

HOME DESIGN

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Selecting Your Interior Designer

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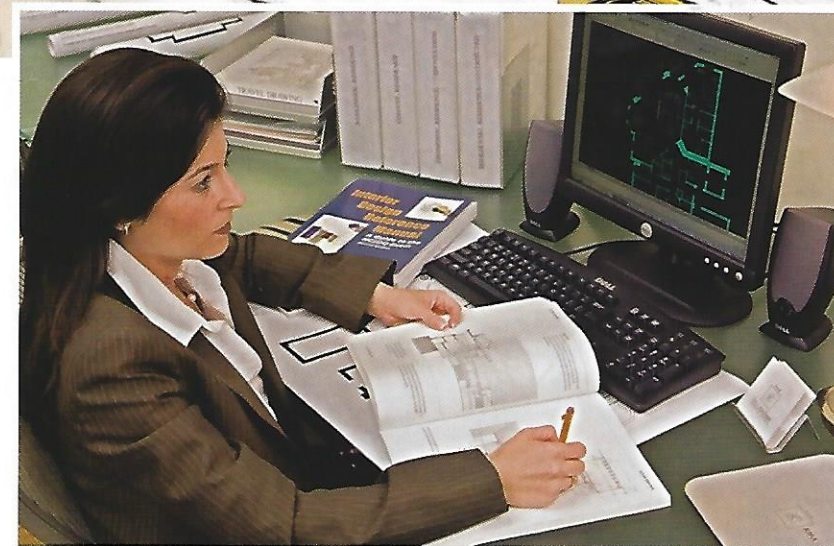
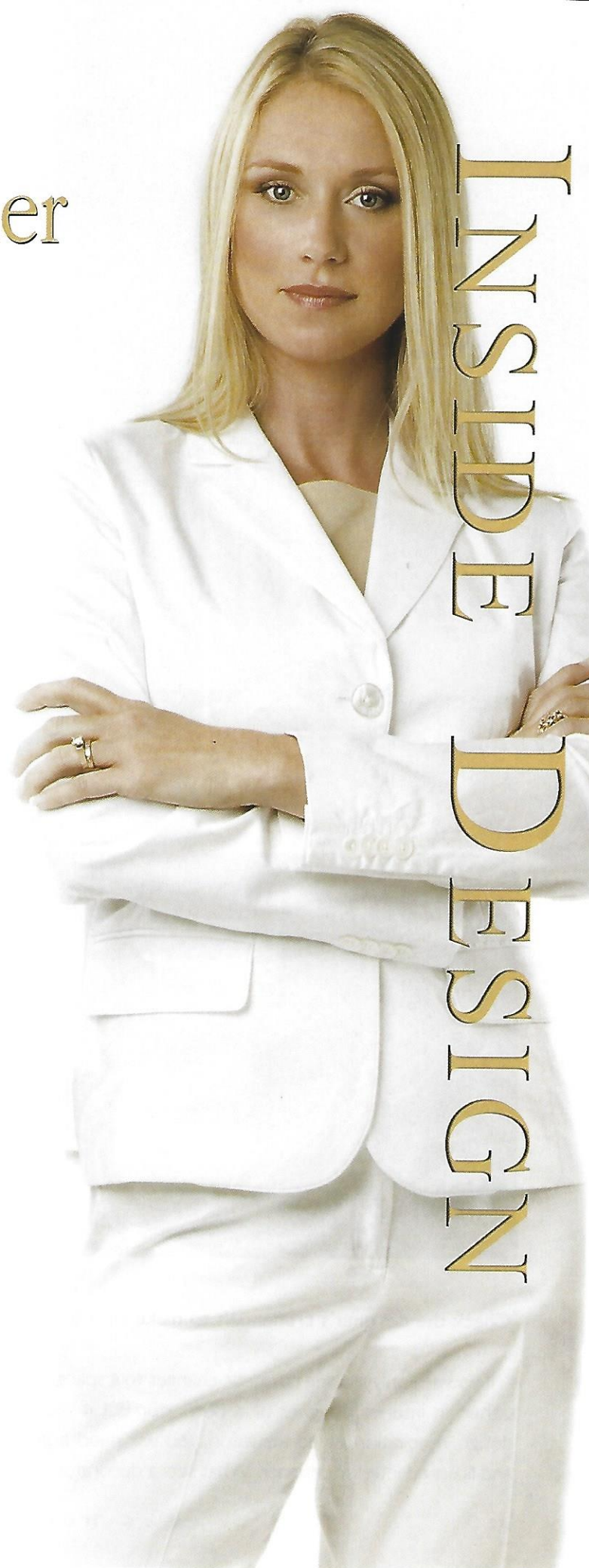
When you are considering renovating or beautifying your property, selecting an interior designer is the most important decision you will make. Interior designers are not only hired for their creative expertise, but they provide valuable services such as coordinating, directing and overseeing interior projects. Their talent and knowledge can yield professional results and their experience of the process can mean the difference between delight and disaster.

