

UNIT 1 Introduction to Interior Design



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3

- Chapter 1 — The Value of Interior Design
- Chapter 2 — The Profession of Interior Design— Yesterday and Today
- Chapter 3 — Interior Design Specialty Areas of Practice
- Chapter 4 — The Business of Interior Design
- Chapter 5 — Is Interior Design for You?

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The Value of Interior Design



Chapter

1



Design Insight

“We shape the spaces that shape the human experience. This is what we do, what we create, what we give. It is how we earn our place at the human table. It is why our work is important to our clients, to our societies, and to ourselves. It is the difference we make and why we choose this noble profession.”

*International Federation of Interior Architects/Designers (IFI)
DFIE Interiors Declaration*

Learning Targets

After studying this chapter, you will be able to

- interpret the definition of interior design.
- summarize the individual value of interior design.
- assess the value of interior design for the public.
- summarize the business and economic value of interior design, including local, national, and global value.
- explain the impact of culture and society on the value of interior design.

Introduction



Interior design is one of the most rewarding professions in which to work. It is also one of the most interesting to study. In an interview with *Metropolis Magazine*, Suzan Globus—past president of the *American Society of Interior Designers (ASID)*—defined interior design as the “...creation of environments that sustain and support human beings to live to the highest of their capabilities.” This description begins to capture the creativity that is part of the process of design. It also captures the ability of well-designed spaces to shift people from a mundane, sometimes frustrating existence to a better life.

Interior Design Defined

Design, in general, is a way of making sense of things people see, interact with, or perceive in their environments. Through design, professionals try to make environments better, safer, healthier, more effective, and understandable.

When design moves into the **interior**—a space enclosed by walls, ceilings, and floors with such openings as windows and doors—it often reflects how people work and live in their spaces. An interior space, a volume within an enclosure, is a location where life takes place. These places often have unique characteristics depending on their function, the people living in or using them, and the construction of the building itself.

For the purpose of this text, the following definition captures the complexity of the interior design profession. **Interior design** is the creation of interior environments that support the function, aesthetics, and cultures of those who inhabit, live, and thrive in interior spaces. It enhances the well-being of people who live, work, and play in those interiors as well as protects their **health, safety, and well-being (HSW)**—a key responsibility of the interior design profession to produce designs that do not adversely impact the public.

The study of interior design involves a mixture of art, business, and psychology—sometimes with a different twist. Where art serves as an expression of personal emotions, interior design serves to capture and express someone else's taste, style, and needs. Where art claims its value in beauty and aesthetics alone, interior

design is an applied, practical, and functional art that addresses serious human problems. Such problems include living well with chronic illness, as well as ordinary, everyday needs such as more storage in a bedroom. People often undervalue the artistic nature of interior design for the primary reason that it is difficult to measure beauty and its impact. Therefore, it is difficult to explain and sell to potential clients. It is much easier to applaud efficiencies and productivity than it is to sell aesthetics. It is the art of interior design, however, that ensures beauty in a space, and elicits the human response—often touching the human heart, **Figure 1-1**.

Interior design as a business is similar to such professional services as medicine or dentistry. When a client leaves the interior designer's office, however, often the product a client buys is **intangible** (abstract). It is a creative idea rather than an obvious product such as a set of clean teeth or new braces. Therefore, it is important for a successful designer to have a plan that ensures the business will be profitable and protective of those who purchase his or her design services. Good business organization and management are necessary for any design practitioner. All must be familiar with the basic principles of running a business.

The field of interior design is comprised of people—the clients you serve, the team members you work with, and the people who inhabit or use the spaces you design, **Figure 1-2**. Because of this, a foundational principle of interior design is an understanding of the psychology of human needs and emotions—from dreams and disabilities to frivolity and function.



Figure 1-1 The beauty of an interior space should capture and evoke human emotion. *What aspects of this interior capture your emotions? What is your response to this space?*



Figure 1-2 Interior designers must understand the psychology of human needs and emotions. *From your perspective, what are this family's needs?*

Consider the needs of the client first. For instance, clients may ask you to design a series of spaces that they themselves cannot even envision, such as their dream homes. Others might ask you to design something you may never use yourself, such as a healthcare unit for those with disabilities. To solve both of these *client problems*, the designer must listen carefully to the client to understand and apply theories of human psychology and behavior to a given problem. Because each client problem is different,

each day in the design world is different. This is why it is a fascinating profession to study and practice.

Another set of human needs to consider and for which to design, is those of the users visiting or living in a space. For the home of a multigenerational family, the designer may need to understand needs of a grandfather, mother, and children. For an unconventional yet stylish urban restaurant, the designer should consider all ages of those who may dine there.

Designers also work with another set of people—their design team. These experts may be peers, project managers, architects, engineers, construction managers, or furniture-manufacturer representatives. The team **collaborates**, or works jointly to solve pre-design or on-site issues and problems that arise. This fulfilling—yet challenging—part of the profession involves working smoothly with a variety of personalities, opinions, and communication styles. This is essential when working with and for people.

