

EVERYDAY FENG SHUI

Feng Shui by Maria

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Sell Your House Faster with Feng Shui

When it comes to real-estate, we are currently in a seller's market. Home prices are going up and in some areas buyers are even outbidding each other. Are you interested in taking advantage of this boom and selling your home? Do you want to sell it faster and get the best price possible? Feng Shui can help!

In his seminar, "Blow Home Sales Through the Roof", Feng Shui practitioner and professional home stager James Jay, demonstrated that a properly staged home using Feng Shui principles sat on the market for only 42 days, while one without the help of Feng Shui staging lingered on for 153 days, some even longer.

Staging is all about "setting the stage" for a buyer, so that when people enter your home they immediately feel a sense of safety, comfort and well being. Feng Shui is about creating balance and flow in your home by creating open spaces. Since buying decisions are made mostly on feelings within 3-6 minutes of initially seeing the home, everything that you can do to make the home more appealing works in your favor.

Feng Shui staging does not have to be expensive. James Jay outlined 6 core action steps that will lead to quicker more successful sales. He calls them the SECRET, with each letter indicating an action step.

Feng Shui core SECRET action steps for home staging:

- 1) Street** - This is called "curb appeal." 70% of home buyers do a drive by first, and this is when the 3-6 minute decision comes to play. Is the first thing they see clutter, disrepair and weeds? This will make them move on. It is recommended to somehow create a "gateway" for people to enter, using an inexpensive arbor and colorful flowers. This can also be a gated area, or just a border of healthy flowers. It gives people the illusion that they are entering into a special place. Another suggestion is to put something that moves in front of your house: a flag, windsock, whirligig, and or fountain. Movement attracts attention and draws people in. Also place your For Sale sign perpendicular to the street so it can be seen from farther away. Look at your home from various angles to ensure that the first thing your buyers see is uncluttered, engaging and beautiful.
- 2) Entrance** – This is called "The Mouth of Chi" because this is where the energy enters your home. Make sure there is nothing blocking the entrance. Consider painting your door any shade of red, which signifies protection and prosperity (and is easy to see), or black which signifies water and the flowing in of Chi, the life force energy. Keep your entrance clean, uncluttered and adorned with beautiful flowering plants. Remember that if you don't use your front entrance you are not activating the Chi, so even if you are used to entering from the garage, you still need to walk in from your front door at least 3-5 times a week.
- 3) Create Flow** – Now that you have enticed the buyers into your home with your curb appeal and inviting entrance, the first things they see when they enter are vitally important. The rule of thumb is to clear the clutter and depersonalize. "People buy space not stuff." They need to see themselves in the home, so the less of your personal belongings the better. Most buyers are usually younger than the sellers so it is also important to update (no avocado green or harvest gold crock pots on the counters). This leads us to countertops, which need to be cleared as much as possible.
- 4) Room of First Sight** – Slowly open the front door and look at what you see first. Is it appealing or not? The key is to increase the positive and to diminish the negative. If it's not appealing, for example if the first thing you see is a bathroom or an older, outdated kitchen, consider placing a plant or screen to draw the eyes away. You can also triangulate accent colors to lead the eye away; for example near what you don't want the buyer to see first place a red candle, then further away place a red bowl, then slightly further from the bowl place a painting with red accents that directionally are pointing away from the area. This creates an illusion leading the eyes away from the unappealing area.

- 5) Engage the 5 Senses – This is what I feel is the fun part of Feng Shui staging:
- Visual - Color/paint is the cheapest way to transform space; muted is best for sales.
 - Sound - Consider pleasant sounding water fountains, soft music or wind chimes.
 - Touch - Bring in interesting textures with pillows or throws.
 - Taste - Offer treats to your prospective buyers; a bowl of candy, cookies etc.
 - Smell – Baking cookies, bread, or boiling spices on the stove makes the house smell homey. Avoid incense or purchased sprays as people may be allergic.
- 6) Transcendental – This is “The Law of Attraction” and in Feng Shui called intent, visualization and affirmations. Think state, and write your affirmations and visualize yourself signing the contract and moving on.

So this is the SECRET to Feng Shui staging. There are other principles to consider as well when staging a home to sell or rent.

Decluttering vs. Bare Space

It may be easy when you think of decluttering to remove all items from a specific area. It is important to remember that in Feng Shui clutter is referred to as “visual noise”, however an empty space is “visual silence.” Therefore once you have cleared the space you may think of adding a “prop” such as a bottle of wine and two glasses, or a fancy coffee machine and two cups; something that would make the buyer picture themselves relaxing in the home. For successful staging remember the three R’s: Remove, Reorganize, Replace.

The Most Important Rooms for Staging

Even though we talked about the entrance and the room of first sight, there are specific rooms which have been established as the rooms most important for staging: The Kitchen, Living Room and Master Bedroom and Bath. After your curb appeal and entrance to get the most bang out of your staging efforts focus on these areas first.

