

knowledge and inspiration for office people

Vital-Office® Concept

Das Vital-Office® Konzept

Für mehr Lebensqualität in einer gesunden Bürowelt

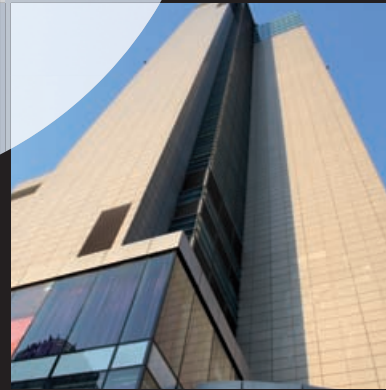
The Vital-Office® Concept

- For a better quality of life in a healthy office world -

活力办公室®-公司的理念

—提高生活质量，创健康办公环境

Peter Jordan
皮特·尤丹



The Vital-Office® Concept

- For a better quality of life in a healthy office world -

Peter Jordan



Metabalance-Verlag
Fachverlag für
Ganzheitliches Gesundheitsmanagement

© Metabalance-Verlag, Leipzig 2012

© Vital-Office®

Design: Vital-Office GmbH

Edited by Peter Jordan

Published by Metabalance-Verlag, Leipzig 2012

All rights reserved.

No part of this book may be reproduced by any mechanical, photographic, or electronic process, or in form of a phonographic recording; nor may it be stored in a retrieval system, transmitted, or otherwise be copied for public or private use - other than for „fair use“ as brief quotations embedded in articles and reviews - without prior written permission of the publisher. The intent of the author is only to offer information of general nature to help you to quest for designing a healthy office space. In the event you use any of the information in this book for yourself, which is your constitutional right, the author and the publisher assume no responsibility for any actions.

Printed in Germany

www.metabalance-institut.de

www.vital-office-net

ISBN 978-3-943256-01-7

Inhalt

Forewords	5
Dr. Hans-Dieter Schat	5
Dr. Jürgen Kuske	10
Sabine Freutsmiedl	13
Introduction:	16
1. Office optimization	18
1.1 Why good office design is so important?	18
Conclusions:	23
1.2 Efficiency and Creativity	23
1.3 Creative workplace design	28
Conclusions:	36
1.4 Intelligent design and geometry	36
Conclusions:	40
1.5 Security and Privacy	40
Conclusions:	44
2. Colors	45
2.1 Colors - the easiest way to create a good mood	45
2.2 The effect of colors	46
3. The 4 worlds	57
3.1 Layers of perception	57
Conclusions:	59
4. Ergonomics	60
4.1 What is ergonomics?	60
4.2 Stress load model	61
4.3 Ergonomic polarity	61
4.4 Branches of Ergonomics	62
4.5 Hygiene, comfort and personal appreciation	62
Conclusions:	64

5. Feng Shui	65
5.1 Room psychology - the Feng Shui principle	66
5.2 Thinking pattern	67
5.3 Modern Physics	69
5.4 Yin and Yang	70
5.5 Live energy Qi	71
6. FAQ	74
6.1 What is especially important with a Vital-Office® design from the Feng Shui viewpoint?	74
6.2 Vital-Office also produces office furniture	76
7. Conclusions:	78
8. Biografie	80
Peter Jordan	80
9. References	82

Forewords

Dr. Hans-Dieter Schat

Integral office design is a requirement for excellent Management

The striving for outstanding results is presumably as old as humanity. Our Stone Age ancestors have not left any reports behind for us about this so that we must rely on our suppositions. In today's discussion we are on safer ground when we are dealing with the origin of Business Excellence.

The decisive impetus came from Tom Peters and Robert Waterman, who set off in 1982 "In Search of Excellence"- the title of their bestseller. Peters and Waterman obtained eight principles of excellence from the analysis of the best companies at the time:

- A bias for action, active decision making - 'getting on with it': trying comes above studying.
- Close to the customer: Not only the striving for customer satisfaction but also learning from the customer and developing innovations jointly with the customer.
- Autonomy and entrepreneurship- also and especially then when risks are involved.
- Productivity through people, and, in fact, through all the people who work in the company or are involved with it. Not only productivity through managers!
- Hands-on, value-driven, the emphasis is on the actually "hands-on" management practice.
- Stick to the knitting, no diversification into different sectors.

- Simple form, lean staff: only as many management and specialist teams as necessary.
- Simultaneous loose-tight properties, that is tight in the basic orientation and targets, loose in the choice of means

Subsequently, Peters and Waterman were heavily criticized but you must first acknowledge their contributions: With the book "In Search of Excellence" the subject was presented to a broad public in the Western world. "Excellence" in companies was suddenly no longer only the concern of the boss, but was discussed on all levels. Since this book you no longer overlook the subject of Business Excellence in management theory and the authors are responsible for this input. Basically, the criticism of their work is based on two arguments:

- Some of the "excellent" companies selected by Peters and Waterman got into economic difficulties soon after the book was published.
- It remained unclear how these eight principles are connected, how they can be implemented together in a company.

The first point of criticism concerns all the concepts of business management and management theory: current success does not guarantee future success. No one has yet found a concept which guarantees business management success for the long term. Success must be worked at anew time and time again.

The second point of criticism went deeper and led to the development of management models which wanted to bring the different perspectives, criteria and demands into one integral approach and an integrated assessment.

Probably the most well-known of these models, at least in Europe, is the Business Excellence Model of the European Foundation for Quality Management. This model was developed since 1988 by representatives of leading European companies and has new criteria which are divided into two groups: the facilitators and the results.

Why are not only the results recorded?

In an early stage you can only determine that a company is using more resources, for example, for the improvement of employee motivation or process stability. Only later will it be possible to observe the results in our example with more innovations through qualified employees or more stable processes.

The EFQM model of Business Excellence, due to the consideration of facilitators, is in the position to record approaches for improvement very early. The new criteria are as follows in the current version:

Facilitators:

- Management
- Employees
- Strategy
- Partnerships and resources
- Processes, products and services

Results:

- Employee-related results
- Customer-related results
- Company-related results
- Key results

Consequently, the criteria of Peters and Waterman have not been overtaken but put into a frame and made available for an integral contemplation.

The development of office concepts reflects the development of Business Excellence concepts just outlined.

Office design started with individual criteria: size of the desk tops and the access routes to the window, the strength of the lighting and limitation of reflections, perhaps also a sensible arrangement of work medium or storage.

All these criteria were introduced with good reasons; serious disregard of these criteria leads to injuries and job-related illnesses of the office worker. But these criteria stand for themselves; they lack an integrating concept. With the taking account of table sizes and lighting strength perhaps an injury-free office can be designed, but definitely no excellent office.

Office design has an unusual quality which obviously makes the taking over of an integral approach more difficult: an office and its furnishings consist of objects which are noticeable in isolation.

No one would say : "This company has improved its innovation management in the frame of EFQM, therefore we will also improve our innovation management and we will automatically be excellent."

But some say: "This company has introduced free-form surfaces and 2-component lighting and increased the efficiency in the office. Therefore, we will also buy desks with free-form surfaces and a couple of 2-component lights and increase our efficiency likewise."

The one functions as little as the other. The winners of prizes in the frame of the EFQM model show outstanding achievements in all criteria and the process is coordinated for the individual criteria.

It is no different in the office: only one integral process, starting with the planning and the involvement of the employees through to realization, resulting in office workplaces in which the employees can live Business Excellence.



Dr. Hans-Dieter Schat

The author: Dr. Hans-Dieter Schat studied economics and social sciences, served in the 1990s as office organiser in the automobile industry and is now senior researcher at the Fraunhofer Institute for System and Innovation Research ISI.

Dr. Jürgen Kuske

The effect of environment factors on the productivity in the accounting and commercial departments

- How can performance-promoting environment factors be used and applied in the commercial departments of a company?
- What improvements can be achieved by the specific measures?
- Must the employees accept these applications for them to work?

In order to be able to answer these questions it is important to understand how people think and act. We become aware of this when we realize time and again that all decisions are made and decided more than 95% in the subconscious and only 5% are made consciously.

- Why is this so important?

In the accounting and commercial departments of a company we find predominantly rationally thinking people.

- What does this mean?

Rationally thinking people and employees in the accounting and commercial departments are left brain dominated people. More than 80% of their thinking is done with the left half of the brain. This is important for these areas of responsibility involving Mathematics, Law, Order, Accuracy, Compliance with Laws, Regulations, etc. to name just a few.

As we know, our brain consists of a left and right half. If we describe the left half of the brain as the concrete and rational side and the right as the artistic and emotional side, then we can easily understand how people are influenced by the different sides.

We find right brain dominated people, that is, people who think and work predominantly with the right half of the brain, in artistic and emotional areas of responsibility. For example, this includes musicians, painters, all people who work artistically and emotionally, or who are very sensitive and described as artists.

- How can we promote and use the right half of the brain?
- What can be achieved with this?

In Feng Shui work is undertaken with affirmations, pictures, colors and water; this work addresses the right side of the brain especially. As a result, not only is this side of the brain encouraged and supported, but also a stronger use of the mental abilities of each individual is promoted.

Consequently, in addition to encouraging wellbeing, health and better performance, the productivity and creativity can be improved by greater use of the other half of the brain.

In addition to improved creativity, the greater use of the two halves of the brain leads to the often somewhat monotonous tasks, which must be undertaken by the personnel in the accounting department in ever shorter periods of time, being dealt with somewhat more creatively and easily, without the employee being consciously aware of it.

Since rationally thinking people often have difficulties in being receptive to these support strategies, it is important to introduce measures which can be comprehended in concrete terms. This can be achieved by the use of good furnishings with round and oval forms, flowers and beautiful pictures chosen by employees, in compliance with the Feng Shui rules and ideas as well as the integral approach of the Vital-Office® concept.

A beautifully designed office is the requirement of each person, irrespective of which group he belongs to, for a positive attitude to work, thus automatically increasing productivity and the enjoyment of work.

This is especially important at the present time where stress and high levels of pressure are on the agenda in the workplace.

Grant ourselves and our fellow workers a beautiful environment in the workplace and increase our options through the use and support of the knowledge of Feng Shui and the Vital-Office® concept.



Dr. Jürgen Kuske

MBA (IAS – Accountant, Rating Analyst, Controller, Betriebswirt)
CEO and CFO worldwide for OPTIMA packaging group
Doctor of Science for international Management
SMA Wien / European University Belgrad

Sabine Freutsmiedl

Spatial concepts and colour designs indisputably have an effect on people.

From the moment we are born we are sensory beings and this is how we experience our world. Working rooms, such as offices, are therefore consequently living spaces for people, that decisively influence our wellbeing, our health, yes even corporate success.

It becomes clear to us from looking at natural forms and systems and their reciprocal effect on the human organism that peace, centeredness, alert clarity and thus creative efficiency emerge. We can be confronted with this in nature, as well as in a consciously designed office spaces.

From a biological viewpoint we are close to all that is natural. Natural aspects promote our internal, lively processes so that we feel well-balanced and harmonious. We can perceive and feel this analogy to nature every day anew. Merely the question is necessary „Where to I feel particularly good and well-balanced so that creativity and efficiency are able to develop“.

Our modern, technically structured world is very frequently void of this analogy to nature in our life and working worlds. We have had to adapt ourselves to this and have got used to bad design and conventional, loveless arrangements of living and office working areas. However our senses perceive that ordinary common environment as unnatural artificial objects, which lack the organic formal references. Consequently, our basic needs are neglected as well. And our organism reacts all too frequently with stress.

This also has an effect on the way our brains work. A tunnel vision is often the result if we are stressed by the many negative factors. We are then primarily active with the left side of our brain, which works significantly slower and moreover look for solutions based on old experiences, patterns and mental set-ups. The innovative, creative quantum leap does not occur here.

