feel secure. And exposed beams--Americans love them, but the Chinese say beams in the bedroom are bad luck. A beam above your head causes migraines. One above your feet means you won't go places in life. OK, well how about a nice little guest bathroom by the front foyer? Very bad, say the Chinese. It means family health and wealth will get flushed out the door. No, the first room you see in a house should either be a living room, so mom and dad will remember to relax, or a study, so kids won't forget about homework.

(House layout)

Unidentified Woman #1: Good afternoon. Law offices.

LARSON: (Voiceover) A lot of the same ideas apply at work, and that brings us back to Mark Webb's law firm. Feng Shui experts are here to fix some business problems.

(Office; Webb with others)

Mr. MARK WEBB: Although there's been income to the business, there's also been outflow in the same sense; so we have done well, but the expenses have been high.

LARSON: (Voiceover) For six months, the men have combed through Mark's law firm making changes. The final stumbling block, Mark's office--it's all wrong.

(Feng Shui experts rearranging office)

Unidentified Man #1: So a person in this position would tend to have headaches, would tend to not work well, and also would be very easily disturbed and startled and not in control of their life.

LARSON: (Voiceover) First, they move the desk away from the wall, into the command position so Mark can be in command of his business. They hang chimes and plants over an office back door. They say that door
causes cash flow problems, letting spirits, energy, and money escape. The men hang a mirror over the fireplace to bring in more life, and they say, trust.

(Feng Shui experts chanting and moving furniture)
Mr. GORDON: Mirrors are often called the aspirin of Feng Shui.
Man #1: I know. Sometimes we have somebody take two mirrors and call us in the morning.
Mr. GORDON: In the morning. Yeah.
LARSON: (Voiceover) Finally, they move a couch away from the front door. They claim it makes clients feel uneasy to sit there, as if they're not welcome inside. Does any of this work? Judge for yourself. Here's Mark's office before the Feng Shui, and after. Does it feel like a nicer place to work in? Well, the cash flow problem has definitely improved. For a year, Mark's firm tried to settle a big case. Finally, one week after the Feng Shui visit, a breakthrough. The firm negotiated its biggest cash award case ever.

(Office)
Mr. WEBB: Did a very good job.
LARSON: Of course all this could be just a coincidence. But then again, could a few mirrors and a couple of plants help me get a pay raise for example? Hey, it couldn't hurt. I kind of like mirrors. I might want to move this plant. My command position.
PHILLIPS: Cash flow is certainly good for Mark's Feng Shui experts. They charge anywhere from $300 to several thousand for a job, and now they even have their own 800 number.