How to interview interior designers.

The ability to communicate well is extremely important to a successful relationship between you and your interior designer. When interviewing your designer take note of the way they introduce themselves and let them explain how they operate. Their ability to communicate is critical. During the building process, your interior designer will be your biggest advocate to the builders and trades people. Your designer should also ask you many questions in order to determine your needs and desires. When you are conveying your insight, be clear and concise and observe their ability to listen and comprehend you.

Look for certain character traits.

Designers are respected not only for their talent, but also their management skills. It is crucial that your designer is not only a good collaborator and strong leader, but also that she/ he is opinionated, well informed and respected in the building industry. Many collective decisions have to be made throughout the process and having these good interpersonal skills will help your designer move the project along to a successful conclusion. Your interior designer will be your team leader throughout this process and together, through mutual respect and hard work, your team will be successful in creating your dream environment. ▶



Check the designer's credentials to make sure they suit your needs.

If you are only making cosmetic changes to a space, you can work with either an interior designer or a decorator. But if your project includes design, renovation or construction, you will need a general contractor and licensed interior designer. What sets a decorator and designer apart

is simply, experience, education and professional qualifications. In Florida, one can't be called an "interior designer" unless licensed. An interior designer must start with a two-to-four year degree in interior design in order to satisfy the educational requirements for the qualifying exam. The program should be accredited by the Council for Interior Design Accreditation (formerly FIDER). One must have a combination of six years of experience and education before applying to take the exam. Once a designer has been qualified and accepted by the National Council of Interior Design Qualification (NCIDQ), they may sit for two-day exam. A passing grade means they can apply to the Florida



Board of Architecture and Interior Design for a license. The entire process can take more than a year. License holders must complete 20 hours of Continuing Education credits every two years to renew the hard-earned license, but the designer has then earned the right to join industry professional organizations and proudly list the acronyms behind his or her name. So, when you see the letters ASID, IIDA and/or NCIDQ following a designer's name, you'll know you have chosen a licensed interior design professional, one who has the education, expertise and vision to complete your project successfully. ♦

*Until next month, keep your creativity outside the box and
Inside Design.*

OPPOSITE ABOVE - If your project includes renovation or construction, you will need a licensed interior designer vs. a decorator. What sets the two apart is simply, experience, education and professional qualifications. In Florida, one can't be called "an interior designer" unless licensed.

OPPOSITE BELOW - Erin Carlin, Design Associate for Kira Krümm Interior Design studies for the NCIDQ exam. Once a designer has been qualified and accepted by the National Council of Interior Design Qualification (NCIDQ) they may sit for two-day exam. A passing grade means they can apply to the Florida Board of Architecture and Interior Design for a license.

ABOVE - When interviewing your designer take note of the way they introduce themselves and let them explain how they operate. Your designer should also ask you many questions in order to determine your needs and desires. When you are conveying your insight, be clear and concise and observe their ability to listen and comprehend you.

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