However, if we perceive nature and are active outdoors, both halves of our brains are synchronizing so that the right, much faster side is also participating, which can provide us with creative, unconventional inspirations and rightly gives us the conviction that „solutions are lurking everywhere“.

This is how we are able to enjoy letting go and an active rhythm that feels good and provides us access to our full creativity and personal strength.

A similar thing happens when we design our personal and office working environments with organic shapes. The overall effect is that they are perceived as an organism, which surrounds us like a shield and consequently grows into a vibrant spatial experience.

The basis of all considerations and space planning should be people with all their basic needs. This is how we can get away from enforced form which we need to adapt to towards a sensory form which supports us. The foundations have been laid to aid people where they are with their needs – in harmony with nature.

Happy office workers are those whose employers have an open mind concerning office concepts according to holistic criteria. However, it requires a great deal of good will and acknowledgement by the decision makers in order for it to be carried out consistently up to the very last workplace. Up to now budget cuts upon employees are more opportune, which has a high degree of disadvantageous effects on the entire office environment in the long term.

Why it could pay off to deal with this topic will be explained to you by the one who undoubtedly has the most experience in this field. With his valuable experience Peter Jordan from Vital Office® will take us to the heart of vital office design.



Sabine Freutsmiedl

Metabalance Institut, Institut for holistic health management and prevention, www.metabalance-institut.de

She worked long term in leading management positions, as manager, coach & project manager in financial business. She is responsible for Change-Management processes and training concepts for DGFP (German association for human resources management), Inhouse training and Coaching as well as team training.

The Vital-Office® Concept

- For a better quality of life in a healthy office world -

Introduction:

The time that people spend working in the office is a regular part of life that has impacts on people's health. The office is a working environment with many physical and psychological demands, challenges, and stresses which have a long-term effect on the person working in an office. These demands, challenges, and stresses in offices can cause psychological problems and physical ailments.

A meticulous and holistic design of the working environment, however, can promote creativeness and significantly contribute to the wellbeing of body and mind. This design also promotes productivity and innovation.

Instead of presenting a finished "To Do List", we direct our attention to the basic principles and contexts. This facilitates the generation of additional possibilities by means of integral individual office planning. Creative ideas and concepts of interior designers and architects and their effect on the health and capability of the individual and the entire team can be analyzed in advance using the Vital-Office® Concept.

It is our aim to create a living office space.

Only an integral design of work environments adapts work to man: It promotes wellbeing, development of personality, the development of creativity and authenticity, health and consequently, capability.

Therefore, concepts are sought which understand the office workplace as an integral system and subject all the interlinked areas to an analysis, meeting the needs of people.



Abb. 1. The aim determines the way – also in office planning. A purely functional objective results in fittings which are just as functional and sober, whereas an objective relating to productive capacity and maintenance of people's health leads to totally different concepts of office fittings.

1. Office optimization

1.1 Why good office design is so important?

Have you ever considered how much time you spend in the office?

Hours? A few days? Only a few months? Is it only a couple of hours as in a restaurant, or perhaps only a few minutes as in a shop, or several days as in a holiday apartment? How many hours a day do you spend at home in your kitchen or your lounge? And, in contrast, how many hours do you spend in your workplace?

Apart from periods spent sleeping which we do not experience awake and conscious, the workplace is the environment where we spend most time. As office workers we spend a considerable part of our lives in the office. Seven or eight hours a day, five days a week, 45 weeks a year over a period of approximately 40 years. That amounts to approximately 72 000 hours spent in the office. As a result, the office is the dominant artificial environment which has the biggest influence on our lives.



Abb. 2. 2 Our journey through life is positively or negatively influenced by the quality of our office workspace.

Feelings determine our decisions and it is possible to find out about such feelings by placing ourselves in a particular situation.

Imagine you work in an office. White walls, suspended louvered ceiling with in-built lighting, grey blinds in front of the windows, light grey desks, grey carpeting, loose cabling hanging down from the desk and on the floor. Choose your desk in there.

Perhaps not exactly the best spot with a wall behind you, but as an exception a less good place.

IMAGINE YOU ARE NOW SITTING IN THIS PLACE.

Take a look around. Try to evaluate as many details as possible in your surroundings in a consciously emotional way. How do these environmental factors affect your mood? Do you feel positively inspired, indifferent or de-motivated? Try to evaluate as many details as possible from your surroundings in a conscious way. Is there a plant in your office? Is it beautiful and vital or is it struggling to survive? Can you see out of the window, or is there a grey blind in front of it?



Abb. 3. A modern office - carelessly planned and furnished.

Also, for example, at your desk more closely. Touch the table-top consciously. What does the table-top at which you are sitting convey to you? Is it to be judged as high quality like your work is supposed to be, or is it just a piece of plastic, cheap and dirty?

Is there something colorful in your office? Have you looked at the waste paper baskets?

Look at your colleagues? Where are they or where are they moving about? In front of you, at the side of you or behind you?

How good is your privacy sphere? Usually, we are especially sensitive when it is a question of protecting our privacy sphere behind us. Are your colleagues constantly or frequently going past you from behind? Do you perhaps get an unexpected tap on the shoulder or does someone make use of the opportunity to read your emails? How good is your privacy space at the side? If

someone comes speak to you, is that person almost sitting on your lap before you notice him?

*take a look at the printer, copier, fax machine and telephone?
How clean are the monitors and the keyboards?*

*What do the chairs look like? Material threadbare? Filthy dirty?
Armrests rickety?*

If you think you now have a feeling about the effect of your office environment on you, try to imagine how you would feel after a week. – Let time continue to pass, day after day and try to imagine how you would feel after 12 months. How have you adapted?

Be consciously aware of the feeling. Let yourself submit to it totally. Think again of all the details which you were so aware of on the first day. You became less and less consciously aware of them during the following days, so that in eventually they only affected your psyche unconsciously. You can find out how below:

How do you feel now. Fit or exhausted? Creatively full of ideas or empty?

What happens in one month? From when one month's salary until the next. 4 weekends, 30 evenings. What have we achieved during the time?

And then a whole year? Spring, summer, autumn and winter. Sunshine, rain, snow, warmth, heat and cold. Let a whole year pass in front of your inner eye.

What do we remember? What were we moved by? Or, looked at another way, what were we frequently not moved by?

How did you adapt to your work environment? Is it possible that developments and decisions in your private life were influenced by the mood that you were in when you came home from the office? Take time to let this question really sink in.

And finally, we take a jump in time: how is it after 5 years or 1300 working days? Think about the decisive changes your life undergoes in 5 years, e.g. partnership(s), friendships, children, house building, home ownership, and many more.

Could it be that developments and decisions in your private life were influenced by the mood you were in when you came home from the office?

Try to get a feeling about the extent to which the office environment constantly affects your life. How many positive impulses such as joy, love, inspiration and motivation have you taken from your office environment into your private life? The extent to which you live your working life creatively is the extent to which your private life will also be creative.

On the other hand, a grey rainy weather day mood, gloomy atmosphere, unkindness, stress and de-motivation from the office also influence your private life and your decisions in a negative way.



Abb. 4. The extent to which you live your working life creatively is the extent to which your private life will also be creative.

As a contrast we only have to imagine a place in nature. Your favorite place, for example. In the woods, park, meadow, by the sea or in your garden – with lots of colorful flowers, magnificent trees, twittering birds and other animals, river or sea, sun, beach, mountains etc. How does it feel? Does it not lift your mood?

What a contrast to a “modern” colorless and shapeless office.

The diverse, gloriously colorful nature is what our ancestors experienced every single day for many millions of years. Logically, these archetypical formative human experiences are still with us modern people. Reactions and reflexes to environmental factors are defined by these archetypical experiences in nature.

At the same time the diversity of nature is the source of inspiration for our creativity and the requirement for a happy life.

What an insult concerning our basic needs then is a technical standardized office.



Abb. 5. We are used to living in a lush gloriously colourful environment based on archetypical experiences. At the same time the diversity of nature is the source of inspiration for the development of creative potentials.

We are not used to living in a monotonous artificial environment but in an environment which is lush and naturally diverse. This natural diversity in form and color is an important source of inspiration and a natural, archetypical need.

The negating of human needs inevitably leads to less productivity.

Architects, office designers and fitters should be aware of their responsibility. Their work influences the lives of the people who work in the office environments they have designed.

Consequently, in a figurative sense, you can say that not only is a neutral object designed or fitted, but that "life," in the sense of journeys through life, is designed in a positive or negative way.

That is the real measuring stick against which good architecture and good office design are judged. However, the client often imposes limits on the architects and designers. Unfortunately, cheaper fittings are frequently installed due to lack of awareness about the negative effects of an office design regarded as functionally satisfactory and due to the lack of empirical studies about increasing efficiency with vital optimized fittings.

We can say from experience that almost every larger Vital-Office office fitting is authentic and unique in many small details attached to the needs of people and organization. Almost each company or department is unique in some way or another and this is then reflected in a good vitally optimized office fitting.

Conclusions:

- Humans are used to nature's diversity and need this for stimulation, inspiration and creative self development.
- Usually the ordinary design of offices is depressing creative abilities.
- Office designers need to be aware of their responsibility influencing people's lives.

1.2 Efficiency and Creativity

Each company, each entrepreneur, managing director, sector or department manager endeavours to be successful with his employees. Motivation techniques should ensure that all the employees, in a good mood, thinking positively and with a smile on their faces act better than the competitor. But what really is THE decisive factor for success?

The key word here is creativity. Creativity is important for a healthy office and a healthy organization. Creative employees who contribute intuitively respond better and faster to challenges in their jobs and are therefore more successful.

By contrast, employees who in a virtuously perfect manner act based only what they are told are less able to react to changes and ultimately fail in attempts to compete. Virtuosity is the opposite of creativity. There are other important factors beyond how thoroughly you have learned your job. Your authentic and self-generated expression is important.

When I started with the topic of creativity in my seminars in 2003 the concept was totally unknown in the office sector. The straight track prevailed in the office. Reduction to rectangular tables with 4-foot frames was the non plus ultra of the modern ergonomic office environment. The simplest design was in vogue. Vital factors by means of items such as round furniture were only smiled at. Likewise, diversity in form or color was absolutely frowned upon.

In view of the economic crisis at the time general uncertainty developed about future living conditions. Many jobs which even years previously were regarded as absolutely secure were now suddenly no longer safe. The idea was that this uncertainty could only be met by reduction to minimal forms and colors in the surroundings at home and in the workplace. Otherwise, people would virtually go mad. If at home everything is round and colorful, as in nature, and, at the same time, proven model concepts of living are no longer certain, where should you find security? Back to an earlier proven model concept would not be so bad after all. Therefore, everything became simple, monotonous, sharp-edged and angular. Like in grandfather's day. Order ruled. And is order, just like nature, round and colorful? Um, no, it is sharp-edged and angular, white and black!?

Strange. Unlike our grandfathers, do we not see nature as the perfect system of order? Something is not quite right here.