Those who practice interior design do so with the ability to envision something not yet built. It is the only profession specializing in the creation of interior places that addresses the following needs:

- rest and renewal (home)
- productivity and efficiency (home and work)
- entertainment, healing, education, and inspiration (home, work, and all other places)

Interior design has a great deal of overlap with other fields such as architecture, graphic design, landscape design, and social sciences (for example, environmental psychology). Interior design—at its best and simplest—is a practical art, a successful business, and an application of psychology to human needs.

The Compelling Value of Interior Design

The value of interior design is multidimensional and complex. By nature its value is hidden, unnoticed, and private—even when it is public. Only a limited number of people see any given interior, and they usually do not notice it when it works. The nation is evolving into more design awareness and appreciation of the relative beauty or ugliness of the built environment—hence the avid interest in design websites.

The value of interior design is often analyzed first on how well the spaces function for whom they are designed. For example, can the user accomplish the task he or she needs to perform in the kitchen, office, or

hotel lobby? Does the user have to walk too many steps to move from one room to another? Can the user reach an object in an overhead cupboard?

“Interior design comprises a relatively small segment of the entire building industry, but its impact is enormous. From homes to hospitals, restaurants to retail stores, schools to state houses, interior design directs and influences the look, the feel, the quality and the functionality of the interior environments we move in every day.”

ASID State of the Industry Report, 2012

People also perceive the value of interior design in terms of how they feel in a well-designed interior space—their comfort or the warmth in the space. They can discuss their responses to the aesthetics of the space and its beauty. Therefore, its value equates to feelings and emotions experienced in the interior space that previously were merely dreams. Interior design is the only profession dedicated to altering the way people perceive the immediate environment. In a way, interior design shapes spaces that reassure people they matter.

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

Perspectives on the Value of Interior Design

Carrie Zwisler: “To me, the value of interior design is its ability to form environments and experiences that can both consciously and unconsciously change your life. Living in a well-designed environment can have a tremendous impact on your emotional, mental, and physical health—the same way living in a poorly designed environment can have an incredibly large negative impact. People often overlook interior design’s ability to shape productive, healthy, positive, and beautiful environments.”

Lauren Richards: “In the design world, possibilities are endless. Once a creative idea comes to mind, a designer can place that thought into a real-world application. The beauty of this concept is that *anything* can be an inspiration for a design. Anything: seen, unseen, felt, read, and heard can be translated and applied to a design. Specifically for interior design, I value the understanding that the design of a space has complete effect on the

users. From the first initial idea, which was then manipulated into a physical structure, now impacts the user’s human behavior in every aspect.”

Jason Schleisman: “Interior design is something that shapes my everyday life in ways that I often take for granted. Actively conscious of them or not, influences created by design are present in all spaces I occupy whether at home, school, work, or elsewhere. From the utensils I use to eat with, to how I access my kitchen; from the way my desk is illuminated, to how I am guided from a building’s entry to an office, interior design shapes the way I think, feel, and act. Because these influences, sometimes very subtle, have such an impact on my overall behavior, I find the power of design to be of tremendous value in fostering not only my own intangible personal well-being, but that of others, too. Sharing this power by creating spaces that enhance quality of life for others is something I find meaningful.”

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Discussion of the value of interior design focuses on the impact on public health, safety, and well-being when addressing laws, regulations, or the built environment. The **built environment** refers to manmade surroundings that provide the setting for human activity, from the largest civic buildings to the smallest personal place. The use of the health and safety language relates to laws regulating the licensing of professions that protect people, **Figure 1-3**.

The previous examples are just a few reasons why interior design may be of value to you as a career and why the public values it. The next section describes more. As you study the field and profession, record other reasons you discover. You will be amazed how many there are!

The Value of Interior Design to You

As you think about a career in interior design, it is important to examine the effects interior design has on you. Whether you realize it or not, the design of interior places wields great power and influence in your life.

Interior places shape your behaviors, feelings, and perceptions just as they will for your future clients.

- **Behaviors (or actions).** The shape of a room, the available light you have to complete a homework assignment, or the location of dishes in a kitchen can all influence your behaviors and actions.
- **Feelings.** Your choices in color, connection with nature through window placement, and symbols of individuality that mark your personal territories all influence your feelings.
- **Perceptions.** Your perceptions involve your sensory awareness of environmental elements in your space. For instance, the textural surfaces on an object (rough or smooth), the comfort in furniture (soft or firm), or privacy to meditate (visual privacy to reflect) all influence your perceptions about a space.

The influence of interior design on your daily life is very real and significant. Moreover, you have the power to control the design of the interiors you occupy by the choices you make, by what you specify, or what you buy. As a future interior designer, you will deal with these realities as you work with clients and their spaces.



