

Art of Formulation
Herbstalk 2019
Kristin Henningsen
kristin@vtherbcenter.org

Flavors, Actions, and Energy

Flavor	Action	Energy	Constituents	Examples	Plays well With
Sweet	Tone, build, moisten, soothe, modulate	Cool to warm	Sugars, polysaccharides	Astragalus, Licorice, Anise hyssop, fenugreek	Pungents, bitters
Salty	Nourish, build	Cooling, sometimes drying	Minerals	Nettle, Raspberry leaf, Oatstraw	Demulcents, Aromatics
Sour	Astringe, Tone	Cool to warm	Plant acids, minerals	Schisandra, citrus peel, Rosehips	Sweet, aromatics, Pungents
Bitter	Stimulate, cleanse	Cool to warm	Alkaloids, sesquiterpenes, volatile oils	Dandelion, skullcap, chamomile	Sweet, Salty
Pungent	Stimulate	Warm to hot	Volatile oils, allyl sulfides	Pepper, ginger, garlic	Sour

Formulation Theories

Triangle Theory:

1= Primary Herb=70-80% Formula

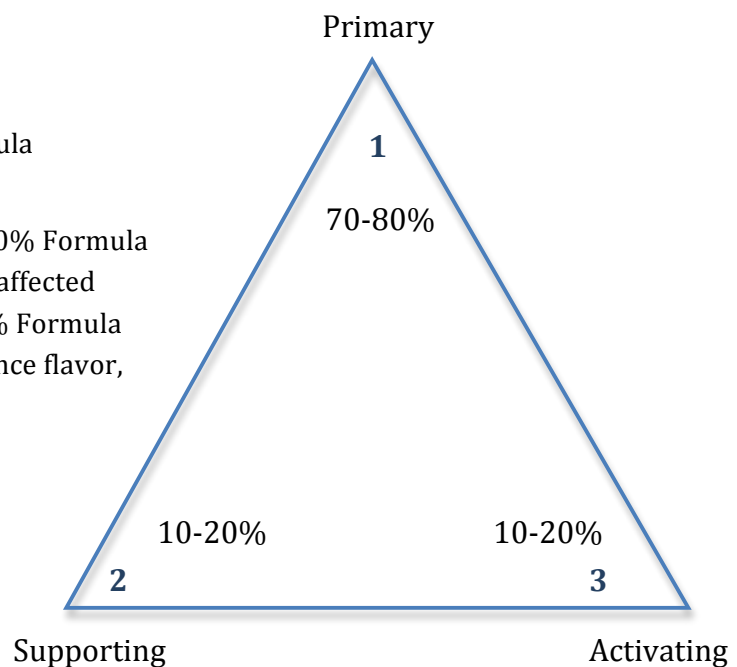
- Addresses primary goal

2=Supports and Builders= 10-20% Formula

- Tone/nourish body system affected

3=Catalysts/Activators =10-20% Formula

- Support overall action, balance flavor, direct other herbs



TCM Formulation:

Classification	Role	Action
Rulers	Main Herbs (35-50%)	Support primary goal
Ministers	Auxiliary Herbs (35-50%)	Support, supervise, help develop action of main herb
Adjuvants	Assisting Herbs (15-25%)	Support associated symptoms. Support effect of main and supporting herbs
Emissaries	Conducting Herbs (5-10%)	Direct herb to body location, alter taste, harmonize
Anti-Assistant	Anti-assisting Herbs (0-10%)	Balance out formula (ex: demulcent to dry, cold to hot)

**Note that one herb can serve several of these roles*

Ayurveda

Classification	Ratio	Action
Primary Herbs	up to 50%	Target specific health concern
Supporting Herbs	20-30%	Strengthen action of primary herbs, work with secondary symptoms
Assimilation Herbs	10-15%	Increase bioavailability/assimilation
Detox and Repair	10%	Used to support the mind/body purification & self repair mechanism so primary herbs are more effective
Balancing	5%	Mitigate any discomforts/ side effects (i.e.; demulcent to drying herb)