

Professional Practice for Interior Designers

By Christine M. Piotrowski

This updated edition of the most comprehensive business guide for designers covers the interior design profession in a clear and well-organized style. From establishing a practice to managing a project, the reader progresses through all aspects of the business, whether in a small or large firm. The new edition includes additional information on ethics, as well as a companion website containing sample forms and other resources. This book is recommended by the NCIDQ as preparation for their professional registration examination.

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Professional Practice for Interior Designers Summary Details

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Five Important Success Points for a Successful Interior Design Practice

1. **Remember that profit and revenue are not the same thing.** Even the sole practitioner working from home has operating expenses, and these expenses must be considered before realizing a profit. Profit occurs after business expenses for operations, such as salaries, rent, and travel are deducted from charges to the client. These operating expenses reduce profitability, just as not charging for shipment and delivery charges on any goods sold to clients. Thus, revenue is the amount of funds brought in via fees and sales of goods. That revenue by itself is NOT profit.
2. **Never begin design work without a contract signed by the client.** More than ever, clients today are looking for free advice. Offering design ideas before a contract has been executed can mean doing design for a client that goes to someone else for the completion of a project. Talk to the client about their needs, as it is the only way you can determine what the project is all about and how much to charge. Refrain from offering substantive design ideas until after a contract has been signed. If the client is reluctant to sign an agreement, they might also be reluctant to go forward with any design work.
3. **Use a clear scope of services.** The scope of services defines what you will do for the client. It determines how much you will charge—and even how you might charge. It also creates the limits as to what will not be done, although these extra services can be included—for an extra charge. The scope of services should be detailed in the order in which you will perform the work. This helps the client understand how the project will be done. Of course, you must be prepared to perform all the services you include in the scope discussion, or hire someone who can—perhaps as a consultant.
4. **Prepare an Annual Plan.** An annual plan helps a design firm see clearly where it wants to go and what it wants to achieve during the coming year. Having direction helps the business owner make decisions on items

such as: what jobs to take and which to pass up; appropriate fees for each job; marketing expenses and approaches; and to help make hiring decisions.

5. Keep accurate time records. Even if you don't charge by the hour, keep accurate time records. Recording time helps determine how long each type of project takes. This will help determine fees and other charges for similar projects. Time recording can also assist in determining if there are certain kinds of projects that take too much time for the amount of revenue earned. Many clients, especially those charged by the hour, will want to see time records when billed. Commit to record work for non-billable time as well, which will help you clearly see if you are wasting time on tasks that could be better accomplished by an assistant.

From the Back Cover

The *Fifth Edition* of the premier guide to interior design business practices—now with a companion website

For more than twenty years, *Professional Practice for Interior Designers* has remained the leading choice for educators teaching interior design business practice as well as for professionals seeking to advance in their own practices. This ASID/Polisky Prize winner covers the full range of legal, financial, management, marketing, administrative, and ethical issues faced by interior designers today and is recommended by the NCIDQ for exam preparation. Written in a clear, down-to-earth style, it covers the topics and tools essential for planning, building, and maintaining a thriving commercial or residential interior design business.

This *Fifth Edition* is fully current with the latest business practices and offers a range of new features:

- **User-friendly, revised chapter organization** that makes information even easier to find and follow—with material arranged by general business practices, organizing and managing a practice, and job search and career options
- **New or updated coverage** of professional responsibility, social media marketing, sustainable design practice, job strategies, and other key subjects
- **Additional "What Would You Do?" case studies** that challenge you to respond to issues faced by interior designers today
- **Extra pedagogical tools**, including chapter objectives and "NCIDQ Component" boxes throughout the book that flag material relevant for the exam
- **Companion website** containing sample forms and other resources

Companion Website: wiley.com/go/ppid

About the Author

CHRISTINE M. PIOTROWSKI, FASID, IIDA, currently based in Phoenix, Arizona, provides consulting services to interior designers on business practices. She is a former professor of interior design at Northern Arizona University and has more than twenty-five years of commercial and residential design experience. She has won the ASID/Polisky Prize twice and received honorable mention once. Her books include *Becoming an Interior Designer*, *Designing Commercial Interiors*, and *Problem Solving and Critical Thinking for Designers*.

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