Boulder Community Hospital/LaCasse Photography

Figure 1-3 Protecting the health, safety, and well-being of the public is a prime focus of the interior design profession. *Predict what types of laws and regulations protect the public in this environment.*

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A Creative Outlet

Many people enter the interior design field because it serves as an outlet for their creative ideas. They love to think differently and offer unique ideas to help others achieve their goals. They enjoy the challenge of doing something different—like nothing ever before. Part of the value of interior design involves the ability of professionals to creatively solve client problems.

Interior designers use their creativity daily. Newly-constructed buildings offer the chance to design new, innovative spaces for people who inhabit them. Similarly, the remodel of a commercial office space or the redesign of a master suite in a home both offer new problems to solve. Therefore, when you practice interior

“Skillfully designed spaces can arouse in us a sense of purpose, or a sense of the profound.”

IFI DFIE Interiors Declaration



Conrado/Shutterstock.com

design, no two days on the job and no two clients are the same. As a practicing interior designer, you constantly face new challenges.

A Fulfilling Career

Designers indicate many reasons for choosing an interior design career. For some, it is as simple as having a desire to help people. They might desire to work with residential clients who desire to build their dream homes. While for others, fulfillment comes as they help a client who has a physical impairment or disability better his or her current home to reflect changing needs. Still others desire an interior design career because of the number of people their appropriate design of a commercial space positively influences. Consider the number of people who enjoy a well-designed hospital or an elementary school that engages students through fun, yet functional learning spaces.

Others select interior design because they wish to reshape the physical environment—transforming an ordinary space to an extraordinary place. For instance, a coffee shop design may provide a reading nook for cozy privacy, or an interactive, lively place to meet and greet others. A library can be a social gathering place or a place that provokes contemplation and learning. **Figure 1-4.** Your desire to study design may be more



Nagel Photography/Shutterstock.com

Figure 1-4 A career in interior design gives you an opportunity to reshape interior environments to meet the needs of others, such as designing a coffee shop for meeting friends or a library for research and study.

The Value of Interior Design to the Public

While having a creative outlet and fulfilling career is important to you, of equal or greater importance is what you bring the public, or your clients. The profession draws many designers because of its connection with *people*. The design of quality spaces begins with caring about the people who use the space and the desire to make their work or personal spaces function better. Understanding the personal value of interior design to the public along with how to best meet human needs through effective design, helps shape who you are as a designer.

“In the spaces that are important to us, we experience not only a sense of place, but a sense of who we are, and of what we can be.”

IFI DFIE Interiors Declaration

about developing meaningful spaces that are good for the planet for the next generation than about the client.

Some choose interior design as a career because it can flex with lifestyle, age, and interests. When young, it can be a very fast-paced, energetic, exciting career that includes travel around the world. If a designer wants to start a family or remain state-side, he or she may wish to work specific hours and days in a large architectural firm. Still later, a designer may set up his or her own private firm that allows consultation with clients on specific projects that resonate with a personal value system.

Still others select interior design because of the variety of opportunities to work in both commercial and residential design with the same undergraduate degree. For example, as a professional you may work in the hospitality sector designing and managing the installation of relaxing spas in boutique hotels. After working for 15 years in that design specialty, you may desire a different challenge.

With the same interior design degree, you can move into the corporate office specialty with its different challenges and unique client needs. You may feel the rejuvenation of shifting into a different career, yet you do not need a different degree. Why not create functional, thought-provoking, and more meaningfully designed spaces that make an intellectual contribution to those exposed to them?

Personal Value

All interior places influence people at the individual level; therefore, they have personal value. People inhabit spaces and perceive them as more than shelter. In a way, they are a type of billboard on which visual

Designer Profile

Marc Herndon—The Value of Interior Design

Marc Herndon is an interior designer/project manager at Gensler in the Washington DC area and has practiced interior design for more than 13 years. Here is what Marc has to say about the value of interior design.



©Ron Pollard, courtesy of RNL

“As a practitioner, I have experienced first-hand the value interior design brings to the public. No matter where you are, be it the office, a café, a shopping mall, the library, or a hospital, you are surrounded by decisions made by an interior designer. *Interior design is about living.* It is an intimate, diverse discipline, and one that significantly influences behavior, streamlines efficiencies, protects occupants, and improves the human condition. It is a weighty responsibility and one that requires a great deal of preparation.”

You can read more about Marc’s background in Appendix B.

displays of pattern, color, and form express personalized statements. If designed accurately, these spaces reflect the preferences, styles, values, personalities, and behaviors of the users—a type of design thumbprint.

The conscious and deliberate design of interior spaces to meet people's needs and desires indicates their worth as individuals. It also indicates their perceived value to society.

Meeting Human Needs

There are many psychological, physical, and sociological human needs that the design of interior spaces should accommodate. Some of these include *territoriality*, *privacy*, the need for nature, and the desire for well-designed spaces. As designers meet these needs, the value of the profession becomes obvious.