I was lucky in 2003 to escape from the treadmill of stress during that summer of the century. My doctor sent me to a health resort, I took a step back in my job and suddenly I had a lot of time. At least, I had a lot of leisure time for my circumstances. To arrive home in the afternoon at 4 or 5 was already something new. However, then the problem was, what am I going to do now? It was still too early for the television. Therefore, I went for long walks and long rides (mostly totally alone) nearby and further afield. Firstly, I had to learn how to do nothing and think nothing. That is, stop working and totally switch off. My horse at the time, "Carioka" helped me in this. She was actually very shy and easily startled. Each time, when I started to think again, mostly, of course, about current business matters, somehow or other Carioka would notice. Subsequently, I understand what happened. A horse forms a certain partnership with its rider. Since the rider usually likes to say where he wants to ride to, he must be the boss of the horse. As an entrepreneur we usually understand this. However, you then easily forget that the horse expects a certain attention from its boss. Just like with the leading stallion, the horse expects the boss "to pay attention". That is, recognizes possible dangers in good time and warns and protects the horse. This is the case if you are properly "taking notice while you are absolutely present in the present moment". Then, weird, you also have eyes in the back of your head. However, you cannot think at the same time, otherwise, it is all up with paying attention. Thoroughbred horses are so sensitive that they are aware if the boss is no longer paying attention. It thinks that it has to be responsible for its own safety. You can already imagine what happens.

At the next opportunity the horse does a jump. There was something on the right side, after all. Sorry, only a bird. You are lucky to still be on the horse. Therefore I learned quickly how to switch off properly, and even more important, to really pay attention and to be absolutely present while riding, at work and in my private live.



Abb. 6. Firstly, I had to learn again how to do nothing and think nothing.

In this situation, you are also very receptive to intuitive thoughts. During this time I asked myself why it is worth working and arrived at the subject of creativity in an intuitive way..

Virtuosity is the opposite of creativity.

If you act virtuously you do not need to think anything new. You simply do what you have learnt. Something which has been learnt, will be performed in a well practised way, in accordance with the situation and the context. At the same time, depending on ability, a perfect performance will be provided. At a piano concert you do not want the pianist to play different notes from what the composer has written. With companies this also applies in different departments: at the conveyor belt and in the accounts department strict rules are applied and the virtuous ability and long-term reliability of the individual are especially in demand. However, these kinds of activities are not especially constructive for the employee.

The one-sided limited occupation and the blocking of all the employee's own creative initiatives lead to dullness and triviality in the quality of life.

Therefore, it does not depend so much on how well something was learnt (virtuosity). Authentic – individual – expression (creativity) is more important. Only through such authentic expression, borne from the inner self, can other people be reached on a subtle level of human interconnection (social intelligence). This expression is required

to get true feedback and to identify your present reality, and this is the precondition for effective intuition.

Efficiency is different from productivity, which is achieved only through completing specific tasks. The industrious working away at specific tasks is rarely efficient! Efficiency means "to hit the mark at the right time" which simply is intuition based on present reality – CREATIVITY!

To be creative means to create something in your own way. To behave creatively means to express oneself in a non-standard way. The opposite of creativity is virtuosity. The impetus comes from within. The expression is on the outside.

Each person can be creative. Creativity is a natural characteristic the expression of which is more or less supported, moderated or suppressed by rules, social standards of behavior and education.

Imagine children playing with building blocks. The children are happy and are laughing as only young children can. The bricks have been stacked haphazardly. But the children are having fun.

Then, usually, something happens which has a defining influence on the children in the future. An adult arrives and sees that the wall is not straight. The adult joins the children and explains to them: "What you have made is really great. I will show you how to do it properly".

...show you how to do it properly.

– Please let this sentence really die on your tongue. Do you remember what it was like for you. How many nice adults instructed you in this way but then brought you right back down. How many times did it hurt? How much pleasure was lost?

This is how we learnt to behave in conformity with the rules and to survive in society. But what happened to our creativity? Our harmless joy? Have we retained a small amount of freedom with which we can express ourselves? Or have we become resigned inside.



Abb. 7. Creativity requires space for one's own authentic way.

Can you remember which of your behaviors result from what you have been told and which of your behaviors you learned and defined on your own? to some extent we all have to learn from others how to behave, but if you rely on others to perfect your performance, nurture your intelligence and develop your talents in life, you are virtually dead. Life is creativity. Creativity is like an idea, a spark which shows a divine space. Creativity is born from presence - being here and now. Creativity is stimulated through inspiration.

Strangely, in terms of origin, creativity has nothing to do with competition and comparison of performance. It is not about getting one's "kick" or a tiny bit of happiness from being better, bigger or faster. Instead specifically developing yourself and making yourself stand out with respect to others shows a lack of your own creativity.

The individual authentic way is unique. For this reason there cannot be any competition. There can only be competition where it is a question of copying a specific way. Putting a mask on is simpler in so far as you know the role to be played and know how this is regarded and accepted by others. Anyone who really wants to be creative, must first jump over his own shadow and set himself free from the opinion of others.

High regard for the “individual authentic way of being” must come from each individual himself. Without one’s own acceptance, high regards and commendations by third parties result in a mask or a role again becoming manifest.

To live creativity means authentic thinking and acting, free from prejudices and educational definitions. In our society education is unfortunately characterized by culpability. Thought and action which do not conform are declared wrong. Here, we are not referring to really culpable acts, such as murder and other crimes which hurt other people, but the easily suggestible sense of duty such as: “If you do not help me, then you are to blame ...” or “If you do that or do not do that it will be your fault that ...” or “if you do not do what I say, you will be to blame”. We all have plenty of these kinds of examples. What do they do? They serve or served to exercise control. They hold us back, prevent us from experiencing things and trying them out. Consequently they hamper our creativity.

It is just the same within the company. “If you do that differently from the successful, previous employee, it will be your fault if it does not work.” This is not motivation. We all make mistakes. In order to continue to be creative, it is more beneficial, if we can forgive. It would take a very long time, if we wanted to resolve all the many guilt models from our upbringing during a psychological consultation. It is much easier to forgive oneself, and, of course, others as well. This is quicker and we are free to look forward again and live our lives in a creative way, to experience the world and its possibilities in a creative way, to cry and laugh in an authentic way, experience more quality of life at the same time and be more efficient in our work.

1.3 Creative workplace design

I have made it my job to develop integral creative solutions for the office environment, to offer companies more efficiency and people a better quality of life. Therefore I founded the brand, Vital-Office®.

I am convinced:

- That companies with committed and creative employees are better.
- That committed and creative employees enjoy work.

What is this like in departments such as Sales, Development, Buying. Nowadays, is it not true that a faster ability to adjust to changing factors is an important factor for success? Is not everything done to motivate the employees? Motivate with what aim? To work faster? Or to have more innovation, team spirit and communication in their department? In the end only more creativity and the accompanying efficiency are required.

- Your job can be a part of life with high quality for you.



Abb. 8. committed and creative employees enjoy work.

Creativity comprises “creating” .. producing and organizing. There is no real difference between the inner forms of one’s self, a creative communication or the design of objects. Outside is expression – Inside is origin.

- Creativity is NOT virtuosity
- Creativity is NOT skillfulness
- Creativity is NOT the learned patterns of behavior
- Creativity is NOT envious
- Creativity is NOT offending
- Creativity is NOT dismissive
- Creativity is NOT thinking but being

But:

- *Creativity is your authentic way of expressing yourself*
- *Creativity is pleasure in life*
- *Creativity is living in the now*
- *Creativity is authenticity*
- *Creativity is life*
- *Creativity is communicative*
- *Creativity is happy*
- *Creativity is sympathetic*
- *Creativity is wealth of ideas, creative power, imagination, wealth of ideas, power to create.*

Creativity feeds on abundance and requires space for inspiration and perception.

Where do you have your best ideas? Where do you feel free, breathe deeply and where are you happy?



Abb. 9. A lush green landscape with lots of water, plants and game is perceived as paradise.

The answer is: In nature.

Obviously, most people have had this experience. Not in buildings but outside in nature, not at their desks but when jogging in the park, not at home in bed but on the sunbed in the garden or on the beach. Something happens there in interaction with nature which is different from in an artificial environment.

If we think about our archetypical experiences, this becomes more understandable. Our ancestors lived and developed in nature for many thousands of years. First of all, certainly the fight for survival was on the agenda. For example, a monotonous desert with steep sharp-edged rocks was not especially attractive. Monotony and a

sharp-edged quality are therefore always regarded as dangerous and hostile to life.

In contrast, a lush green landscape with a lot of water and many plants and animals seems like a paradise. The grain grows faster and there is also enough game. You had enough to eat and could devote yourself to craft and many other occupations in a creative way in your spare time.

At the same time, the diversity of the paradisiacal nature is the source of inspiration for creative developments.

The consequence in our contemporary partly unconscious perception is: harmonic organic forms symbolise abundance, security and creative freedom. The unfolding of creativity in imagination and the power of expression is facilitated as a result.



Abb. 10. Harmonic organic forms symbolise abundance, security and creative freedom.

Even Rudolf Steiner came to the conclusion: "Through the round or rather, the organic forms, the visitor is more intensively connected to the nature which surrounds him ... However, you communicate with deeper levels of nature through the organic forms: .." ¹

On the other hand, too many straight lines in buildings and furnishings have a predetermined, controlling effect and obstruct individual attempts at creativity. In addition, the reduced, straight use of forms in comparison with the natural luxuriance and abundance is simply banal to our minds.

¹ Source: Rudolf Steiner "Wege zu einem neuen Baustil". [Ways to a new Style of Building].

Consider that we are used to dealing with the abundance and diversity of nature. It is not important to us that each leaf on the tree has a different unique shape and different color. Even our body is an example of diverse forms. If we simply look at our hands. What a use of forms! Or even our faces? Endless types of expression which do not ask too much of us. On the contrary, our brain only becomes a little warm from this challenge. Just like with my horse. It is only really warm after a few kilometers and becomes even faster than before, if it is allowed to run.

Scientists confirm that we only use a small fraction of our brain's capacity. It is therefore time to start to develop our creative potential and design our offices to be more lively, diverse, colorful, rounder and more flexible.

In contrast, what does a monotonous office environment defined by rectangular shapes achieve? The rectangular is such a simple form: 4 corners and 4 edges. What mental skills are required to count to 4? And what mental skills do you need for the definition of an arc or of a circle, the irrational number π , an ellipse or a Cassini curve? The differences are immense and yet, we humans have the ability for this.

In this sense it is an insult to our true mental skills. The 4-cornered banality has a degenerative effect. Just like our muscles deteriorate if we do not use them, our brain degenerates and also our ability to be creative.

At the same time, mental skills are a unique gift from God to man. It is the divine impetus (breath of God) which distinguishes us from animals. In this sense, the artist, Friedensreich Hundertwasser, has already described the straight line as virtually "blasphemy". The straight line is simply too banal in comparison with a round shape. This is the reason it leaves the gift of God unused. (Compare also the parable of the son who buries his share of the inheritance / Bible)

Hundertwasser dealt with the subject of creativity in another context. In post-war Vienna housing was scarce and the house rules were very restrictive and obstructed every creative initiative of the tenants. Based on this context, Hundertwasser demanded that each person should have the right to plant a tree. This is why we find trees on the balconies and roofs of the houses in some of his paintings. In addition, he demanded that each person be allowed to build throughout his life. He demanded that each person should be allowed to extend and alter his surroundings,

that is, his home. This was to preserve mental skills by means of creative activity. In this sense, Friedensreich Hundertwasser described the straight line as ungodly because it does not occur in nature. He demanded in his "Verschimmelungsmanifest"² that the straight line should be prohibited. An extract from this manifesto:

- "Man must again make use of his critical and creative function which he has lost and without which he ceases to exist as a man!"
- The use of the rule in architecture is criminal, as is easy to prove; the rule must be seen as the instrument for the decline of the architectonic Trinity.
- You should be prohibited from carrying a straight line on you, at least, morally."

(Source: <http://www1.kunsthawien.com/deutsch/philosophie.htm>)

"Draw a line" is what you say when you want something finished. It is about division. The straight line divides into 2 parts. Left and right or above and below.

A rectangle is generally associated with restriction. Restriction in all four directions of the compass. By means of this restriction, a fault can be produced outside, which, in turn, serves to exercise control. This is the basic requirement for power and control over others.

