

designspeak

[FAST FACT]

■ PLAYING WITH THE QUALITY OF LIGHT AND LIGHT FIXTURES CAN ENHANCE THE VISUAL ASPECT OF THE SPACE

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WELL BEGUN

ARCHITECT VIVEK NANDAN PRASAD tells us how a lobby space in a residential building can be well designed

A well designed lobby space would cater to all the senses of an individual and can be broken down into some of the elements of design as follows.

Canopy - From a completely open environment, the canopy starts the process of the transition to a built form. A cantilever canopy works better as being open on all sides it forms just an overhang and now implies the sense of scale to the human form. On a practical level, it forms a covering from the harsh and direct sun, a protection from the rains and also a drop off point for the residents. A canopy can be of concrete or as prevalent these days of steel and glass. The top of the canopy can be further used for planters with the greens hanging down from the sides if so desired. Lights at the underside of the canopy would not only provide illumination but also act as a design feature and create a play of light and shadow. A design pattern created of LED lights can be used to highlight the canopy itself as a focal point.

Glass partition - it is used to demarcate the entrance lobby from the outside. As it prevents cross ventilation from taking place it is used where the space is going to be air-conditioned. The glass presents a physical but visually dissolved barrier thereby allowing the interplay of the inside with the outside.

Form and Scale - the interior space is defined by the walls, the ceiling and the floor and further refined by its size, proportion (relationship between the length,

breadth and height) and shape. By different treatment of the surfaces in terms of colour, texture, by arrangements of the opening, the incidence of light, the enclosure of a space can either be emphasised or broken. Proportion, structure, lighting, furniture, accessories all enhance the quality of the space. Creation of different levels by using steps can be done to alter the frame of reference for scale and proportion.



Walls/Floor/Ceiling - the treatment of these six 2D planes forms the crux in the creation of the décor of the lobby space. Options available and possible for flooring and wall cladding are enormous - they can be of natural or artificial stone, vitrified tiles, wood finish, aluminium cladding, depending upon décor scheme envisaged. Induction of focal point/s via motifs, mural and paintings, patterns and textures, different types of surface finish like paint, texture plaster, stone cladding in different colours, shades

would create unlimited décor options. The false ceiling can be plain or with projections and recessions, geometric designs or free flowing shapes.

Accessories - water bodies, greenery, light and light fixtures, music, sculptures and artifacts, security systems, furniture. Playing with the quality of light and light fixtures enhance the visual aspect of the space and the light can be used to either highlight or subdue aspects of the design features, highlight the placing of the sculpture, artifacts. Soft music playing in the background in the entrance lobby is always a positive idea due to its universal appeal and can rejuvenate. CCTVs, intercom systems are some of the security equipment that is needed before finalising any entrance lobby design. Space for the reception personnel, a reception counter/table to need to be included. Furniture in the form of chair or sofas, center tables also have to be considered for rounding off the design requirements. These act as facilitators of chance/ accidental encounters between the residents of the building, serve as waiting spaces for some guests of the residents of the building.

The various elements taken together and designed in a cohesive and holistic manner will result in a well designed lobby space. The correct spatial arrangement of these elements will bring about an interaction with the human beings and enhance the manner in which the individual sees and feels the space.

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