“It is the nature of Humankind not only to use spaces, but to fill them with beauty and meaning. It is, after all, for Humanity, our ultimate client, that we design.”

IFI DFIE Interiors Declaration

The Need for Personal Territory and Privacy

Quite simply, you witness **territoriality**—the need to control a fixed area by laying claim to it—when you see people put their names on books or other personal items. Such markers define territories and communicate ownership. Markers can be as subtle as leaving a book on a chair to reserve a classroom seat. Likewise, personal markers can be very obvious, such as a sign on a piece of land that reads “private property—keep out.”

One of the major functions of territorial behavior for humans is acquiring and regulating privacy. **Privacy** is a process that involves both seeking human interaction and controlling it. People control access to themselves through selective distance or isolation.

Cultural background plays a role in regulating privacy. For example, people in Latin or Middle Eastern cultures often require less personal space during a conversation while those from Western cultures may need more personal space for comfort. Making eye contact in some cultures is a sign of honesty while in other cultures it may be a sign of disrespect or rudeness. Privacy is a complex human

need involving several other important needs, including survival, physical/psychological health, self-identity, and emotional release.

Interior designers address these diverse human needs through multiple ways. These include offering people the ability to personally control their environments (such as changing the thermostat or opening windows) or to be alone with their thoughts. For example, spaces for solitude can be designed both into commercial and residential environments. Awareness of these human needs helps designers create spaces that can assist people in being more productive and feeling less stress.

The Need for Nature

A paradox exists that humans are a species that build, but then pay thousands of dollars to travel elsewhere, such as a cabin in a remote area, in order to vacation where people are not. Why is it important for many people to be near the security of human contact yet still have an innate desire to spend time outdoors?

The most recent Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) statistic indicates people spend 90 percent of their lives indoors and only two percent in nature. Many believe that humans suffer from nature deprivation. People have an inherent need for nature.

The ways interior designers create environments can help people reconnect with nature. For example, although workers may spend 90 percent of their time indoors, having a view to the outdoors and living green plants indoors helps meet the human need for nature. Creating interiors that support the protection of the environment and preserve natural areas also meet human needs and add value to the profession, **Figure 1-5**.

The Need for Good Design

The human need for good design often has low priority in people's lives, especially if it requires money they do not have. Humans are very good at adapting to situations and dilemmas—it is part of their survival instinct. People, however, yearn for and delight in well-designed spaces, objects, signage, food, fashion, and cars. If you think of a tool that works well, you may envision one that is ergonomically sensitive to your needs. Some examples include a well-designed toothbrush, keyboard, or chair. If you think of spaces that you want designed well, you may think of desired changes for your kitchen or workplace.



Photograph: David O. Marlow/Interiors by Associates III Interior Design

Figure 1-5 Helping people connect with nature within their interior environments is just one way designers help meet client needs. *How does this environment help its occupants connect with nature?*

The design of interior spaces should adapt to people as individuals, rather than people adapting to the designs of spaces. Bad design exists. Good design matters.

It is the designer's job not only to listen to what the client wants, but to also volunteer creative, appropriate solutions based on the designer's expertise. They serve as motivators for better design and better living spaces. The designer often leaves a signature mark of quality and creativity that is pleasing and meets the needs initially expressed by the client.

Business and Economic Value

The value of interior design extends into all business sectors and is an economic advantage to clients. For example, the interior spaces of a corporate office serve as an extension of a company's values and identity. These interiors translate into customer loyalty and brand recognition that enhance business success, **Figure 1-6**.



©Judy Davis/Hochlander Davis Photography/Designed by ForrestPerkins

Figure 1-6 Building brand recognition is one way interior designers serve their commercial business clients. *What details about this space capture your interest in design?*

The business and economic value of interior design relates to its ability to attract customers. For example, a well-designed coffee shop interior attracts people to visit, spend money, and stay longer. Therefore, the design brings additional business to the restaurant, generating revenue and additional client base.

While many understand the value of quality interior spaces in the home, others are still learning how interior design brings concrete and measurable value to the workplace. A well designed space will maximize the use of real estate through the following:

- efficient space planning
- appropriate levels of natural and electric light
- incorporation of safe and appropriate designs and materials that protect human health and safety

For companies, this means increased employee satisfaction, productivity, and well-being. It can also decrease absenteeism. In addition, if you consider design through its cultural and global impact, it is a factor in economic development and cultural sustainability.

“The profession of interior design provides value to the stakeholders. It improves well-being as a factor of economic development. It provides strategic thought leadership resulting in multifaceted return on investment.”

DFIE Declaration, IFI, 2011

Local Value

Bad design has real economic consequences. In a recent study, Gensler—a well-known, world wide architectural and design firm—published a document entitled “U.S. Workplace Survey.” It explained that the effect of bad office design on lost worker productivity in the United States is estimated around \$330 billion annually for just the industry groups that were sampled in the survey. Redesigning the offices with open-access workspaces significantly improved the decision-making process, group cohesion, and team effectiveness. This, in turn, had direct impact on the organization’s financial bottom line.

