



You just got the keys to your new home or decided to finally proceed with that long overdue renovation, so what's next? When we meet with our clients for the first time, we discuss their wish lists and watch their eyes light up as they describe their future space. I am going to share some valuable advice for you to keep in mind when looking to work with a designer.

Rule #1: Do your research.

"What is your budget?" As a professional Interior Design Firm, we know that the budget will be determined by the scope of work, construction challenges, finishes and so many other factors but it's interesting to hear what our clients think their dream spaces will cost them. Before getting involved in a new custom build or renovation, it's important to have realistic expectations for your budget. Visit home and trade shows. Talk to suppliers regarding appliances you're interested in, kitchens and countertops, hardwood and tile. Put

A Goal without a Plan is Just a Wish

actual figures against this list and you'll find yourself enlightened just by doing a little bit of homework. Once you've done that, it's time to bring in the experts.

Another piece of advice is to consider saving money for the unexpected - we recommend setting aside 10-20 percent of your budget. If you ultimately do not need it then you can put it towards a splurge item.

Rule #2: Hire professionals.

This is your home and you wouldn't hand it over to just anyone. Hire a Designer! The value we bring to a space is so much more than making sure you've chosen the right shade of white for your trim or blue for your walls. A professional Interior Designer will provide you with creative solutions to maximize your cubic footage, consider traffic flow patterns, functional furniture layouts, mill-work solutions, determine how to effectively light your space, consider special electrical requirements, suggest furniture, fixtures and equipment that will perform for you and your family, and take extra care to ensure that what is designed can actually be done. "Buy the best and you will only cry once" -



Miles Redd. I often (half-joking) will say that I feel like I've done my job when my clients can't make a decision without me. There is value in choosing to work with someone who has a clear vision of where you want to be. You have to trust in them and their abilities and follow through with the plan.

Rule #3: Don't chicken out!

Halfway through the build process you may start to get cold feet on that fabulous accent wallpaper your designer chose or coloured kitchen cabinets. Now and again, we will get a panicked call from our clients onsite regarding a selection that they want to change when it's only half-done. Changing your mind midway changes budgets and timelines so avoid this.

Let us help bring your home to life this winter and do what we do best. You'll love the experience and the end result, we promise.



Cynthia Soda is the Owner and Principal Interior Designer of **Soda Pop Design Inc.**, a multi-disciplinary interior design firm providing complete custom renovation and design services for residential and commercial clients throughout the GTA. **Soda Pop Design Inc** focuses on merging the client's lifestyle, personality and architecture to create customized liveable luxury.

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