On the other hand, the rectangular shape is used for the creation of structure in architecture. Town development, building and room construction. We feel safer in a rectangular room than in a round one. We can make conscious use of the strong restriction function of the rectangular shape. Both in a good and in a bad way.

2 <http://www1.kunsthawien.com/deutsch/philosophie.htm>

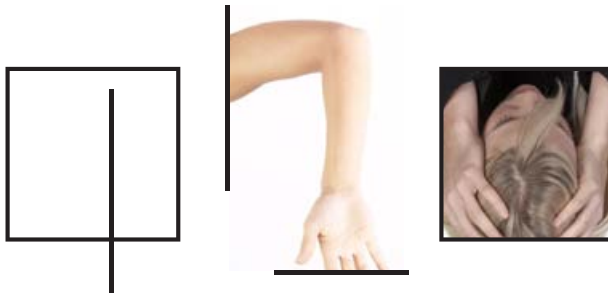


Abb. 11. Straight lines are associated with restriction and suppress individual attempts of creativity.

Round shapes do not have edges which you can hold on to. Or do they? None or endless numbers of edges?

Who remembers how we drew the first parabola in school? The calculated points were joined with a line. The more points you calculated, the rounder the curve became. You can say that a round form simply has many points or edges. If you think logically about it, this is an endless number of edges. So many corners also suggest many more possibilities. Possibilities to behave in a flexible way. If one edge does not work, I will take the next one, etc. Theoretically, the more possibilities there are, then logically, the more difficult it is to exercise control.

Round forms stand for more possibilities in terms of development and flexibility as well as more freedom – the basic requirement for creativity. We can therefore use round forms in a conscious way to increase wellbeing, creativity and efficiency in the office.

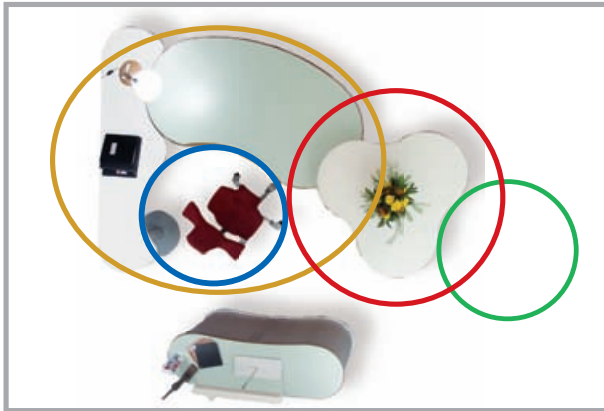


Abb. 12. Round forms stand for more possibilities in terms of development and flexibility, as well as more creative freedom – the basic requirement for creativity.

An efficient, vitalizing, creativity-promoting office environment can be created within a structure by means of, for example, round desks combined with structure-giving rectangular forms, which are usually present in the building and room. On the other hand, there are still an endless number of possibilities of intelligent variation, with round forms producing structures by means of arrangement within a pattern, and many more.

When we work with round shapes, we are dealing with an endless number of possibilities. From the design of the individual desk and additional components, through to the arrangement of the components using any angle and grouping based on geometric patterns. No limits are set on the complexity. Frequently, this kind of intelligent structure in the office furnishings is not perceived consciously, immediately. You recognize the pattern and the geometry on which it is based unconsciously with your mental skills. You simply feel good and possibly somewhat inspired. After all, one part of your brain which otherwise perhaps remains unused, is being activated.

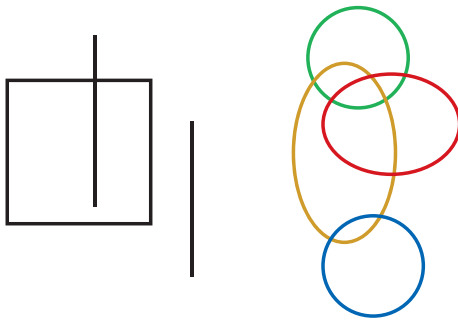


Abb. 13. Linear shapes symbolize regulations / Round shapes symbolize diversity.

Conclusions:

- Creativity needs stimulation and inspiration.
- The stimulating source is the diversity of nature.
- The biological abundance is the benchmark for stimulating design.
- Linear shapes symbolize regulations, directions, limitations, shortage and the resulting power and authority.
- Round shapes symbolize diversity, abundance, infinite possibilities and freedom.

1.4 Intelligent design and geometry

Humans unconsciously recognize geometric relationships and thereby the higher order of shape.

Man unconsciously recognizes geometric relationships and as a result also the higher order in design.

We therefore experience shapes based on a geometric, mathematical relation as aesthetically beneficial and mentally constructive. By definition, this is already the case with rectangular forms. Even if the geometry is really simple.

With round forms it is somewhat more differentiated and difficult.

Organic forms, for example, desks, can simply be produced by rounding off all the edges a little. As it were, softening. A similar thing happens to a sharp-edged stone if it is rolled down the stream or river long enough. The result is a beautiful, rounded pebble. We can no longer injure ourselves so easily on it as with the sharp-edged stone. This is why we are more comfortable with the softened stone. It has a harmless, organic form. The potato is like this, beautifully, organically round and it inspires our organism on the level of the stomach. On the level that deals with our essential needs of protection from injuries and consumption of food.

This is different with a geometric form, for example, a circle or an ellipse. Since we recognise the complex form unconsciously, certain areas in our brain and our system are activated which must be attributed to a higher spiritual order.

Organic forms stimulate and are esthetically pleasing. But organic forms can imply a higher intelligence by means of geometric forms, which have their roots in mathematics. For example, an ellipsis is a curve where the sum of the distances from any point on the curve's two center points is constant. A "Cassini curve" is a family of curves in which the loci of each curve satisfy the condition that the product of the distances to each focus point is exactly a constant. The lemniscates (the horizontal eight, the symbol of infinity) is a special form of the "Cassini curve."

Mathematically these forms are very complicated, but humans are unconsciously aware of such relations. Who can create complex geometry? Not animals, not plants and not stones. Only the highest spirit in the creation can do this. This ability is a divine gift. If you apply more effort in geometry people can feel it.

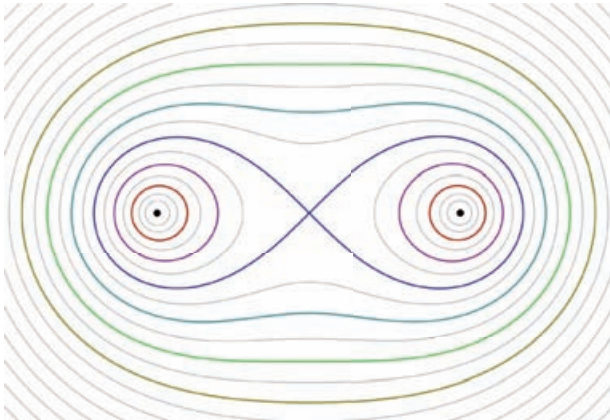


Abb. 14. Geometries based on Mathematical formulas and relations increase our capacity for thinking unconsciously.

Our mind perceives such relations unconsciously⁴ and is proverbially glad to have discovered something “intelligent” in its surroundings.

It is especially important, when dealing with organic forms, to use clearly formulated geometry, to ensure the higher approach of intelligence at work.

Unlike with the rectangular table for which the proportion is the only characteristic for a pleasing, inspiring geometry, with round forms we have an endless number of possibilities. It is all the more difficult to design a round desk form based on a harmoniously inspiring geometry.

Since we perceive the effect of a form unconsciously, just like the effect of a color, this also has a specific effect on us. This can vary a great deal. Just like a mix of colors produces a mix of feelings, emotions and tendencies in our way of thinking and influences us in our decision-making, the form has the same effect.

3 (Urheber Zorgit / Quelle: http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Line_of_Cassini.svg)

4 Source: Rudolf Steiner “Wege zu einem neuen Baustil”.

The logical analysis of the effect of round forms is very difficult and never complete. A round-shaped desk is a combination of several geometries. Simple changes in size and changes of individual radii change the relations within the form and result in a totally different effect.

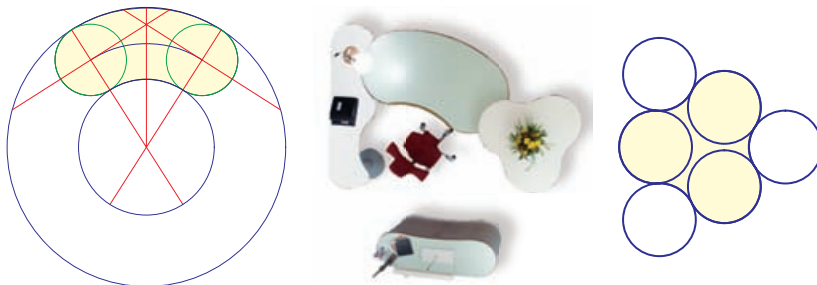


Abb. 15. The circle itself is the most perfect geometric form and symbolizes the spiritual origin.

The harmoniously, inspiring effect and effectiveness of the few very costly developed Vital-Office forms have already been proven in practice for more than 10 years. With very good feedback from the employees working at them.

In practice everyone can sense the difference. Just like you perceive the quality of a car by lots of small details, it is the same with a desk. If you have the opportunity, I would like to recommend you to test different desks with all five senses. In my more than 20-year employment in the sector I tried out almost each form long term and experienced the differences. Of course, everyone must have their own experiences, for which reason we frequently take 2 steps forwards and one step back.

Spiral-shaped sequences of numbers, for example, the Fibonacci sequence, which reproduces the golden cut, are likewise suitable aids for building geometric relations into a design, such as the well-known Root 2 or Root 3 proportions. Other geometric aids are, for example, the construction of the flower of life and the proportions and forms it contains.

The circle itself is the most perfect geometric form and symbolizes the spiritual origin (heaven). The square symbolizes expression in matter (earth).

Conclusions:

- Round shapes, based on a geometric relationship, symbolize a higher (intelligent) order within the biological diversity.

1.5 Security and Privacy

Security and Privacy are preconditions for creativity and true communication and social intelligence. Here we differentiate:

- Security through backing = back coverage
- Security through protection = shield in front
- Security through command = overview of space
- Personal territory = privacy = intimate space



Abb. 16. In the design of the office first we must meet the essential needs for security and privacy, before we are able to think about other civilised forms of cooperative creative communication and cooperations.

Actually it is quite simple: Above all else, everything you need and everything for which our ancestors fought, is a safe place to live.

Just as our ancestors looked for a place with good protection from behind, you are looking for the same in our modern world. This need is archetypically conditioned. Consequently, a secure workplace with rear protection is the requirement for all further development and exposition of your possible work performance.

We also feel better at the front, if we are not completely exposed. A shield provided the primeval hunter with protection, just like the castle for the knight. The most minimal protection is, for example, a loin-cloth. It is just the same in the office: In reception, in line with a castle, somewhat more protection is required. Speakers like to have a lectern (shield). In a group office employees are happy with a modesty panel.

Your preference for your own intimate space is somewhat more differentiated. The private sphere is more than the aforementioned security. It also implies a safe space for your individuality. Everyone knows how unpleasant it is if someone else stands too close behind you or next to you.

My friend, Manfred Ross⁵, liked to use the figure of the Neanderthal man in his presentations, to make these kind of effects easily comprehensible. In the same way, I have got into the habit of using the Neanderthal man in my seminars as a representative of our collected experiences of humanity, archetypes and psychological programming.

