



Session #7



Have Your Touch Base



Appointment



The Interior Design Business
Success Studio

- ✓ Follow your system...
- ✓ You've pre-qualified on the phone,
- ✓ Evaluated the project in their home,
- ✓ Established the expectations with your chat,
- ✓ Had your contract signed with deposit in hand,
- ✓ Confirmed your schedule,
- ✓ Stayed focused on your framework, to create the best design for your client,
- ✓ Met for your "Touch Base" appointment,
- ✓ Finalized your selections and verified the details,
- ✓ Get ready for your Final Presentation!

This is what we have already discussed and learned before...

- ✓ Follow your system...
- ✓ You've pre-qualified on the phone,
- ✓ Evaluated the project in their home,
- ✓ Established the expectations with your chat...getting clear with priorities, their budget, their timeframe,
- ✓ Had your contract signed with deposit in hand, never leave without it
- ✓ Confirmed your schedule so they understand your timeframe,
- ✓ Stayed focused on your framework, to create the best design for your client,
- ✓ Met for your "Touch Base" appointment....more about what you don't want to say so you're not giving away your talent for free
- ✓ Finalized your selections and verified the details...verify that what you have selected is available, in the price range, you can put a piece on hold or the vendor can get it.
- ✓ Get ready for your Final Presentation after the "Touch Base" discussion!
- ✓ Mastermind Session is the final presentation. We're almost ready.
- ✓ Let's get started! You're already 10 steps ahead of your competition.

You're now 10 steps ahead of your competition!



You're already 10 steps ahead of your competition!

I have worked with so many designers in the design business for 20 years...

So many designers think they're automatically good designers without training or a system because they have good taste.

Not true: You have to have a system to have a successful businesses, doing it in order, and have a foundation in place already.

Be grateful that you have this system!

YOU'RE GOING TO
KNOCK THEIR
SOCKS OFF
WITH...

Your connection,
Your professionalism,
Your design talent,
Your consideration for their
needs,
Your consideration,
Your presentation,
Stellar Customer service.

It's about more than just your design skills. You ARE going to blow them away with:

- Your connection...how you can capture what they want...a “connection” with them
- Your professionalism...you have a system, contracts, have contacts to get what they want
- Your design talent...you can interpret what they want...it'll blow them away
- Your consideration for their needs...their family's needs, their space needs, their time
- Your consideration for everything in their way of living, the whole project, whether their family likes it
- Your presentation needs to WOW them with these things.
- Stellar Customer service.....carry your phone everywhere!

If you follow these concepts, you will be successful!



You are selling a lifestyle,
Every choice has a reason,
WOW them with your design.



Remember that you are selling a lifestyle, not just new furniture.

There should be a reason behind every choice you make for your client and you should be able to convey that to them.

Now let's talk about how to WOW them with your design!

- We will be jumping into more of the mindset behind designing a space.
- Anyone can make a room pretty, but I'm here to help you make a career for yourself and help you build a successful business.

Have your Touch Base Appointment

- Have your pieces ready in a casual format.
- We are just double checking, testing the water, making sure we're on the same page.
- Have a back pocket choice.
- Present two ideas to choose from.

YOU ARE
CREATING
THE BEST
DESIGN
FOR THEM



Have Your Touch Base Appointment

You don't want the client to cancel the appointment.

Let them know you're a true professional and you want them to be involved and not give up; this is just a confirmation appointment, making sure the great design you have created is exactly what they envision and to get them excited about the project.

Have your pieces ready in a casual format: "I just wanted to run some things by you."

- We are just double checking, testing the water, making sure you're on the same page
 - Don't give them the information so completely that they could take the ideas and run on their own; this is part of the design process.
 - Make sure it's what they envisioned and you're on target and that it's not the final design.
- Be sure they understand that you're not done...just part of the design process.

If something is questionable, have a back pocket choice: If you have 3 fabrics as focal points and they are hesitant about the first, have some choices. Let them know it's not the final design and actually you haven't spent too much time and they haven't spent too much money. Just \$250 design fee.

Sometimes things are confusing and need to be clarified.

- Using "contemporary" as an example, use sample pictures to clarify what the client thinks "contemporary" is...maybe ruffles and gingham, maybe rocket ship patterns, or space Jetsons.
- Continue having the client describe in detail exactly what they envision, like samples of arm styles or legs of a sofa, style of chandelier, not giving them enough information so they can do it themselves.

- Have back pocket choices
 - Present two ideas, with **YOUR** first choice first
 - Don't show your hand unless you have to
- You're going to look like a genius, or very well prepared!**

Don't imply you're done; this is part of the process and part of creating a design.

