



## **Lighting has the biggest impact**

July 30, 2012 - Green Buildings

In the current fast pace business environment we are all bombarded with messages to get our attention for a product or a service, we are in turn trying to enhance how we all market our own goods or services. In the real estate business at every rung of the ladder the property owner and manager are looking towards how to maximize the dollar spent for the most value, to create a unique experience for their property. Whether it's an office fit out for a tenant, a gut re-hab of the lobby and public spaces or a tight budget "face lift" to an area of the building. All with the intent of having the space feel and look better, but also to get value for the dollars spent.

So with the above being said, I'll let you in on one of the best kept secrets in real-estate; if properly designed, budgeted and installed, lighting is the single biggest value that can be implemented in a renovation of any kind. From a budget retrofit of lamps to a gut renovation, lighting has the biggest impact in the changed perception of a space for the dollar spent per s/f.

Lighting today has a great deal of options, price points, and different technologies like LED. Energy codes and renovation can be a complex and challenging obstacle in a renovation. Be forewarned and forearmed. Plan, price and know what you are getting into. All of the spaces we work on are planned in that an Architect, will have a concept working with their customer the owner of the building. In many instances a lighting designer is involved on the creative side as well as an engineer to stamp drawings to comply with code. A renovation of any size should be reviewed as to what the NYC Building Code classifies the renovation as and what the code compliance is for that renovation. The typical code compliance is function of watts per s/f in power consumption, along with the required light level in foot-candles for light in the space. Find a competent designer to help you navigate the codes and classifications to maximize your design and dollars spent.

There are many levels of energy efficiency that a building can obtain, it's sort of like the Olympics in that there is a certification called LEED sponsored by the USGBC, (find out more at [www.usgbc.org](http://www.usgbc.org)) at levels like silver up through platinum, with each offering a more energy efficient building. In your planning at every budget level, identify your needs, develop a design, and maintenance requirements, when necessary find a lighting designer (The International Association of Lighting Designers [www.iald.org](http://www.iald.org) or the Illuminating Engineers of North America [www.iesnyc.org](http://www.iesnyc.org) are resources to locate a lighting professional) to put your project together. Work through your budget for products, installed costs and see samples of the products of the fixtures you will use. Formulate a written specification that can be sent out for bidding purposes.

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Lighting Representatives like Light Abilities ([www.lightabilities.com](http://www.lightabilities.com)) can help you see samples, and completed work locally. Lighting will be your best investment in changing your space, be informed on how to have a successful outcome.

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