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Feng Shui, The Image Consultant's Way

Evana Maggiore, AICI CIP, sheds light on how innocently an inspiration can become your specialty, as it was for her when she discovered Feng Shui.



Feng Shui, The Image Consultant's Way

Evana Maggiore, AICI CIP

I began my image consulting career in 1982 when I introduced color and style analysis to customers of my chain of women's clothing boutiques. I stumbled into the niche of Feng Shui when I read Terah Kathryn Collins's book, *The Western Guide to Feng Shui*. The idea of applying this ancient Chinese philosophy to personal appearance had intrigued me so much; I joined Collins's first Essential Feng Shui Practitioner Training Program in October 1996. Interior designers, who create harmony and balance in homes and businesses, were early and successful adaptors of the holistic principles of Feng Shui. Why, I wondered, could these same principles not be applied to wardrobes, as well?

Personal style consulting and makeovers became my specialty at my fashion-oriented venue. As I worked with clients, however, I realized that there was more to dressing them than physical appearance. So in 1984, I began exploring the world of personal energy. I studied Astrology, Meyers Briggs, the Enneagram and other metaphysical topics, which eventually led to my discovery of Feng Shui.

Feng Shui, the 4,000 year-old Art of Placement that links empowerment with environment, held the key to my translating the invisible and intangible energies of a client's personality, preferences and goals into the visible and tangible energies of color, pattern, texture, fabric and silhouette choices. It also made me aware of the huge impact our habitual surroundings have on the quality of our lives, spawning my premise (and the foundation of Fashion Feng Shui®) that clothing is your body's most intimate environment and is therefore, as influential on your life as Feng Shui purports your home and work decor to be. This realization changed my image consulting business, and my life.

At the 1998 AICI Conference in Miami, Florida, I presented a pre-conference workshop, *Feng Shui, The Image Consultant's Way*, officially putting Feng Shui on the image industry's radar screen. This seminar introduced the concept of how a

client's personal and professional surroundings (home, work & wardrobe) both affect their existence and reflect their state of mind, and offered basic tips for creating authentic and empowering living, working and dressing environments. It was also the debut of my STYLEDynamics personal dressing system, which has evolved into what is now called Fashion Feng Shui®. Also that year, Alyce Parsons, AICI CIP, asked me to take her place as the presenter of the Holistic Image Consulting Professional Member Roundtable. We teamed to work on a project, Universal STYLEDynamics, that blended my fledgling Feng Shui-based system with hers. Our groundbreaking workshop moved participants from personal style to personal surroundings and stressed the energetic synchronization of Essence, Intention and Environment.

Louise Elerding, AICI CIP, and I presented our premiere STYLEDynamics/Fashion Feng Shui workshop at the 1999 AICI Conference in Toronto. I recall how fulfilling (and intimidating) it was to have all my "teachers" sitting front row and center. Many of them recognized (or were curious to see if) Feng Shui had something to contribute to the image industry and had come to support (or to interrogate) us. Later that year, Louise and I co-founded The Fashion Feng Shui® Facilitator Professional Training Program, with two image industry gurus attending our very first training weekend. Their presence announced that Feng Shui had something very valuable indeed to offer our profession. Finally, in July 2000, AICI confirmed Feng Shui as an image consulting niche when it presented me with the Image Industry Merit of Industry Excellence (IMMIE) Award for Innovation.

Feng Shui is certainly not the only niche for image consultants who desire to take a holistic approach to their businesses. However, I truly believe the study of it can enhance one's comprehension of the interaction and the influence of the energies surrounding us. My exploration of metaphysics, and particularly Feng Shui, have given me the tools to not only evaluate a client's psyche, but also to facilitate him or her in translating those core values into a fulfilling, functional, fortifying and flattering personal style-one that transcends any self, society, corporate, or industry imposed limitations.

Evana Maggiore, AICI CIP, the founder and president of Fashion Feng Shui International, is an IMMIE award-winning Professional Image Consultant, internationally-recognized Feng Shui Practitioner, and author of FASHION FENG SHUI The Power of Dressing with Intention, which has been endorsed by Dr. Christiane Northrup, as taking "...personal style to a whole new deeper healing level." Connect with Evana: evana@fashionfengshui.com.