Therefore, imagine that there is a Neanderthal man in you who is constantly checking whether everything is safe. After all, the Neanderthal man lived in a dangerous environment. A sabre-toothed tiger could come creeping up quietly from behind; for this reason the Neanderthal man preferred to have a solid wall behind him. Exposure in a group of more or less strange people who did not belong to one's own family also meant increased attention. It is better to have the club in your hand in case someone stupid comes along.

It rapidly becomes clear that no constructive, friendly interaction is possible, as long as the Neanderthal man has the club at the ready, because he does not yet feel 100% safe. In the design of the office, we must first meet the essential need for security, before we are able to think about other civilised forms of creative cooperation.

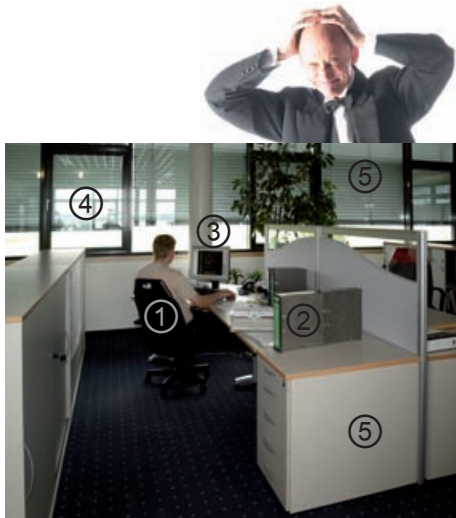


Abb. 17. This is how stress is produced: ① No backing
② Colleagues are kept at distance ③ Glare: dark
monitor in front of light window ④ Reflections and
irritations in the window ⑤ Gloomy grey surroundings
produce rainy weather mood.

In practice, we can observe, if you have no security and no defined private sphere in your workplace, (for example, due to unsuitable furniture and a bad room concept), that you then unconsciously create alternative private areas in your workplace unconsciously.

For example, including by your behavior towards other employees. You behave, for example, more aggressively, more affectedly, more evasively, more threateningly, in a more anti-social way, more defensively, less communicatively, more arrogantly and more reservedly in order to keep the others at a (safe) distance.

Certainly, all forms of behavior which do not conform with your company's culture and definitely counteract the company's targets in terms of efficiency and competitiveness. In addition, this kind of negative behavior leads in the long term to personal suffering and health problems.

On the other hand, an ergonomic design in conformity with the premises of security and a privacy sphere promotes friendly, cooperative and constructive communication, social intelligence for new ideas and better competitiveness. At the same time, it facilitates a better quality of life.

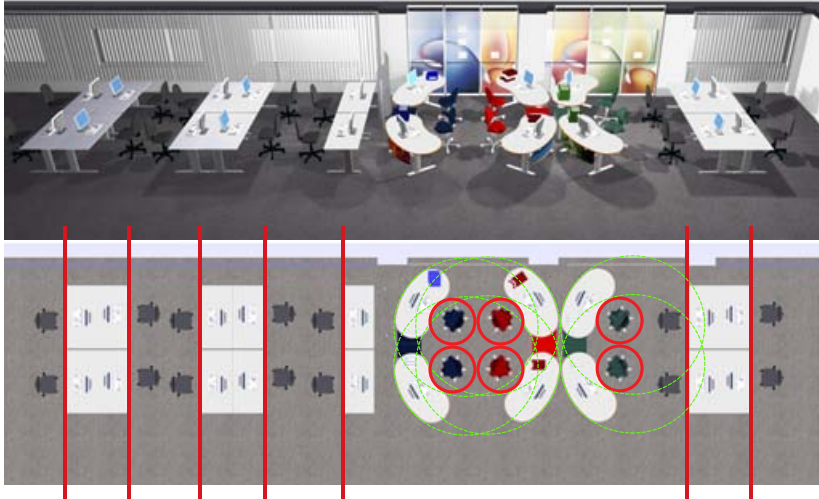


Abb. 18. : Unsocial unprotected workbenches against protected social group – boring gray against attractive colors. Vital-Office tables require less space and at the same time offer a maximum of usable desk space. At the same time, the tables can be arranged in such a way that ergonomic and sociological factors can be taken into account in an optimal way and a lively efficient organization structure develops.

When you feel safe, your Neanderthal man has packed his club and lain down to sleep, then you can behave freely and naturally. You can direct all your strength and energy at pleasant things. You can talk casually with your colleagues.

You are safe and do not have to defend yourself.

You can also talk about things, which, to be on the safe side you would have otherwise kept to yourself. Because it could be that one colleague tries to undermine your position and that it is better to keep the technical information to ourselves to strengthen your position. No, we have no need to fight and we do not have to defend ourselves. We are safe. We have a safe workplace, with backing and protection as well as a more intimate space for our privacy.

On the basis of this security we are unconsciously more friendly and helpful to our colleagues. Our colleagues feel the same. They, likewise, have a safe place and are more friendly, co-operative and helpful.

We are bringing about a change. We are more successful and we enjoy our work. We enjoy working together and appreciate our successes and we will take this energy with us into our private lives

The scenario described above functions in an optimal way if the company culture, company vitalizing processes, employee management and office design are co-ordinated with each other. In our calculation, the unconscious effect of a Vital Office must not be underestimated.

It is known from depth psychology that man is mainly controlled by his subconscious. There are differences caused by type. This leads to managers, who are more reason orientated, making decisions about employees, who are more emotionally driven. The result is appropriate. However, it can also turn out differently, if we no longer negate the essential needs but use them consciously.

Conclusions:

- Security and Privacy are preconditions for creativity, true honest communication and social intelligence.

2. Colors

2.1 Colors - the easiest way to create a good mood

If we look at the cycle of the seasons, spring, summer, autumn and winter, it quickly becomes clear which season produces the best mood. When, after the short, grey days of rain, slush or snow of the winter, the days at last become longer, the sun shines and the landscape becomes colorful, then your mood improves as well.

The colors on a sunny day are absolutely clear and bright. In contrast, on a gloomy rainy day in winter all colors appear in a grey shade. In northern countries (for example, Scandinavia), where the winters last several months, people often become depressed, due to the bad mood produced by the grey landscape over such a long period of time. In contrast, we admire the joie de vivre of the people in the more southern countries, where the sun shines more. The gloriously colorful landscape produces a good mood.

In view of this simple logic, is it not almost perverse when offices are installed with furnishings in all possible shades of grey? Different shades of grey on walls, ceilings and furniture in the office do not only affect the mind but also creativity, focus and productivity. This affects all the employees from the operative employee through to the managing director.

Anyone who has tried to present a color concept to a group of decision-makers (owner, managing director, secretaries and other involved parties), knows how difficult it is. It is impossible to conform with and fulfil the tastes and ideas of each individual. It is not surprising, if interior designers and architects are happy to avoid this debacle and simply take the lowest common denominator. Logically, that is red, um... blue, also not? .. let's take grey then.

To make it easier for the parties involved and decision-makers to decide about colors, in the following we show different systems which help to make the topic comprehensible in analytical terms.

2.2 The effect of colors

The general effect of colors according to modern color psychology is:

- Yellow colors have a brilliant, releasing, extroverted, alleviating and communicative effect.
- Orange colors are invigorating, exciting, anti-depressive, affirming, celebratory and joyous.
- Red colors are vital, active, expanding, resolving blockages, tremendously stimulating, accelerating, attractive, powerful and loud.
- Violet colors have a deepening, muting, relaxing, mysterious, depressing and introverted effect.
- Blue colours are broad, calm, concentrating, conciliatory and peaceful.
- Green colors are passive, mediating, conciliating, soothing, regenerating, protecting and hoping.
- Ochre and brown shades have a stabilizing effect and are connected to the earth.
- Achromatic colors (black, grey and white) have the effect of restricting life forces and are formalizing.

As always, each extreme endangers health in the long term. It is therefore not the best solution to paint over large areas of the office walls with striking and garish colors. It is better to work with less saturated colors, for example, paler shades of color and pastel colors. These are more pleasing to the eye and you are more comfortable. In addition, they reflect the light better and bring more brightness and natural light into the room. In contrast, dark, saturated colors “swallow” the light and more artificial lighting must be used. It is easily understandable that a dark room is less inviting than a light room.



Abb. 19. :Offices in light colors with different emphases in accordance with the 5 Feng Shui Elements – water, wood, fire, earth and metal.

2.2.1 Colors in nature

To ensure the creation of a harmonious room atmosphere, for the color combination we can orientate ourselves by nature. Which colors cover a large area, which colors only occur at certain points, which ones are mostly striking and which ones are pastel-like gentle during the course of the year?

- The color red is very popular. However, with its quality of being tremendously stimulating and activating, is it particularly suitable in offices in which business success is of top priority. Not for nothing are the board of director areas usually fitted with reddish, Swiss pear wood. If you look at nature, you mostly find red in small doses at certain points, for example, blossom, fruits, fungi, plumage of songbirds and blood. The latter can be associated in a positive way with our archetypical hunter as a successful experience and only in second place with the negative aspect of war and suffering. However, in the plant section as well, for example, with blossom, fruits and fungi, red has the two aspects “good food” or “poisonous”. In any case, we can establish that the color red only occurs in nature at certain points, brilliant and in full saturated color.
- Blue sky and blue water are mostly present over large areas, however, only at certain times of day in full saturated color. We actually experience a transition from white (light) to full shade blue through to black (darkness). In principle, a blue floor is a bit strange. Who can walk over water?

- Yellow is the most popular color. In nature, the sun is yellow and therefore yellow suggests vitality.
- We find ochre through to brown as naked earth. We still like a natural stamped clay or wood floor. Without green vegetation the earth is also dust and mud, depending on the season, not always an inviting environment.
- Our ancestors found grey rock above the tree level, that is in the anti-life area. Nowadays, far too often, unfortunately, we find grey in our towns, streets and offices.
- We find green everywhere where there is water (blue), sun (yellow) and earth (ochre). Lush plant growth also tells us: Here is a good environment where we will find enough to eat and where we will be able to develop.

The more we think about the colors in nature, the more we realize that several colors work together in a harmonious situation as a whole. There is virtually an archetypical system which determines the effect of the colors only in combination with other colors.

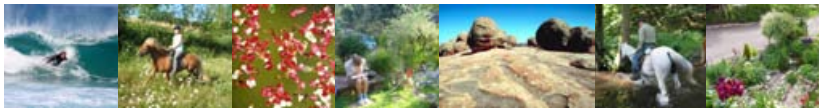


Abb. 20. Colors in nature

2.2.2 Yin-Yang colors

Yin and Yang best symbolise the duality of our reality – that is, its contrasts, for example, light and dark, hot and cold. This system can also be applied to colors. Light is attributed to the male, active (Yang) and dark to the female more passive components (Yin). Likewise, warm shades (red) are more full of energy and therefore Yang, whereas cool shades (blue) on the other hand are Yin.

The Yin-Yang principle assumes that Yin and Yang should always be balanced. Otherwise, it leads to stagnation and inaction. When both components are represented equally, we have harmonious balance in which continuous development is possible.

In this sense, we also find rules here for harmonious color design.

Another aspect is also interesting. If you look from the dark into light you see yellow and red. In reverse, if you look into the dark from a light standpoint you see blue to violet.

- *Yang: darkness in front of light creates yellow, intensified darkness, red*
- *Yin: light in front of darkness creates blue, with intensified darkness through to violet*



Abb. 21. : Only when Yin and Yang are balanced is movement and therefore development possible.

2.2.3 The 5 elements cycle

The 5 elements cycle represents the whole spectrum of qualities of life. In traditional Chinese medicine the 5 elements are attributed to organs and life systems as well as the associated emotions.