On a local level, organizations often view the hiring of an interior designer as an additional, unnecessary expense. Quite the contrary is true. Instead, professional

interior designers can save their clients time and money while increasing efficiency and productivity in the workplace. This leads to a more successful bottom line for a business. For economic value, a professional designer may

■ **Bring design thinking to your project.** Design thinking is an active practice that develops in the proper environment and causes you to look at the world with evolving potential and probable possibilities. It is a nonlinear problem-solving process that combines future thinking and analysis with creativity. Rather than a system of sequential steps, the ebb-and-flow (or back-and-forth layering) of design thinking allows interior designers to envision possibilities others cannot imagine and show how out-of-the-box alternatives can work.

Interior designers bring that innovative, creative thinking to their projects to produce designs that can influence the home and workplace. Although interior designers have utilized design thinking in practice over many years, David Kelley of IDEO coined the phrase *design thinking*.

■ **Save money by doing it right the first time.** Many times, people attempt to save money by completing design work themselves (for example, a home or small commercial project). In some cases, the scope of work is minimal, and a talented consumer can complete the work. For the more complex or technical work, hiring a professional can avoid costly design-decision mistakes.

■ **Save time by completing the legwork.** Time is money. In both residential and commercial design, a professional designer has an accessible resource network to tap to save you *legwork* on tracking down the best resources for the scope of work to be completed.

■ **Capitalize on what the client already owns.** There is a myth that interior designers want to toss out whatever the client owns and purchase all new items for the spaces. This is not true. Professional designers understand the importance of memory pieces that are important to residential clients. In addition, they appreciate that a corporate office workplace cannot afford to recycle all their furnishings and equipment when moving into a new space. Professional designers are skilled in reusing existing items in the design of new or existing spaces, **Figure 1-7**.



RM Rowart Design/Rosalie M. Rowart, ASID



Photographer: Kimberly Gavini/Andrea Schumacher Interiors

Figure 1-7 Reusing existing items that a client already owns is one way interior designers show they understand the importance of a client’s possessions. *What is one memory piece you own that you would want an interior designer to work into a new design for your room? Why?*

- **Access design products, custom materials, reputable contractors, and craftspeople.** Professional interior designers have a network of quality resources for the client to access beyond the Internet and local retail stores. It is difficult to locate design products and reputable craftspeople to produce and install the design their clients prefer. The interior designer can offer references to ensure the client is pleased with the final result.
- **Manage and coordinate work, contractors, and job details.** Part of the interior designer’s education and training involves project management. You learn how to schedule, coordinate, and facilitate the final design installation into a facility. Shortening the downtime for your client’s business can save real dollars.
- **Enhance spaces that invite repeat business.** Many commercial interiors, if designed well, create an engaging atmosphere that invites people to visit the space again and again—bringing additional business to the owner. For example, a fun, community ice cream shop—designed well—may invite individuals to return again and again as a family tradition.

Good design offers improved health, safety, privacy, security, productivity, profitability, employee and customer satisfaction, and sustainability.

National Value

The downturn in the U.S. economy in 2008 was in part due to the overbuilding and overinflating of residential and commercial real estate—designed spaces and places. Many investors never thought such real estate would lose value. This led to a global real estate bubble resulting in a tremendous amount of vacant space. Another value of interior design involves rethinking possible uses for space the initial purpose of which no longer has market demand.

The use of interior designers in residential design and renovation projects clearly links to the economic conditions of the time. When the economy is good, more people are likely to use interior design services. Commercial real estate projects requiring interior design professionals, however, often occur regardless of current economic conditions. For example, the budget allocations for the building of a school or a remodeling project typically happen over a period of

years. This makes such projects more affordable over time. An added economic advantage of such projects is that clients use these renovations to enhance their business images in the community.

Global Value

Presented as the creative industry of the twenty-first century, many perceive design as having a serious advantage over other industries for increasing the global economy. As developing nations struggle to compete with such traditional industries as manufacturing, creative industries—such as design—are becoming the new knowledge economy. The basis of a **knowledge economy** is on investing in such intangible assets as leadership, management, and human skills—such as the ability to design.

Gary Becker, a Nobel Laurette, indicated that ideas drive the economy. The transformation of IBM is an example of Becker's point. After selling its computer manufacturing divisions to China, IBM now licenses ideas and sells services. According to the *International Federation of Interior Architects/Designers (IFI) President's Update in 2011*, design is perceived as a skill needed to creatively address such world problems as expanding employment, stimulating urban regrowth, and improving quality of life.

The value of interior design is globally needed, yet universally misunderstood. Its perceived value varies in different parts of the world as illustrated by its growth in individual countries.