They will never like anything you bring them if they think it's the final design right at the beginning. Be sure to tell them it's not set in stone.

Have examples to back up statements like "solid rug with a pattern." Definitely needs to be clarified. Now is the time to figure out what is meant.

Example: Customer loved pastels, showed her Laura Ashley and then a conditional of a beach with soft pastels. She chose the Laura Ashley and if I had not done this step, I would have been "back to the drawing board".

KEEP
THINGS
MOVING

Listen to their concerns
“I want to be sure I
understand...”

Feel, Felt, Found

Feel, Felt, Found

This is where you ask things like, “How do you feel about this piece? I want to make sure this piece won’t overpower the room.”

Is this wall paper too dark because it makes the room feel closed in?

You’re getting feedback by listening to their concerns.

Find that by balancing light and dark in a room, you can create different solutions.

Psychological method is responded to well by humans!

Letting them know you’re connected to them by asking questions, remembering your time is valuable.

KEEP THINGS MOVING

You're not trying to be rude, but you ARE being protective of your time and your talent.

Do not give them details that they can take elsewhere.

Don't let them micro-manage your process.

Be flexible

Get them excited for the great Presentation.

Keep Things Moving

You're not trying to be rude, but you ARE being protective of your time and your talent.

Do not give them details that they can take elsewhere and try to shop your prices.

Don't let them micro-manage your process.

Be flexible...if a sofa leg reminds them of their grandmother, feel free to change it.

Get them excited for the great Presentation.

RE-CONFIRM! “We are on track to have your project finished by...”

“Has anything changed in your timeframe?”

“Are you comfortable custom ordering A piece. You won’t be able to change your mind after ____.”

“Is your husband still on board with us working without him?”



Re-Confirm: “I’m so excited for your presentation next week! We are on track to have your project finished by...”

“Has anything changed in your timeframe?”

“Are you comfortable custom ordering a piece? I’m going to do everything I can to show you the size and scale of your new furniture. I might take you to see a piece in person and I’ll always have a swatch of fabric for you to see. You won’t be able to change your mind after _____.”

Start having these difficult discussions now! Get them used to the way you communicate.

“Is your husband still on board with us working without him?”

Let them know that you are still concerned about their budget and their time. That you have kept all of their needs in mind and that you’ve been working REALLY hard to create the best design ever just for them.

MAKE YOUR FINAL SELECTIONS!



“OK, so our final presentation is next ____, I’m so excited to show you everything pulled together. We will be finalizing all of our decisions, and will need to have a deposit to get everything ordered.”

Make your final selections

“OK, so our final presentation is next _____, I’m so excited to show you everything pulled together. I know you’re going to just love it. Now remember, I am checking the status on everything that I’m selecting and I’m even putting pieces on hold. We will be finalizing all of our decisions, and will need to have a deposit to get everything ordered. I don’t want to lose anything because we delayed this step, and then have to start the design all over again.”

Be sure they understand the process about deposits, and the final presentation.

4 Biggest connection killers:

Fear

Control

Pride

Anticipation

Don't forget that you are dealing with people's emotions and not just designing a space for them.

These little 4 emotions (fear, control, pride, anticipation) that your clients are experiencing can topple their happiness and your success. Remember that all of these emotions are going through your client's mind when they call you for the first time, as you're presenting the design or waiting for the furniture to come in.

A side story...

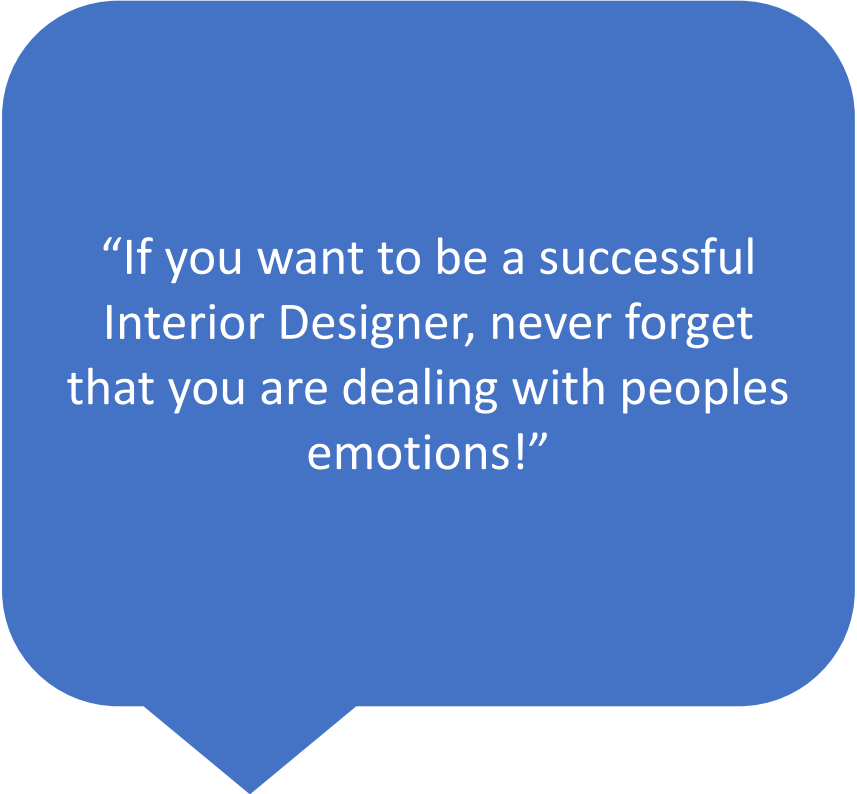
One of my favorite college experiences was when a group of us design students were afforded a private meeting with a renowned designer, Vicente Wolfe, in New York. Of course, we all wanted to know what it took to get to his level of success.