Some examples: ⁶

⁶ Source for the following table: Wikipedia

Wood	Fire	Earth	Metal	Water
Liver	Heart	Spleen	Lung	Kidneys
Eye	Tongue	Mouth	Nose	Ear
Tendon	Blood vessels	Muscles	Skind and Hair	Bones
Seeing	Speaking	Tasting	Smelling	Hearing
Anger	Joy	Desire	Grief	Fear
Shriek	Laughter	Singing	Crying	Sighing

If someone wants to be healthy, everything should be in flux and well coordinated. Nothing must hinder the flow and the changes. The 5 elements are directly linked with our health. By creating harmonious analogies in form and color in our environment, we create catalysts for ourselves, which promote our mental and physical health through transformation (alteration, remodelling).

Below are more correlations with the 5 elements.

Wood	Fire	Earth	Metal	Water
Birth and Growth	Education and de-velopment	Ripeness and Transition	After-ripening and Harvest	Gathering and Enjoyment of Harvest
East	South	Middle	West	North
Sour	Bitter	Sweet	Sharp	Salty
Spring	Summer	Midsummer	Autumn	Winter
Morning	Midday	Afternoon	Evening	Night
Wind	Heat	Humidity	Dryness	Cold

We can see that it is a complex integral system which covers all areas of life. Consequently, the correlations in form and color can be specifically used in office design:

Wood	Fire	Earth	Metal	Water
Cylinder vertical standing rectangle	Pyramids, Triangle	Square, horizontal cuboid	Circle, Ring, Cupola	Waves, Irregular, recurring wave- shaped forms
Green	Red	Ochre	Silver	Blue

It is important that we understand that one element is always dependent on other elements.

The Chinese tradition of Feng Shui provides us with quite simple analogies with which we can work:

- Water (blue) nourishes the wood (green) – wood needs water to grow.
- Wood (green) nourishes the fire (red) – the fire burns with wood.
- Fire (red) nourishes the earth (ochre) – fire produces ash, dust, earth.
- The earth (ochre) produces the metal (silver)
- The metal (silver) enriches the water (blue) – mineral water

Accordingly, a color combination in the sequence of the “feeding” cycle is always harmonious.

An example: If you have a red occasional table and a blue carpet, this is not appropriate. The water would put the fire out. However, if you design it to introduce a green component, e.g. by having green chairs around the occasional table, then the cycle is re-established.



Abb. 22. : The correct combination of the elements leads to more harmony. [Blue, Green, Red]

Consider that we spend a long time in office environments and therefore need balance and harmony instead of monotony. It is therefore, important that in long term office environments all 5 elements are always represented as a source of inspiration and stimulation. In form and color thus representing the full cycle of the qualities of life.

In Feng Shui the concept of the 5 Elements is well known. This concept is usually used to foster or control certain energies (of people, rooms, buildings and lands). But mainly this concept represents a full circle of qualities – a more versatile life circle than the Yin Yang circle.

Each element represents different qualities, such as: spring, summer, autumn, winter; or joy, love, pride, sorrow, forgiveness, abundance, attachment and detachment. You feel complete if all elements are represented in a room. If some are missing you feel strengthened according to the qualities represented by the elements, which are present. However, you miss the absent qualities and on the whole feel incomplete.

Often, fashionable interior designs have a tendency to be one-sided. Feng Shui may function as a corrective instrument by ensuring that all elements in color and form are represented to stimulate all of life's qualities. How a designer uses the proportions and combination of each element in the interior design will determine whether a design is good.

For example, we can fit colored furniture, as in this figure:

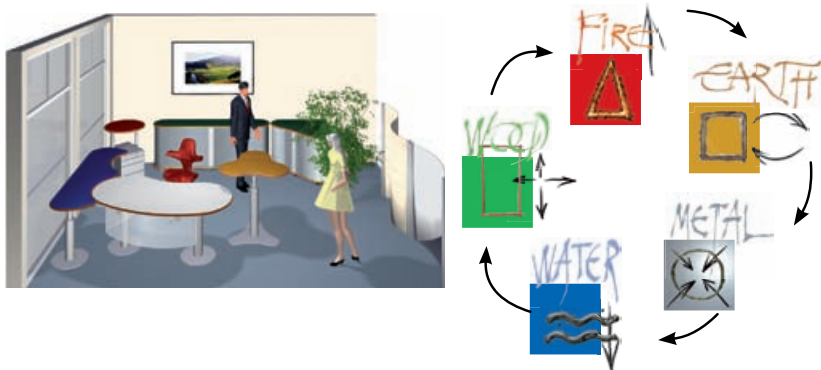


Abb. 23. The colors of the 5 elements in the office – representing the full circle of qualities.

Each item of furniture is in a color of the 5-element cycle and arranged in such a way that each item "supports" another:

- Desk in element metal (grey)
- Side table in element water (blue)
- Pedestal with lifting panel and office chair in element fire (red)
- Sideboards in element wood (green)
- And the adjustable stand-up table in element earth (ochre).

I know that some people will wrinkle their brows now and wonder whether this is serious enough for the Business World. It is not a kindergarten. After all, we are no longer children. We work hard, without pleasure and tremendously seriously. We are important in our position. When we really take firm decisions, things go well later.

Perhaps, just like that time in kindergarten? Do you still remember the laughing?

In our display we have a great deal of sample furniture in different colors. Many clients have decided individually on colored furniture and, long term, are very happy with it. In total we have a selection in more than 100 colors for furniture and chairs. New variations with bright or pastel shades are being continuously created by our designers in cooperation with our clients. There are numerous possibilities with regard to implementation and combination.

My thesis stands. However, in the implementation there are sufficient options, from relaxed colorful to finely serious, or even technically cool.

One more example with less saturated colors and 1 dominating element.



Abb. 24. The colors of the 5 elements in the office – representing the full circle of qualities

The elements are also attributed to directions. For this reason, many Feng Shui consultants want to attribute one element to entire rooms. Feng Shui is, of course, a complex system which will not be dealt with in detail here. In simplified terms, the room in the south element is fire and either red.. (for earth, which is fed by the element fire from the southerly direction) or green (for wood, which feeds the element fire from the southerly direction). The system a Feng Shui consultant chooses varies from school to school and situation. In our experience the first system predominates. That is, red shades in the south and blue shades in the north .. in accordance with the Baqua. Accordingly, workplaces and whole departments are divided in directions according to functions (Sales, Buying, Accounting).

In practice, now and again, we find that whole rooms are designed totally monotonously e.g. in red or blue: red walls, reddish carpet and furniture in reddish wood. Sometimes, this is too much. We therefore keep referring to our basic principle: all elements should be present in a room.

Elements which are not included by the combination of different wall colors, floor coverings, curtains, furniture and chairs, can be added in an easy way through pictures. This is a good option, because not all people like colored offices and a certain neutrality is aimed for in the furnishings.

There are many options to implement colors in office design:

- Wall pictures are probably the easiest and quickest way to add missing color elements.
- Walls are quickly painted. Different colors or nuances for adjoining walls also increase the room experience.
- Front screens (protection) on the desks can be designed individually. They are easy to replace.
- Curtains on the windows can be individually printed, sound-absorbing acoustic curtains, which are still transparent. As a result multi-use is achieved.
- Office chairs and visitor chairs are ideally suitable for powerful color accents.

- Meeting and occasional stand-up tables are likewise suitable for clear color accents, provided they are not too large.
- Not only do decorative plants in colored plant pots improve the indoor climate, they also bring color into the office.
- Desks are best left somewhat neutral in color: white, greyish white, beige or in a traditional wood shade.
- For sideboards and cupboards in principle the same applies as for tables. Covering panels or the doors of the sideboards or shelves are well suited to color accents.
- The floor covering is often uniform over an entire office floor. Therefore, it usually sets the basic shade and the color design for the furniture should then be coordinated with this base color.



Abb. 25. Sample planning



Abb. 26. Sample planning.

3. The 4 worlds

3.1 Layers of perception

Do not worry. We are not lifting off and looking for new worlds in space. However, there is another very important aspect here which affects us in an inspiring way. In this context, we must turn to Johann Wolfgang Goethe and Rudolf Steiner. The latter summarized the subject of human perception, based on Goethe, in the context of Anthroposophy⁷. Transferred to our subject "Inspiring Office Design", it enables other options to emerge, which appeal to man unconsciously, in an integral way. As a result, previously unexploited or not fully used potentials of the employees are activated.

Previously, we have discussed matter in different colors and forms. However, what about a plant? With plants, do we only perceive the color and the form of the leaves or the stem? Do we only see the color green? A heart-shaped leaf? Or only a round stem?

When we dissect the plant scientifically, in the end we only see the carbon which the plant is made up of. Purely in chemical terms, the differences are not too great between the plant, carbon or rock. Or is there more? And if yes, what?

What is the special quality in a plant in comparison with a rock? Or to put it differently: How differently do we perceive the mineral world in comparison with the plant world?

Think of a flower you see on a mountain hike. There are still isolated patches of snow even in June, the alp more brown than green, but a few flowers are already in bloom. How quickly creations have grown there from seeds, developed from the root and blossomed? And how quickly will they die again? At the moment, we see the beauty of the form and the color of the flowers. However, at the same time, we also see the development cycle.

⁷ Rudolf Steiner, *Das Geheimnis der Trinität. Zweiter Vortrag, [The Mystery of the Trinity. Second Lecture]* Dornach, 28. Juli 1922

In addition to purely physical, objective perception, we become aware of the plant on a totally different level. Here, we see a force at work, which, in the end, only expresses itself in form. The origin of the force is actually not visible in the material world. Nevertheless, we humans recognise and feel this original force.

Have you ever watched horses galloping? How fast and powerfully they move – how their muscles play under their coats? Have you seen the proud expression of the leading mare, her snorting, her behavior? And how lithely does a cat move?

We are confronted here with another new world which we perceive in a totally different way from the mineral or plant world.

Observe the feelings or entire orchestras of feeling this little images triggers in you about the animal world. I find it overwhelming. Simple colors and forms from the material world seem almost boringly banal. Nevertheless, the animal world is only possible in combination with the two other worlds. Yes, it comprises the mineral and plant world.

The worlds build on each other, and, in a certain way, represent the unity of human existence.

Can you add something to this? Definitely. Inspiration, intuition, creativity and awareness of the self. This brings us back to our subject. The human spiritual world builds on the mineral, plant and animal world and, at the same time, creates it. Look in the face of a laughing child, a proud craftsman who displays his work or, or, or ... all the many human forms of expression. Everything is contained here and yet it requires

- For expression the mineral world,
- For growth the plant world,
- For movement the animal world and

- For imagination, creation and abstraction the human spiritual world.



Abb. 27. A combination of the 4 worlds with the 5 elements in a patchwork graphic.

What does this mean now for the office environment design?

- Full development of human potentials requires the natural sources of inspiration from all the worlds on which the creative awareness of self are based: the mineral, plant, animal and human spiritual.
- The inspiration can be realized, as far as possible, in a natural form (plant in plant pot) or as a picture motif:

Conclusions:

Good observation is the requirement for good architecture and good interior design. I am no color expert, therefore, for concrete color design I employ architects, designers, graphic artists and artists to whom I give concrete tasks. It is important for me that a positive, healthy office is created which facilitates creativity.

4. Ergonomics

Our aim is to create living offices. For this we combine ergonomic office planning and furniture design, modern building biology and a traditional method of stimulating room design (Feng Shui).

4.1 What is ergonomics?

Everyone has heard of ergonomics - after all, the word is widely used in advertising. But to think of ergonomics simply as a way of designing more comfortable goods misses the point - there is much more to ergonomics.

The word ergonomics is perhaps a little intimidating, but behind it lies a very simple idea.

- Ergonomics is about 'fit': the fit between people, the things they do, the objects they use and the environments they work in.
- If a good fit is achieved, stress is reduced.
- We are more comfortable and can do things more quickly and easily, and we also make fewer mistakes.