- In Africa, the profession of interior design is just beginning to receive recognition, and therefore holds minimal value at this time.
- In Europe, interior design is more often referred to as interior architecture and has a long-standing reputation and value.
- In China, interior design is a celebrated profession that is highly valued. Design is under the control of the local and national Chinese government rather than individuals.

In the United States, interior designers work in a variety of fields such as architecture. According to the *American Society of Interior Designers' (ASID) State of the Industry Report*, among employed designers, about 20 percent work in architectural firms. Gensler—a world-renown architecture and planning firm—claimed the top spot in a recent *Top 250 Architecture Firms* list, which ranks U.S. companies based on architectural revenue from the prior year. Gensler's growth in its \$764 million in revenue was directly related to *global growth* according to Andy Cohen, Gensler's executive director. Recently, Gensler opened seven offices in burgeoning cities such as São Paulo and Bangkok. The global value of interior

Designer Profile

Christopher D. Martinez—Importance of Interior Design

Christopher D. Martinez has practiced design for several years in the Greater New York area at Poggenpohl, a German company specializing in high-end kitchens. Read about Christopher's view on the importance of interior design.



Margaret Mosiej, Owner and Principal, Poggenpohl Paramus, LLC

"As an emerging practitioner, I believe that interior design is of great importance primarily because of its ability to transcend what is physically seen. The context in which design exists goes deeper than that of surface level aesthetics, although this is a component. It affects the senses, the mind, and even the spirit. From the very heart is the need to change, impact, and improve. Interior design takes on this role; namely by empowering one who enters these spaces peace and affording them opportunities of improved health and welfare."

You can read more about Christopher's background in Appendix B.

design is highly regarded when firms that employ many designers, such as Gensler, are contracted to complete projects in other countries.

On behalf of their clients, interior designers specify interior materials, products, and furnishings from around the world. The *ASID State of the Industry Report* indicated that interior designers specify over \$46 billion in products every year. Their influence and impact in other parts of the world is often clearly significant. For example, interior designers can diminish the demand for tropical woods and instead increase the use of rapidly renewable materials. Interior designers have direct influence on the planet by what products they use in interior spaces—a direct global value.

As part of the built-environment team, interior designers work closely with the construction industry. In the world, construction constitutes over 10 percent of the global **Gross World Product (GWP)**—the sum value of all final products and services produced worldwide in a given year. As indicated in a recent *IFI President's Update*, China alone, where many buildings and cities are under construction, is responsible for one-sixth of all construction activity due to its population growth. Entire cities in China are planned and built rather than evolving over time from small towns to large metropolitan areas. How Chinese design begins to accommodate all aspects of life for the Chinese people has, and will continue to have, global impact on design. As an example, the focus of China's government and national policy on design rather than manufacturing can be clearly seen in their product tags that read *designed in China* rather than *made in China*.

The *International Federation of Interior Architects/Designers (IFI)* is the global voice and authority for professional Interior Architects/Designers. In 110 countries, IFI represents 270,000 designers, educators, and industry stakeholders in the international design community. IFI holds an annual **congress**—a formal meeting of delegates—in various countries to discuss global objectives and initiatives for interior design.

In the fall of 2011, the IFI held a congress in Taiwan, Taipei. At this congress, they made public the *IFI Interiors Declaration* after holding worldwide focus groups about the global value of interior design. (A **focus group** is a small group of people who study a response to something, such as a product, to determine the response of a larger population.) This document defines the value, relevance, responsibility, culture, knowledge, business, and identity of interior architecture/interior design. The

global economic value of interior design was enhanced through such marketability and visibility. Quotes from this document are threaded throughout this book to raise your awareness of agreed-on global philosophies related to interior design.

Cultural and Societal Value

Interior spaces are vessels, or containers, for materials and artifacts that communicate items of cultural value in an unspoken language within physical environments. What does this mean? In essence, it means that the objects and belongings you surround yourself with reflect who you are and who you want to become. They reflect the culture and society in which you live, learn, play, and dream. The rooms you design never cease to send messages. Perhaps Shashi Caan, previous IFI president said it best, "Our interiors are the repositories of our memories and the containers of our dreams, aspirations, wants, and needs. They are the reflections of us, our society, our culture, and our time." See **Figure 1-8**.



Photographer: Rhonda Grimberg/Interior Designer: Andrea Schumacher Interiors

Figure 1-8 Affirming cultural and social value is one way the interior designer helps clients. *What features in this image affirm cultural and social value?*

Cultural Value

As globalization brings cultural changes in the U.S. and throughout the world, interior designers are striving to understand the new design preferences and requirements of changing populations. For example, cultural differences in a home may be observed in the

- meaning and symbolism of color usage
- adjacency of private to public rooms
- placement of front entry doors
- location of the family altar
- amount of space needed to perform a kitchen task
- location of where individuals sleep
- preferred size of dining spaces

Both public and personal spaces should reflect the cultures of those using and living in such places. Sensitivity to various cultural needs is only one way of communicating societal value, **Figure 1-9**.

