



**LOOKING FOR HELP:
NEED TO FIND A
INTERIOR
DESIGNER?
CALL OUR
REFERRAL SERVICE**

What does an Interior Designer do, anyway? Do I really need one?

In the past, the prevailing notion seems to have been that hiring an Interior Designer was only for the very wealthy or for large commercial or hospitality projects. Much like the stock market was a haven for the rich and powerful, now anyone with a computer can be their own broker; or at least, in theory. Many people assume that hiring an Interior Designer is a luxury they can't afford. But retaining a professional - for even such a seemingly inconsequential task as choosing the color palette for a studio apartment interior - is often the most expeditious path to success. Innovative direction can go a long way toward a happy outcome!

The Interior Designer is the creative catalyst of the project. Interior Designers are drawn to the profession for a variety of reasons; not in small part because they tend to possess an inherent aesthetic aptitude and have an almost alchemic flair for appropriate scale and use of space. They can easily transform a "concept" into a functional, efficient environment - no matter the intended use.

The interior designer is the ambassador of a project. An idea that's been mentioned in design circles often - not completely in jest - is the need to possess a college degree in Psychology! Sometimes, the decision makers on a particular project have diametrically-opposed design philosophies and taste - then the designer must act as mediator and find a way to integrate each one's disparate view into the final proposal. Most people can only see their own side of the argument. The designer sees all points of view.

The interior designer is the consumer advocate of the project. Almost anyone can pick out a sofa from a catalog, website or storefront, but is it constructed well? Is the fabric sturdy, resilient, stain proof, cleanable, prone to snags? What about the springs? Are they eight-way hand-tied? What is the frame made of? Is the dealer reputable? If there is a problem, will the dealer stand by the product? All these questions just for one sofa; this doesn't even address where to place it or what to buy to complement the piece. A proficient Interior Designer will address these concerns.

The Interior Designer is the curator of the project. Most Interior Designers have spent years forging excellent working relationships with a variety of vendors, contractors and other service providers. They can, therefore, draw on the expertise of a team of professionals to assist in carrying the project forward smoothly and efficiently, often saving the client time and money. The relationships and leverage of a skillful Designer cannot be underestimated. Some clients do not have the time or the desire to manage their project. Or perhaps they travel frequently, for business or pleasure. In these cases, they can rest assured that the project will move ahead with its primary advocacy in the Designer's care, expertise and integrity.

When hiring a professional interior designer, one can expect he/she will offer all or some of the following services:

- Visualization of the entire project and creation of scale drawings to assist in planning
- Research of appropriate materials and furnishings that reflect the design concept and functionality of the project
- Development of a written budget for the project
- Acting as liaison with trade workers and/or managing subcontractors: carpenters, plumbers, electricians, and the like
- Providing on-site inspections during construction
- Procuring items that are available only "to the trade" and often discounting them significantly to client
- Frequent communication with client

In short, hiring a professional interior designer is an efficient use of precious budget dollars that will most likely save a lot of heartache down the road. And, quite possibly, help to cultivate a new friendship!