



Michaels Engineering LEED® Brief

INDOOR ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

SUGGESTIONS...

Do you have certain LEED® topics you'd like to know more about? Send an email with your suggestion to the author listed below and your topic might become a future LEED® Brief!

DID YOU KNOW...

...Most commercial buildings are built for show, not for comfort.

...Good IEQ results in happy, productive employees and students.

MEET THE AUTHOR



Jeff Ihnen is the Energy Division Manager at Michaels Engineering. For more information on this topic or additional energy concerns, please contact Jeff at:

(608) 785-1900 or
JLI@MichaelsEngineering.com

→ LEED® CATEGORY #5: INDOOR ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY - WHERE'S THE DOUGH?

Drive for show; putt for dough is something every fairway hacker should keep in mind if they want to reduce their handicap. But how many of your coworkers and colleagues stand around the water cooler pounding their chests about their putting prowess? - About as many brag about their kids' straight teeth.

Commercial buildings are typically built for show, not dough. What does this mean? It has to look good: striking façade, attractive foyer, perhaps a monument or sculpture, a pond, exotic landscaping, maybe a \$10,000 artsy light fixture in the front entrance or a huge electronic sign in front of the building. The building must look good to the passerby, and visitors. But what about the occupants who spend 40 hours per week or more in the facility? - the ones who cost owners over 90% of their operating expense? They deal with it. The facts are well documented: comfortable occupants with a connection to outdoors are more productive and perform better.

→ IEQ

Views to the outdoors, temperature and humidity control, lighting and daylighting and air cleanliness, are all part of indoor environmental quality.

Have you ever waited your turn to occupy a window office or cubicle? Who hasn't? Our office here at Michaels is a testament to peoples' desire to get full spectrum daylight and a view of the outdoors. Window cubes and cubes adjacent to those are occupied. Open space is only available in the middle of our office spaces, furthest from the windows. Not only do people like to see outside, they like natural daylight.

Our office is a good example of how lighting design has changed over the years. Obviously, computers for each worker are the norm. Twenty years ago, the whole office shared two computers. Our lighting system was designed for paper and pencil, not PCs. Spaces are significantly over lit resulting in glare and eyestrain. Consequently, if you visit us, you will find half or more of the lamps in our fluorescent fixtures are removed. It isn't because engineers don't know how to change a light bulb. Good lighting design puts light only where it is needed. This would include a low ambient or background lighting with task lighting where detail work or reading from paper is a regular task.

Skip this one if your space is always the right temperature. Occupant-friendly buildings offer control over your space including temperature and airflow control, and operable windows. You sit on the porch or patio at home to read or just hang out to have fresh air, listen to birds and be connected to the outdoors, rather than being canned up. Why not make this work at work? Happy workers are more productive workers.

→ EMPLOYEES FIRST

People say, "In our business, the customer comes first." Wrong. The employees come first. If you don't have the right employees and allow them to be as productive, energetic, stimulating, and creative as they can be, you are missing a competitive edge. Great employees who enjoy their time in the office will result in plenty of ecstatic customers.

Oh, and if your "customers" are students, the benefits of good IEQ are double because your staff and your customers benefit. Reams of studies show good IEQ results in higher test scores.