Societal Value

Design can be a powerful force and have significant social impact. Often, the phrase *socially responsible design* communicates the perception that designers have a

responsibility to effect real change in the world through better design for all people. For example, are the materials or processes for manufacturing carpet good for the planet and therefore, future generations? The perception is that through good design, it is possible to address social, environmental, and economic issues. The societal value of interior design is both global and local.

“Great spaces are indispensable for great creative cultures. They encourage connections between people, ideas and entire fields of thought.”

IFI 2011

Design is human centered. Designers must think of people in a holistic way. As a profession, interior design has a history of addressing issues relating to social responsibility such as sustainable design and design that meets the needs of all people, including those who have special needs. Interior designers are also designing for a growing population of people who view the world differently, including those who may have autism, traumatic brain injuries, and Alzheimer’s disease. For example, the ideal workspace for those who have some level of autism or traumatic brain injury



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Figure 1-9 Culture can impact dining space and furnishings.

is a distraction-free environment which eliminates background noise, activity, bright colors, and the flicker and hum of fluorescent lights. This is at odds with the trend today for collaborative workplaces.

Emerging more recently is the concept of *socially beneficial design*. This movement concerns

- the way problems and needs are defined
- how solutions are developed
- how those solutions are implemented

For example, suppose a rural downtown area is no longer attracting the community. Through a process, town leaders identify the problem and needs and address them through design. The community develops a new town center boasting a gathering space for different age groups that invites new life into the downtown. The goal is to avoid shallow design concepts and instead evoke societal change. Critical skills for socially beneficial design include the ability to prioritize and to be empathetic. With the help of designers, communities can address social issues of those who are homeless, who have fewer advantages, and those with physical

limitations. This is one area in which the younger generation is going to change the world by caring.

Ethnic and Societal Identity

Interior design shapes spaces that reassure people of all cultures that they matter. Communal spaces in many countries reflect self, family values, gender, class, cultural heritage, and religious affiliations. The home may serve as a sacred space (religion), a small kitchen for personal space (gender), and a large place in which families eat together (social). The interior spaces that hold belongings—both group and individual—capture ethnic and social identity. Interior spaces foster kinship and familiarity because they encourage interaction and exchange of ideas. The conscious design of these spaces celebrates cultural diversity and, if acceptable, individuality, **Figure 1-10**.

The practice of interior design is a unique, ever-changing, fun, and innovative discipline. It is a business, an art, a study of people, a unique way of thinking, **Figure 1-11**. It involves intense problem-solving skills as well



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Figure 1-10 The design of a space that fosters kinship and familiarity helps provide comfort and reassurance to clients. *What social values does the design of this space affirm?*



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Figure 1-11 The practice of interior design offers the designer an opportunity to meet critical client needs in a unique, creative way.

as people skills. It involves business acumen as well as a graphic ability to communicate design by computer or hand sketching. The interior environment is composed of procedures, processes, and products. However, the critical element is the person who inhabits the space. This variety keeps design professionals engaged in the profession for many decades.

“As a creative enterprise, interior design and interior architecture are a mode of cultural production. They are place-makers that interpret, translate, and edit cultural capital. In a global world, interior design and interior architecture must play a role in facilitating the retention of cultural diversity.”

IFI Declaration, 2011

Chapter

1

Review and Assess

Summary

- Interior design supports the function, aesthetics, and culture along with protecting the health, safety, and well-being of those who inhabit spaces.
- Interior design involves working with many people, including clients, team members, and people who inhabit designed spaces.
- As a valued profession, interior design is multidimensional and complex.
- Interior design has personal value to designers and clients and shapes behaviors, feelings, and perceptions about a space.
- A fulfilling career in interior design provides an opportunity to use creativity to meet the needs of others.
- The design of quality spaces begins with caring about people and the desire to make work and personal spaces function better.
- Understanding psychological, physical, and sociological needs of humans is important to designing spaces to meet such needs.
- Effectively designed spaces offer an economic advantage to clients and enhance customer loyalty and brand recognition.
- Interior design has local, national, and global value that impacts economies.
- Interior designers support cultural value by creating designs that reflect client cultures.
- Interior design is human-centered in recognizing the special needs of people and in shaping interior spaces that support cultural and ethnic identity.
- Interior design is socially responsible in addressing such issues as sustainable design and design for all.