Using the Feng Shui Bagua

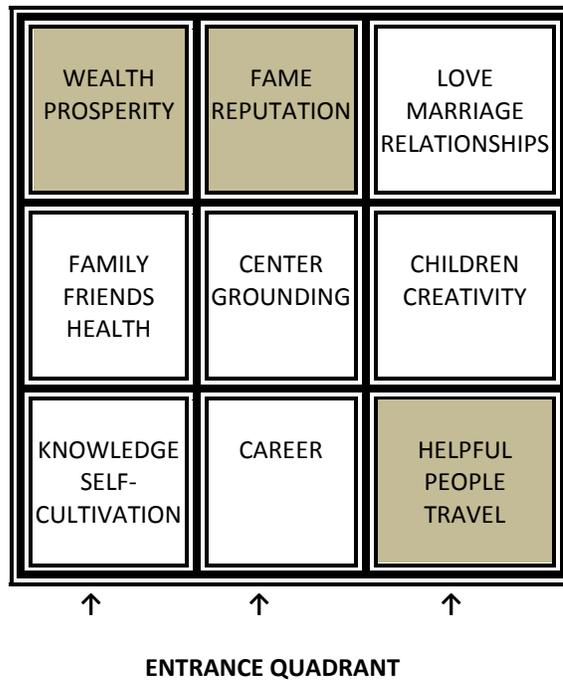
It is also important to use the Feng Shui Bagua to correct and enhance the following areas in your home, no matter what rooms are in these areas.

In the Feng Shui Bagua (Ba-gua) Map, represented as a grid of nine sectors, the Wealth and Fame areas are in the back left corner and middle respectively, while the Helpful People and Travel area is located in the front right corner of your home. The Bagua comes from the Chinese philosophy, “The I Ching,” and literally means “eight trigrams,” with the center area being for grounding. Activating these areas will increase your wealth in the way of a sale, improve your reputation with buyers, and surround you with agents, brokers and buyers who will be helpful in making the sale. The travel area will enable you to travel to your new home.

Enhancements for WEALTH: Back Left Corner - Items that “call the Chi” such as flags, wind chimes, whirligigs, healthy plants with rounded leaves, water features, (fountains, waterfalls or aquariums), art depicting wealth or your desired possessions, images and symbols of wealth, items in deep purple, red or blue.

Enhancements for FAME: Back Center – Display diplomas, awards and acknowledgements, art depicting animals, people fire and the sun, personal images and symbols of fame, items in the color red, bright up lighting,

Enhancements for HELPFUL PEOPLE/TRAVEL: Right Front Corner – Pictures of the place you would like to live after home is sold, art depicting spiritual guides, or pictures of mentors in your life (business cards of real-estate agents), items in black white or grey, and items made of metal.



Feng Shui Staging is not only for selling a home quickly, it is all about changing the energy in a space, so it can be very useful for creating a positive ambiance for events in your home such as parties, or weddings, or for just giving your own energy a lift. When you stage a home you are doing “Feng Shui for the public. Enjoy your newfound energy and congratulations on selling your home.

Feng Shui at Work:

A client had a second home that would not sell. After the renters moved out, it had sat vacant for a number of months, causing her financial hardship. A consultation let us to create a welcoming atmosphere through Feng Shui staging. The house had grey cement steps and black railings that were dirty and peeling. The first thing I advised was scrubbing the steps and repainting the railings. She painted the door red, added a colorful welcome mat, displayed a flag with beautiful sunflowers in the front of the house, hung a wind chime by the door and added a red silk orchid to a stand by the door. Inside, I also advised hanging a small mirror to stop the flow of energy down the stairs and hang a small wind chime above the stairs. A drive by gave us a very welcoming feeling. The house sold soon after, and even for more than the asking price since a few buyers outbid each other.

Affirmations:

Remember that in Feng Shui, intent plays a significant role in enhancing any area of your home or business. That’s why all enhancements need to be made with intentionality; written or stated affirmations are very important. It is also important for them to be expressed as if they are already happening. Examples or affirmations for selling a home: *“Our house sold quickly and for a very good price,” “The buyers were able to streamline the purchasing procedure,” “The house passed the termite inspection with flying colors.”*

Feng Shui on a Shoestring:

Feng Shui enhancements do not have to cost a great deal. Walk your property with buyer’s eyes and see what they may see at first glance. Decluttering your front entrance, adding some colorful plants, hanging a flag, and writing some affirmations are very inexpensive ways to, as James Jay would say “blow your home sale through the roof.”

For questions or home consultations email at mtmccull@aol.com and put "Feng Shui" on the subject line, or visit my website at www.fengshuibymaria.com, (where you can read past columns), or Facebook "Feng Shui by Maria", where I post pictures as examples to enhancements.

* **Check out my BLOG** – Just go to the website and click on "Blog": You can view many pictures and, I will respond to your questions quickly.

COME TO MY NEXT CLASS and Receive \$40 Off a Home Consultation

My next class will be a series of three two hour classes with practical instruction on Feng Shui principles, enhancing the Bagua in your home and Balancing the Elements.

Tuesdays October 14, 21, 28 - 1:00-3:00 pm

The Parks and Recreation Guide will be available late July and registration begins on Aug. 4 (Participants will receive \$40 off a home consultation.) - Mark your calendars and invite friends.

Until then...Blessings!

Maria McCullough – Bio

Maria McCullough, a Benicia resident, is the owner / founder of *Feng Shui by Maria* (www.fengshuibymaria.com) and is a speaker and educator with over 15 years of experience. She specializes in residential, landscape and business consultations. She is a graduate of the Western School of Feng Shui and has personally trained with Terah Kathryn Collins, founder of the Western School of Feng Shui, specializing in Essential Feng Shui® and author of numerous books including "The Western Guide to Feng Shui."