The industrial science, Ergonomics, deals with the stresses and needs of working people. By recognizing and analyzing them the work environment can be better adjusted to the employees.

The main task of ergonomics is avoiding incorrect operations in the security-relevant areas like airplanes, cars and power plants, by adjusting the material for the work and the work environment to the person in an optimal way.

The preserving of the employee's health is a logical consequence.

4.2 Stress load model

The individual influences that act upon a person are certain characteristics of different stresses. This means that many small partial stresses caused by office appliances, work processes and the working environment have their effect on the worker. The sum of all these small partial stress loads constitutes the total stress load.

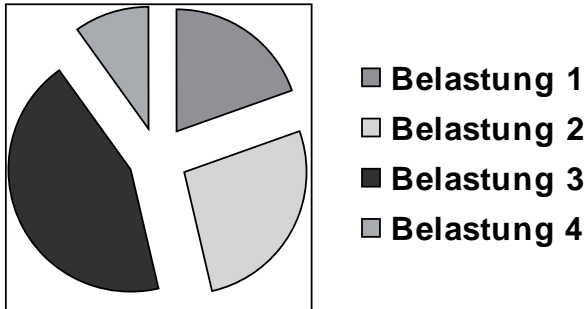


Abb. 28. Stress load model

Since the office environment usually does not have a partial stress that immediately causes significant harm to one's health, it is important to recognize the total stress load and this also over a longer period of time.

4.3 Ergonomic polarity

The human being in the workplace creates a contradiction for himself.

On one hand, humans need social interaction. To be seen and recognized (feedback) is a basic need that is required for healthy personality development. On the other hand, the average office worker wants the greatest amount of privacy possible. He would prefer having an enclosed office for the best possible concentration, and yet at the same time he wants optimum conditions for communicating with coworkers.

It is therefore not wisest to force a 100% solution for one side; rather, it is more effective to strive for a 60/40 solution.

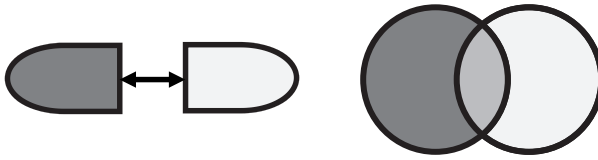


Abb. 29. The ergonomic polarity

4.4 Branches of Ergonomics

- Anthropometrics: to adapt and adjust items to the human body measurements. (form and size of items, adjustability, ..)
- Physiology: to adapt working conditions to human beings.(lighting, air-conditioning, noise, ..)
- Psychology: to create a comfortable environment.(colors, arrangements, flowers, ..)
- Sociological: covering the needs of group membership
- Informatics: design of Info-devices(see, hear, touch and feel ..)
- Organization: organization of work-place tasks.
- Security: prevention of injuries and long term health problems.

4.5 Hygiene, comfort and personal appreciation

The table-top edge is an important point from an ergonomic view-point. It shows us the value of our work quite directly. In accordance with the principle

“The quality of our surrounding work environment determines the quality of our work.”⁸

the table-top conveys to us how attentively and carefully we are required to do our job. For example, you have to be less attentive at a plastic edge than at a solid wood edge.

What is your personal appreciation - Is this equal to the amount your buying department is willing to spend for your desk?

Don't fool yourself. Exactly this appreciation and this quality is reflected on you every day you spend at your desk.

Since we are constantly in direct contact with the table edge, the shaping of the edge with respect to its hygienic qualities must be assessed. For instance, with traditional chipboard with plastic edge banding, the joint develops very rapidly into unhygienic dirty joint, in particular, because the adhesive used is water-soluble and therefore absorbs the sweat from the surface of the hand.

In practice, unfortunately, not enough attention is given to the shaping of the table top. We are in direct contact with the edge with our underarms all day, the whole week and finally the whole of our working lives.



Abb. 30. The quality of our surrounding work environment determines the quality of our work – thus the table-top conveys to us how attentively and carefully we are required to do our job.

High-quality table tops manufactured from homogenous material with smoothly profiled edges combine hygiene, comfort and appreciation.

Conclusions:

An ergonomic workplace design must be carried out conscientiously for each project and each office individually. At the same time, all branches of ergonomics must be taken care off.

You cannot talk yet about an ergonomic workplace simply by obtaining so-called ergonomic furniture and office chairs. The basic human needs in the psychological field, for example, privacy, communication and integration, are just as important and can only be taken care off through ergonomic professional and conscientious office planning.

5. Feng Shui

Nowadays, almost everyone is familiar with the concept of Feng Shui. Only almost everyone understands something different by it. Almost everyone has heard or learned something different.

What is behind it and how do we deal with it?

Different alternatively-orientated healing models and an integral way of thinking come together under the Feng Shui concept. It is therefore difficult to talk about Feng Shui as long as everyone understands something different by it.

The question is: "What is someone looking for, if he is interested in Feng Shui?" When you pursue this question we find 3 fundamental factors which build on each other:

- Health .. is the first aspiration, in particular if you are ill. In the company it is synonymously about the recovery of a company.
- Happiness .. is part of a development, which is about being in tune with the environment. In terms of the company, it is the proximity of the products and the employees to the market.
- Fulfilment .. is authentic (creative) existence. Here, too, the company pendant is a living company which develops successfully in its way and offers the market ever new creative products and solutions.

Feng Shui means Wind and Water. A simple association to perceive Feng Shui is:

- Wind moves Water
- Heaven moves the earth
- Spirit forms matter
- Thought manifests reality

Future is no place to go but something we create. The paths cannot be found but we can create them. And the activities doing this changes both, the maker and the target.

5.1 Room psychology - the Feng Shui principle

Like a health-orientated therapeutic measure Feng Shui acts on the employees in a psychological way through the room design. The Feng Shui principle can therefore be defined as follows:

- “We design our environment and the environment affects us!”
- “It acts on our feelings, our ideas and our vitality. “Emotional - associative .. consciously and unconsciously.

The resulting room design is a static photograph of our self. This in turn reacts and conveys to our psyche, for example, familiar and supposed security. The environment becomes a medium of self programming.

However, time is flowing as well as the changes in our society, in our thinking and the way in which we express ourselves.

It is therefore important to open yourself up to changes in order to take part creatively in life. In this sense the room design is an important medium, in a psychologically careful way, of bringing the usual security and the courage for changes harmoniously into line. A positive starting point is especially helpful for this and aids getting over so-called “blockades and complexes” faster than negative judgements.

The environment, a room, a building or a place in the landscape acts first on our feelings. We feel good, happy, agreeable, safe, joyous, or the reverse, disagreeable and anxious. When we are very active we do not necessarily become consciously aware of this feeling immediately. Nevertheless, this feeling acts associatively on our thoughts in accordance with its own laws. These change discreetly in a positive or negative direction. However, our thoughts are programme and determine our vitality. We have less strength with negative thoughts, we would prefer to withdraw. On the other hand, positive thoughts mobilize powers within us we didn't even know we had.

The aim of a Feng Shui training is to be more consciously aware of these interactions.

Your environment is your mental feeding ground from which the food that goes into your mind is extracted. Choose your environment with care, one that is positive, one that lifts you up and gives you wings to soar.

Carl Gustav Jung developed the scientific basis for this awareness in western culture. The definition of the conscious, the personal unconscious, and the archetypal area of the collective unconscious provides some insight into the way Feng Shui techniques work. According to Jung, the goal of the lifelong process of individuation is to incorporate as much of the unconscious into consciousness as possible.

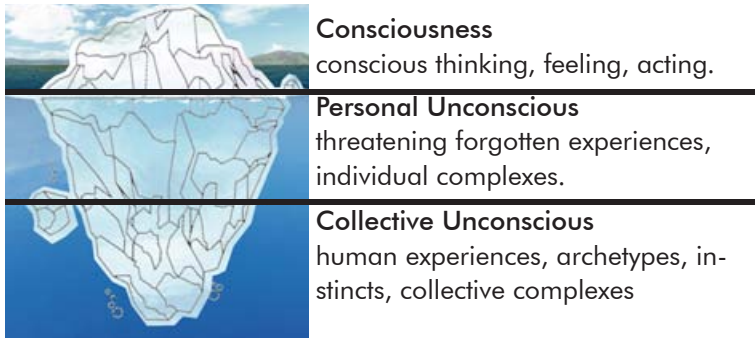


Abb. 31. : Sigmund Freud 1856-1939 and Carl Gustav Jung (1875-1961)

Considering the mass of the iceberg which is under water it is easily understandable which force drive us. The forces which can be mobilized by our consciousness are far to weak to overrule the immense forces of our unconscious. As a conclusion, it is advisable to deal with the principles of the unconscious in order to design a living ergonomic and efficient working environment.

5.2 Thinking pattern

Our own western very differentiating way of thinking differs enormously from the Far Eastern, more holistic view of things. Feng Shui as a traditional Chinese teaching can only be understood if you also adopt the way of thinking of Far Eastern culture.

The fundamental differences between the Western and Eastern way of thinking are:

- Transformation from inside to outside
- Balance instead of the ultimate truth
- Social responsibility before individual right
- Perception of the organism as a whole instead of the Cartesian division of spirit and matter

The division of psyche and body, and the further fragmentation of our self into separate areas (work/private life, church/sports field, feelings/self-presentation, etc.) lead to endless conflicts and confusion and frustration, metaphysically. The inner fragmentation of the Western way of thinking is also reflected in the outer - in a philosophy of life which starts from a multitude of separate objects and events which can be analyzed and used separately from each other by different groups.

However, the I (spirit) as an isolated observer, removed from outer material influences is an illusion. Spirit and matter are only different aspects of a universal unity.



Abb. 32. The Cartesian division of spirit and matter is an illusion.

5.3 Modern Physics

At the start of the 20th century with the findings of the Theory of Relativity and Quantum Physics, Modern Physics did away with the fixed Newton conception of the world. Matter is no longer regarded as static and passive, but as a dynamic active "bundle of energy" which is in a state of constant flux. The traditional concepts of time and space, of isolated objects, and of cause and effect have lost their importance.

In modern Physics the universe is a dynamic indivisible whole which always necessarily also includes the observer.

In his book "Das Tao der Physik", Fritjof Capra, physicist, system theoretician, philosopher and author, described very well the common ground of modern Physics and the Far Eastern way of thinking.

His work deals with the attempt to overcome the Cartesian division of spirit and body in a scientific way and to replace it with a holistic view of the world.

Given we are part of a whole, we are in constant exchange with our environment. Just like two oscillations which overlap with each other produce a new 3rd oscillation.

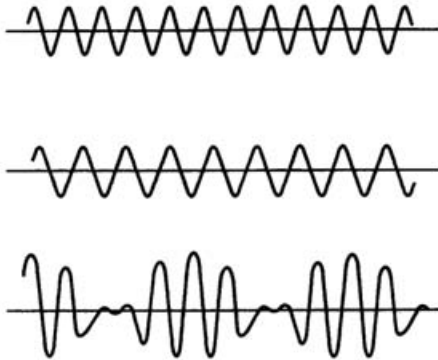


Abb. 33. Interaction of subject and object.

5.4 Yin and Yang

Yin and Yang is the basis of Feng Shui teaching. The polarity of Yin to Yang is, for example, subdivided in the trigrams and hexagrams in finer quality stages. The meanings and attributions are described in the old Chinese I Ging (Book of Changes).

The Yin Yang symbol, however, basically represents the dynamics of the eternal processes of change (birth - growth – maturity – blossom – seeds – death ...).

The constant flux (change), and the movement are best represented in the symbol. In Feng Shui it is not a question of producing a rigid (at times advantageous) situation, but about keeping the things in flux, in movement.

