

INDUSTRY LEADERS

DesignPoint, Inc.

Let There Be Light! The Value of Lighting in Interior Design

Light is a powerful thing that is fundamentally positive. It enhances, identifies, and shows the way. It is no wonder that it is one of the most popularly used cultural idioms; to shed light on, come to light, seen the light, and the list goes on.



Les McCoy

Light, both natural and artificial, is also valuable in designing interiors. "Lighting creates interest in a space, adds comfort, warmth and safety," said Les McCoy, president of DesignPoint, Inc. of Bethlehem, PA. "Regardless of the project and the use of the space, the principles of light are universal in properly designing interiors."

Performance

Every interior space has an intended function, whether to encourage work, interaction, engagement or feelings. Too much light can be blinding, and not enough light is paralyzing; find the right balance.

Safety

Poor illumination is the cause of many accidents. Safety is paramount to all real estate owners, but it is of specific importance in health care and senior living when dealing with deteriorating eyesight and other health conditions in patients. A good interior designer takes into consideration what the interior looks like during the day time as well as how it feels and performs after the sun sets.

Interest

Shining a light on a painting in an office reception area or above a door in a senior living community creates warmth and attracts attention. A senior living resident will feel safer and proud of their personal suite if they have a well-lit entrance. Hotels are doing this in order to make each customer feel welcomed in their room. Balanced lighting encourages focus on a person or thing, whether it is a meeting, work station or patient.

Emotions

Light sets the mood. Darkness, or a lack of light, feels mysterious, cold, dangerous or unsettling. Too much light can be distracting and overstimulating. A good interior

designer can get inside the head of the user of the space to understand how they should feel, and create the area to support those emotions.

Natural Light vs. Artificial Light

Recently, architectural and design trends have called for abundant natural light to bring the outside in. This is achieved in numerous ways. Options have increased as technology has improved construction materials like glass products for light tubes and skylights and interior products window coverings like

solar shades and automated blinds. Interior designers have a plethora of options at their fingertips to promote and support the goal and use of interior space.

Natural light

Scientific research has proven that people subconsciously seek out sunlit places and enjoy spending time in natural light. Research has also proven that there are real benefits associated with spending time in spaces that offer abundant natural light. The benefits of natural lighting are numerous and can affect a person's

health, the environment and energy usage.

Bringing natural light in is important but sometimes can be challenging. "Many clients desire ample sunlight in their office, hotel and senior living rooms," said McCoy. "For spaces and rooms on the building's perimeter this is easily accomplished with windows, skylights and light tubes. For interior areas without access to an external wall, reconfiguration is necessary to remove walls and re-arrange spaces to allow for openness and glass walls for light to penetrate. It

is more complicated, but it can be done with a good interior designer proficient in space planning."

Artificial Light

Natural light is not always everyone's friend. For those trying to sleep or rest, watch a movie in a theatre or focus on working at their computer natural light may be unwanted. Making the correct light sources available can also be cost prohibitive.

Fortunately, with the evolution in lighting technology like LED (light-emitting diode) lighting, it is now possible to have the best of both worlds. **continued on page 26B**

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