

# Case Study: Interior Designer - Sharon

## What do you do?

As well as the regular duties of an interior designer, I hand pick all antique and modern furniture to be used in a given room. I really enjoy this aspect of the business.

## What is your background?

After studying humanities, I went to learn about retail display design at college. This led me into the fashion industry, where I worked for ten years.

Then I took seven years off to raise my children. The only practical experience I gained during those years was from designing and decorating my own home. So I decided to give interior design a try and took up an apprenticeship with an established designer. We soon became business partners and worked together for six years.

After that, I went my own way and, for the last five years, I've been running my own interior design business.



## What characteristics do you need to be successful in your job?

A good personality, organisation, creativity and technical skills are all important to an interior designer's success.

It's also good to have confidence in your own aesthetic judgements, while at the same time being sensitive to a client's tastes and needs.

## What other jobs could you do using the skills from this job?

The aesthetic sensibilities that an interior designer must build up would allow them to work in the fashion industry, either as designer or retailer.

Retailing in other areas, particularly those related to interior design, would also be a possibility. You could, for example, open up an antique furniture shop.

## What changes will there be in the future?

People are becoming much more interested in investing time and money in their homes, which is a positive development for interior designers. The residential market should therefore offer lots of opportunities for talented interior designers.

Computers are used for layouts, architectural designs and for general office work. You can expect this trend to continue.

## Are there many opportunities to enter this career?

It's difficult for someone without previous experience to get a job in interior design. It's possible, however, to get a job with an experienced designer in a related field, like renovation or furniture design. This experience can be used later to get into interior design.

## What do you like about your job?

I think the thing I like best about my job is that it's not like a job - it's more like a hobby that developed into a job.

Another thing I like about being a self-employed interior designer is that I'm my own boss and my hours aren't fixed.

I get to meet clients, plan their homes and shop for things to put into their homes. I enjoy making people happy by creating a beautiful home for them to come back to at the end of the day.

## What do you dislike about your job?

The thing I dislike most is trying to disprove the preconceived notion that interior designers are unreliable or not trustworthy. It takes a long time to gain peoples' confidence and to build up a good reputation.

Many clients are very resistant to change, even though that's why they employed you. You always have to try and convince them that they have made the right choice and that the changes will be great for their lifestyle.

## What advice would you give to someone interested in your career?

My basic advice to someone who wants to enter this field is to find someone you can work with; someone whose talent you admire. Keep a note of everything you learn, so you can reflect and remember what you've learned. And also be patient; it takes a very long time.

## A day in the life

9:00 am - 12:00 pm

Looking at fabrics, furniture, antiques and hardware. Delivering these items to clients.

12:00 pm - 3:00 pm

Visiting suppliers and clients.

3:00 pm - 6:00 pm

Visiting clients and picking up furniture.