The aim is unity (harmony) and not one-sidedness! (one-sidedness over the short or long term would lead to stagnation and sudden tip-over).

In reference to companies Yin Yang is the dynamic force in company development.

Dynamic means agile, energetic, suspenseful, and power through motion. Dynamics is a requirement for transformation, assimilation, evolution, and continual competitiveness for a company. We differentiate:

- The dynamic of business factors such as equipment, products, and expertise.
- Dynamics through movement of the body to increase vitality and communication.
- Dynamics in the office through movable modular furniture.



Abb. 34. In reference to companies Yin Yang is the dynamics force in the company development.

5.5 Live energy Qi

Qi is the basic energy for all life. Effects of the vital energy Qi are, for example: vitality, capability, concentration, intuition, creativity, defence capacity of the immune system, disassociation capacity with respect to psychically weakening external factors, tolerance of stress and the state of mind.

A distinction is made between "Body-Qi", the Qi concept of traditional Chinese medicine and the space and landscape Qi, which is directed by Feng Shui techniques.

In Feng Shui the following characteristics of Qi are defined:

- Qi arises in nature with the tendency to flow back to it.
- Qi follows the electro-/bio-magnetic tracks of humans and other living creatures. (Qi paths develop)
- Qi has a natural inertia / A certain time remains for the Qi flow. (Qi flows in through the doors and along the paths used.)
- Qi is attracted by other bio-magnetic fields and flowing water. (people, plants, animals and fountains divert the Qi.)

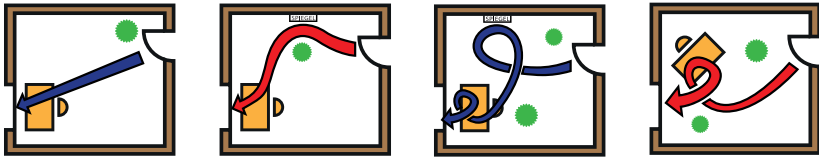


Abb. 35. Qi flow rules in Feng Shui.

There is so-called bad Qi, which arises when the energy flows in long straight lines. Then it speeds up too much, becomes too intensive and changes into the negative. Stagnation of the energy is just as negative as an energy flow which is too intensive.

There is nothing worse than rooms stacked full with sharp edged items of furniture and with "dead" dusty corners. Energy blockades develop. Standing Qi becomes bad and junk contaminates the Qi.

Good Qi: The energy of life, Qi, should always circulate in gently curved or circular movement. Think of a stream or river which carves its way through the landscape in wave-like meanders. This, of course, is how the energy flow in the office should be.

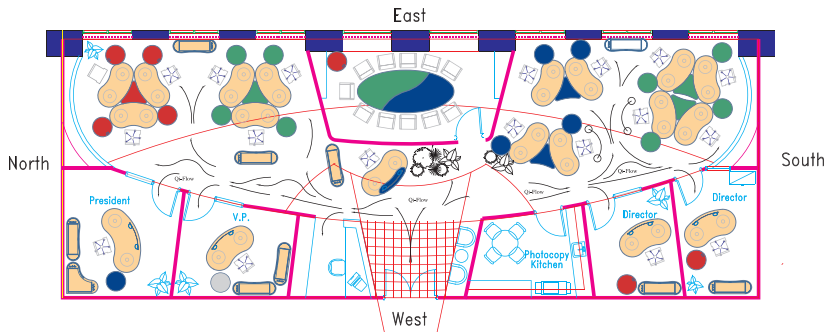


Abb. 36. Simulation of the Qi flow in Vital-Office office planning.

6. FAQ

6.1 What is especially important with a Vital-Office® design from the Feng Shui viewpoint?

The balance of Yin und Yang, the 5 elements and the principle of comprehensiveness are especially important to us.

As a result of the balance of Yin und Yang elements in the environment, the dynamics of life are maintained, both in the personal and in the business management segment. This is comparable with an engine which simply runs smoothly. A one-sided predominance of Yin or Yang is on the other hand like an engine with a more or less strong error of balance.

The principle of comprehensiveness is, for example, symbolized by the Five Elements. A color as well as a form is attributed to each element.

In addition, each element represents a specific characteristic. These characteristics stand both for personal human characteristics as well as for business management factors. If one or more elements are missing in an environment, the characteristics of the elements are also missing.

For this reason it is important to us that all elements are represented in each room.

However, the elements must not be present in the same weighting. One element can definitely be predominantly attributed to a room.

However, with offices we must consider especially, that an employee spends several years in the office and accordingly, is more powerfully moulded by this environment. It is therefore important that the other elements are also present at an appropriate weighting. We find a room in which there is balance of all the elements present, more complete and emotionally richer in interesting receptors. This principle of comprehensiveness leads us further to the principle of fullness and the endless possibilities ..a requirement for creativity.

It is best if several specialists work together for a professional Vital-Office design. We require an architect for the architectonic design and the partitioning of the rooms. Nevertheless, the work flows and the communication paths must be analyzed from a business management viewpoint and the architectonic design must be aligned with this in conformity with function. Therefore, we need a business management expert. A qualified office designer is required for the ergonomic planning of the office workplaces. From an ergonomic viewpoint a great deal of empathy is required, in order to ensure the necessary security at each workplace, for example, in the form of protection from behind. Another specialist is required for the planning of the lighting.



Abb. 37. : Example of successful Vital-Office planning at artundweise in Bremen (Reference: www.artundweise.de)

We have still not reached the end with this. For the special enrichment of the premises through colors and forms we need a special creative team like, Graphic Design, Art, Color Design and Feng Shui.

And that is the special quality in Vital-Office. We work with a team of specialists and offer our clients an integral solution which works.

6.2 Vital-Office also produces office furniture

Since 1999 we have been working on the topic of Vital-Office and also on suitable office furniture. Our many years' work was rewarded with the award "Best Feng Shui Design 2000".



Abb. 38. Example of ergonomic Vital-Office desks which were awarded the Gold Medal 2000 for the best Feng Shui design.

In addition to the forms, the question of the material in the meaning of Feng Shui occupied us a great deal. Consequently, we considered how we could transfer the value and energy of a solid wood table-top to normal payable desks. After a few experiments we found the solution in the combination of MDF boards and special symbols which are partly cut in during the processing. By this means the table-top is given a perceptibly quieter vibration more similar to solid wood. We also find the round biologically waxed section edge especially pleasing.

These MDF table-tops are only slightly more expensive than the otherwise usual chipboard with PVC or other plastic edge band and therefore within the company's means for each office workplace.

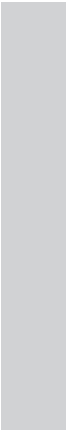
In terms of ecology and sustainability, the MDF table-tops have definite advantages: they consist 100% of wood, are especially solid and hard wearing and can be thermally disposed of, as they are. In contrast, for chipboard first the PVC or plastic edge band must be separated from the chipboard. The plastic must then be disposed of separately.

In the first place, for us Feng Shui is the design of the work environment. And, in fact, a design which does comfort the employee, supports him and encourages him in his personal development. We wish to encourage the creative side of man and as a result facilitate a lively and affectionate relationship with the environment and our planet.

The people who work in these kinds of enriched rooms and buildings, are addressed emotionally, mentally and spiritually on different levels. They respond intuitively, fundamentally more positively, optimistically, affectionately, understandingly and consistently than in a comparatively grey, machine-like and strictly geometric environment.

7. Conclusions:

- We humans are used to the diversity of nature and need this colorful variety for motivation, stimulation, inspiration and creative development of our personality.
- The monotonous standard office furnishings obstruct the development of our creative skills.
- Architects, office planners, decision-makers and buyers should be aware of their responsibility for influencing the lives of other people with their work.
- Creativity needs inspiration.
- The source of inspiration is the diversity of nature.
- The biological lushness is the measure for inspiring design.
- Straight forms symbolise structure, direction, limitations, fault and power.
- Round forms symbolise diversity, abundance, endless possibilities and creativity.
- Round forms based on a geometric relation also symbolise a higher spiritual order in the abundance and diversity which is basically typical of round forms.
- Security and a private sphere are requirements for creativity, constructive open communication and social intelligence.
- In the long-term office environment all design elements in form and color representing the cycle of qualities of life must be present as a source of stimulation and inspiration.
- While planning offices all ergonomic factors needs to be taken care of. An ergonomic workplace is not achieved by buying ergonomic furniture. The basic human needs in the psychological field can only be taken care off through ergonomic professional and conscientious office planning.



8. Biografie

Peter Jordan

Peter Jordan is the founder of Vital-Office, an umbrella world for a unique and holistic way of designing office environments.

Grown up in a family based German wood manufacturing he learned traditional craftsmanship and the principles of sustainable design. His business led him to ergonomics already in the early 1980's when he started producing adjustable computer furniture. In 1989 he was the first in Germany to design anthropometric rounded desk systems and introduced new performance enhancing psychological and sociological effects in ergonomic office planning.

In 2000 he developed the first authentic Feng Shui office system and combined the traditional knowledge of Feng Shui with scientific ergonomics. In the business world he is recognized as an experienced specialist in ergonomics, a professional creative planner of living office environments, and a diligent designer of office furniture.

Grown up in a Christian tradition he personally has made his own spiritual journey and learned about Feng Shui, Geomancy, Sacred Geometry, Shamanism, Buddhism and Spirituality. His visions are to create a living office space with creative people, joy at work and success for the corporation - a win/win situation between people's needs and corporate demands.

He has lectured on "Vital-Office Ergonomics and Feng Shui" in Germany since 2006. Many Feng Shui consultants, architects, facility managers and office dealer already participated in the seminars.

On the subject of "Office Optimization: Ergonomics and Feng Shui," he regularly speaks at several conferences and other events. In 2007 he was a speaker at the International Congress of Facility Management in Frankfurt, at the international Feng Shui conference in Budapest, and at the Conscious Design conference held in New Jersey in

the United States. In 2009 he spoke at the 4th International Conference on Scientific Feng Shui & Built Environment at Hong Kong City University.

He is working on the development of the Vital-Office concept since 2003. The philosophical basis of this concept was tested and enhanced through many real office installations all over the world.

With this book now a part of this experiences and concepts are published to a wider range of office people involved in this subject.

His company Vital-Office® offers professional service in the areas of office planning and office optimizing. In addition, the company produces its own office furniture design collection under the trademark, Vital-Office®. From exclusive executive desks through customized conference tables to ergonomic desk systems in accordance with the Vital-Office® concept.



Abb. 39. : Peter Jordan

9. References

Alexander, Christopher (1977). A Pattern Language

Capra, Fritjof (1976). The Tao of Physics

Chopra, Deepak (2000). How to know God

Dalai Lama (2002). How to practise

Foundation for inner peace (1976). A course in miracles

Goleman, Daniel (2006). Social Intelligence

Grün, Anselm (2004). Menschen führen Leben wecken

Osho, (1931-1990). Creativity unleashing the forces within

Pleznik, Joze, Architect (1872-1957). Pleznik's House in Ljubljana and other churches and buildings from him in Slovenia.

Pogacnik, Marco (2000). Schule der Geomantie

Pogacnik, Marco (2008). Das geheime Leben der Erde - Neue Schule der Geomantie

Renard, Gary (2005). Die Illusion des Universums

Steiner, Rudolf, (1911-1914). Wege zu einem neuen Baustiel "Und der Bau wird Mensch" eight lectures given during the building of the first Goetheanum.

Steiner, Rudolf, (1922). Das Geheimnis der Trinität

Stockmeyer, E.A. Karl, (1996). Der Modellbau in Malsch

Tolle, Eckhart (2005). Eine neue Erde