Chapter Vocabulary

Write the definition of each of the following terms. Then write a sentence using each term in a design-related context.

built environment
collaborate
congress
design thinking
focus group

Gross World Product (GWP)
health, safety, and well-being
(HSW)
intangible
interior

interior design
knowledge economy
privacy
territoriality

Review and Study

- Summarize the definition of interior design in your own words.
- How is interior design similar to and different from other professional services?
- For what three needs is interior design the only profession to specialize in the creation of interior places to meet these needs?
- What are three ways that make the value of interior design compelling?
- What are three ways the value of interior design affects you?
- Contrast the human needs of territoriality and privacy. Give a personal example of each.
- How can interior designers help support peoples' need for nature and add value to the profession?
- Name three ways that a well-designed space maximizes real estate and supports business and economic value.
- On the local level, how can interior designers save their clients money while increasing efficiency and productivity in the workplace?
- In contrast to residential design projects, why do commercial interior design projects often occur regardless of national economic conditions?
- What is a *knowledge economy*?
- Give an example showing how interior designers impact global value through product specification.
- What is defined in the International Federation of Interior Architects/Designers (IFI)—Interiors Declaration?
- Name three cultural differences in a home that designers should understand that may influence design preferences.
- Contrast socially responsible design with socially beneficial design.

Critical Analysis

- Analyze.** Reread and analyze the *Design Insight* quotation at the beginning of the chapter. In your own words, write a summary of what this means to you regarding your potential career as an interior designer.
- Evaluate.** Evaluate the value of design in your community. Create a design chart including the following sections: *Public Value* (meeting human needs), *Economic Value*, and *Culture/Societal Value*. As you observe your community in the next 48 hours, note examples of how the value of design is evident in each of the areas. Discuss your findings with the class. What similarities and differences were noted by your classmates?
- Infer relationships.** The author states that “conscious and deliberate design of interior spaces to meet people’s needs and desires indicates their worth as individuals.” Infer how well-designed interiors support the worth and value of individuals in society. Cite the text and if necessary, additional reliable Internet or print resources to support your inferences.
- Analyze problems.** Think about social issues in your community. What are some societal issues that could be addressed through empathy, caring, and good design?
- Analyze meaning.** According to the author “the value of interior design is globally needed, yet universally misunderstood.” What does the author mean by this statement? Discuss your responses in class. Cite the text and additional reliable Internet or print resources to support your analysis.
- Identity evidence.** Take an actual or virtual (Internet) field trip to two or more restaurants in your community. Study and analyze the cultural design in each restaurant. Demonstrate effective verbal skills by citing evidence that communicates a specific culture (for example, a cowboy hat versus Thai colors). To extend this activity, take pictures of various restaurants (with the owner’s permission) that support your findings.

Think like a Designer

- Value video clip.** Use a digital camera and a school-approved video creation application to create a video about the value of interior design to the public and to clients. Share your video with the class or post it on a school-approved website or blog.
- Reading.** Go to the website for the International Federation of Interior Architects/Designers and click on the link for the *IFI Interiors Declaration*. Read the entire declaration. What does this declaration state about the value and relevance of interior design? What does it indicate about the role of interior design in culture and business? Discuss your findings in class.
- Cultural identification.** As a new acquaintance enters one of your spaces, ask him or her to describe the culture in which you live or who you are. Just as your clothing choices send a message, your interior spaces send one (or more), too. Write a summary regarding what you learned about how others perceive you and your culture.
- Writing.** Read the following statement from the *ASID State of Industry Report*: “While not all interiors are created by design professionals, interior design can, and does, contribute to addressing a wide range of social, economic, and health issues confronting our nation.” Select one social, economic, or health issue confronting the nation, and write a paper that reflects how interior designers can assist in addressing or solving the problem. Use the text and additional Internet or print resources to support your reflection.
- Speaking.** Apply your oral communication skills clearly, concisely, and effectively to explain the difference between *socially responsible design* and *socially beneficial design*. Research examples of each to enhance your explanation of each type of design.
- Writing.** Use the text and additional reliable resources to write an essay on why interior design is “...a unique, ever-changing, fun, and innovative discipline.” Share your essay with the class.

Design Application

- Field observation.** Raise your awareness of “behaviors, feelings, and perceptions” of interior spaces through observation. Visit both a commercial/public space (such as cell phone store) and a residential space (such as a kitchen) that you do not often use. Request permission of the owners to observe how people use the place and act in the space. In the commercial space, note the human behavior that is guided by entrances, displays, or service desks. How does the interior space planning and decoration in these spaces influence human choices and actions? Where were your feelings and perceptions about these spaces? Give an oral presentation to the class about what you observed regarding the influence of interior design.
- Portfolio builder.** When you apply for a job or community service or to a college, you may need to tell others about how you are qualified for this position. A portfolio is a selection of related materials that you collect and organize. These materials show your qualifications, skills, and talents. These materials may be in the form of certificates of achievement, written essays on a number of design-related issues, and a transcript of your school grades and courses. Two types of portfolios are commonly used: print portfolios and electronic portfolios (e-Portfolios).
 - Use the Internet to search reliable sources for print portfolio and e-Portfolio. Read articles about each type. Then briefly describe each type in your own words.
 - You will be creating a portfolio in this class. Write a paragraph describing which type of portfolio you prefer. What might be the benefit of creating both?
- Portfolio builder.** After reading the chapter, write your own definition of interior design. Save this definition in your portfolio for future reference.