The most valuable thing we learned from him was that being a great interior designer requires three things:

1.) Your job is more about psychology than design. Maybe your client is rejecting everything because they are mad at their husband, been in poor traffic, are having a crappy day.

2.) You have to be great at business and take it seriously.

3.) The third most important part of being a designer is the design aspect. It's not the number one or even number two most important components of being a great designer!



“If you want to be a successful Interior Designer, never forget that you are dealing with peoples emotions!”

FEAR: REASSURE WITH YOUR UNDERSTANDING.



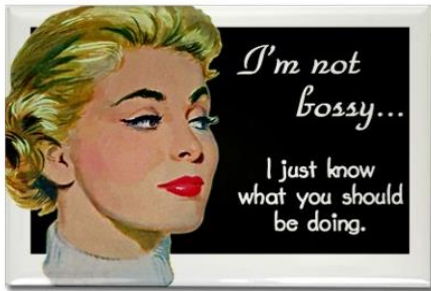
- Afraid of making a mistake.
- Worried It's going to cost more than they'd planned.
- What if they don't like it when you're finished.
- They aren't sure you're going to listen to them.

The number one “connection killer” that you will encounter with clients is FEAR.

You can overcome this by reassuring them with your understanding of their fears:

- Afraid of making a mistake. Afraid you won't do what they want.
- Worried it's going to cost more than they planned.
- What if they don't like it when you're finished?
- They aren't sure you're going to listen to what they want.
- Any time you feel their tension, it's probably fear. Try to understand what they are afraid of and do your best to reassure them.

CONTROL: A PROFESSIONAL DESIGNER IS IN CONTROL OF THE PROJECT, BUT DOESN'T TAKE OVER THE HOME.



- They are used to doing things their way.
- It's naturally unsettling to have someone else take charge of YOUR house.
- *They* know best how they want it.
- What if they don't explain what they want clearly?

We all like to be in control and clients are afraid of losing theirs.

It's naturally unsettling to have someone else take charge of YOUR house.

It takes a lot of willpower to let go and let someone else take control of your home.

They know best how they want it. So they are going to try and micromanage, worry, and second-guess.

What if they don't explain what they want clearly and they end up paying for something they hate?

You need to keep control without implying that you are taking over their home.

Use the key words, "In my professional opinion..." to regain control as the expert.

PRIDE: COMPLIMENT SUCCESSES, AND EMPATHIZE WITH THE CHALLENGES OF DESIGNING. PROFESSIONAL NOT PERFECT.

- They should be able to do this themselves.
- It's embarrassing to point out their past mistakes.
- Is it going to be worth the money? Will it be enough?
- What if what they want is ugly?

- It's tough to swallow your pride and admit you need help.
- They should be able to do this themselves.
- It's embarrassing to point out their past mistakes.
- Is it going to be worth the money? Will it be enough?
- What if what they want is ugly?

Empathize with them by saying something like, "I completely understand. I have a hard time with my own home too because we get so emotionally invested in our own homes. Don't feel bad if you are struggling with your own home because everyone struggles with this."

ANTICIPATION: STAY TWO STEPS AHEAD, AND KEEP THEM INVOLVED WITH THE PROCESS. ANTICIPATE THEIR ANTICIPATION.



- Why is it taking so long.
- How can they buy something that they haven't seen in person.
- Will their family like what they picked out?
- Can't they have the furniture as it comes in? They've paid for it after all.

Why is it taking so long?

How can they buy something that they haven't seen in person?

Will their family like what they picked out?

Why can't they have the furniture as it comes in? They've paid for it after all.