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Achieving brilliant design solutions



Jerold Richland

As seasoned professionals we skirt major pitfalls, avoid egotistical traps and confusion that hinder the adventure of co-creating something entirely new that expresses the vision of the partners in the group—the design team and the client collaborators. Early on we realized that too many cooks ruin the stew. Now we request smaller design committees and strive to maximize our working relationship with excellent rapport and aggressive listening skills. Every idea is considered and usually excellent contributions evolve.

A while ago we were invited to work with a design committee that searched three years for a lobby carpet. The lobby is situated on a classic historical Greenwich Village building. We interviewed the three-member design committee for preferences and overall design intentions. We offered them samples of various design directions and they chose a rich carpet that set the tone for the décor and visually grounded the space. After this, all design issues were resolved easily. In this situation, as with many which are similar, one member is more impatient and proactive. They monitor creativity and logistics as to expedite completion, a great asset to the project. Each decision has to be refined and tested in the new environment with new features and new lighting ambiance: light levels to be balanced with new colors that have been refined.

Presently when you enter this room everything is beautiful, harmonious and inviting. It looks so good that you assume it was the original intention of the architect. Residents adore the makeover, and are proud to show it to guests.

For an Inwood building we were provided with a very creative and individual design committee. Before our coming on board, they were investigating various color

combinations for their lobby and hallways. We offered them viable schemes that they could submit to the residents for approval. We showed them a new glass architectural file design for the lobby elevator wall. They loved the idea, which was novel after searching through many "looks." This material will boost the visual energy of the lobby and instills architectural integrity and quality. The committee is very responsive to the aesthetics of creating a new scheme.

The synergy and surprise developments that arise with effective collaboration empower the creativity and direction of significant design. This process builds on input, combining various ideas to reveal a new entity that is defined by its uniqueness and special relationship to its surroundings. It answers the query: what does it ask for to be complete? In its own time it is the quintessential resolution of what the room requires.

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