DESIGNING COMMERCIAL INTERIORS

THIRD EDITION

CHRISTINE M. PIOTROWSKI, FASID, IIDA

WILEY

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I first want to dedicate this to my family and friends for all their support.

I also want to dedicate this book to all the designers and students who have made this a better world by their efforts in the design of commercial interiors.

To my parents, Casmier and Martha, for watching over me while this was written.

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Contents

Preface xv
Acknowledgments xvii

1 Commercial Interior Design 1

Historical Overview 3
Understanding the Client's Business 5
Working in Commercial Interior Design 6
Where the Jobs Are 11
BOX Working in a Small versus Working in a Large Firm 12
Professionalism 15
Professional Competency 15
Licensing and Registration 16
Ethics 17
Professional Growth 18
Summary 19
Bibliography and References 20
Internet Resources 21

2 Forces That Shape Commercial Interior Design 23

Cultural Sensitivity 24
Global Marketplace 27
Sustainable Design 31
Overview 32
BOX Environmental Stewardship 34
LEED Certification and Credentials 35
The Triple Bottom Line 38
Does Going Green Cost More? 39
The Indoor Environment and the Interior Designer 40
Product Specification Principles 42

Security and Safety 44
Codes 46
Permitting Process and Officials 48
Occupancy Classifications 49
BOX Occupancy Classifications 50
Accessible Design 51
Design Applications—Restroom Facilities 52
BOX Influence of Corporate Brands 56
Summary 58
Bibliography and References 58
Internet Resources 61

3 Research and Project Process 63

Problem Solving in Design 64
BOX Design Thinking 66
Research Methodologies in Design 67
The Importance of Research in Design 67
Research Steps 68
Evidence-Based Design 71
BOX Benchmarking 72
Project Goals and Concept Development 73
Design Process 74
Programming Elements 77
Summary 80
Bibliography and References 80
Internet Resources 81

4 Project Management 82

What Is Project Management? 82
Role and Responsibilities of the Project Manager 84
Working Relationships with Stakeholders and Team Members 87
Managing the Design Team 87
Client Relationships 89
BOX Tips for Working with Executive-Level Clients 91

Project Delivery Methods 92
Design-Bid-Build: Traditional 93
Construction Management 95
Design-Build 95
Integrated Design Process 96
Building Information Modeling (BIM) 97
Project Process 97
Proposals 98
Work Plan 100
Scheduling 101
Fast-Track 104
Budget 105
BOX Time Management Tips 105
Documentation 107
Post-Occupancy Evaluation 109
Adaptive Use 110
Overview of Adaptive Use 111
Methods and Applications 113
Project Strategies in Adaptive Use 114
Sustainable Design Issues in Adaptive Use 116
Summary 116
Bibliography and References 117
Internet Resources 120

5 The Office 121

Historical Overview 122
Issues Impacting Office Design 125
Multigenerational Offices 126
BOX Generations in the Workforce 126
Collaborative Office Spaces 127
Cubicle Free? 128
Coworking Space 129
Technology Integration 130
An Overview of Office Operations 131
BOX The Knowledge Worker 132

Traditional Office Organizational Structure 134
The New Office Organizational Structure 137
Corporate Culture 140
Image and Status 142
BOX Facility Management and Facility Planning 144
Types of Office Spaces 145
Summary 148
Bibliography and References 149
Internet Resources 152

6 Office Interior Design Elements 153

Planning and Design Elements 154
Feasibility Studies 155
BOX Selected Leasing Terminology 156
Sustainable Design 158
Safety and Security 158
Code Requirements 160
Space Allocation and Circulation 162
ADA Impact in Office Planning 166
Furniture 168
Materials, Finishes, and Color 178
Mechanical Systems 182
Design Applications 189
Closed Office Plans 189
Open Office Plans 202
Designing a Small Professional Office 206
BOX Home Offices 210
Summary 213
Bibliography and References 213
Internet Resources 216

7 Lodging Facilities 218

Historical Overview 219
Overview of Lodging Business Operations 221
Management and Responsibility Areas 222
Types of Lodging Facilities 224

The Changing Lodging Guest 226
Business versus Vacation Guest 227
Generational Sensitivities 228
Planning and Interior Design Elements 229
BOX Exterior Lodging Design 230
Feasibility Studies and Concept Statements 231
Sustainable Design 232
Safety and Security 233
Code Requirements 234
Space Allocation and Circulation 236
Wayfinding 238
Furniture 239
Materials, Finishes, and Color 240
Mechanical Systems 242
Design Applications 244
Generic Full-Service Hotel 244
Food and Beverage Facilities in Lodging 264
Bed and Breakfast Inns 267
Summary 269
Bibliography and References 270
Internet Resources 273

8 Food and Beverage Facilities 274

Historical Overview 275
Overview of Food and Beverage Business Operations 277
Types of Food and Beverage Facilities 280
Planning and Interior Design Elements 283
BOX Restaurant Exterior Design 284
Feasibility Study, Concept, and Menu Development 285
Sustainable Design 286
Safety and Security 287
Code Requirements 288
Space Allocation and Circulation 289
Furniture 294
Materials, Finishes, and Color 296
Mechanical Systems 298

Design Applications 300
Generic Full-Service Restaurant 300
Coffee Shops 313
Quick-Service Restaurant 315
Beverage Facilities 316
BOX Restrooms in Restaurants 322
Summary 322
Bibliography and References 323
Internet Resources 325

9 Retail Facilities 326

Historical Overview 326
Overview of Retail Business Operations 328
Types of Retail Facilities 332
Planning and Interior Design Elements 335
BOX Retail Store Exterior Design 336
Feasibility and Concept 338
Store Merchandising 338
Sustainable Design 341
Security and Safety 342
Code Requirements 343
Space Allocation and Circulation 344
Fixtures and Furniture 348
Materials, Finishes, and Color 349
Mechanical Systems 351
Design Applications 352
Generic Small Clothing Stores 352
Generic Small Gift Stores 357
Generic Jewelry Stores 361
Hardline Stores 363
BOX An Office Furniture Dealership or Showroom 364
Summary 366
Bibliography and References 366
Internet Resources 369

10 Healthcare Facilities 370

Historical Overview 371
Overview of Healthcare/Medicine 372
Forces Impacting Healthcare Design 376
Types of Healthcare Facilities 378
BOX Medical Office Buildings 380
Planning and Interior Design Elements 382
Feasibility Studies 383
Sustainable Design 385
Security and Safety 386
Code Requirements 387
Space Allocation and Circulation 388
Wayfinding 390
Furniture 391
BOX The Healing Environment 392
Materials, Finishes, and Color 394
Mechanical Systems 395
Design Applications 396
Medical Office Suites 397
Specialized Medical Practice Suites 409
Hospitals 414
Urgent Care Facility 425
Dental Facilities 427
Summary 434
Bibliography and References 434
Internet Resources 438

11 Senior Living Facilities 439

Historical Overview 440
Overview of Senior Living Facilities 441
Forces Impacting Senior Living Design 444
Types of Senior Living Facilities 445
Planning and Interior Design Elements 452
Feasibility Studies 453

Sustainable Design 453
Security and Safety 454
Code Requirements 455
Space Allocation and Circulation 456
Furniture 459
Materials, Finishes, and Color 461
Mechanical Systems 464
Design Applications 466
Assisted-Living Facilities 466
Long-Term Care Facilities 472
Alzheimer's and Dementia Facilities 475
Hospice Care Facilities 479
Summary 480
Bibliography and References 481
Internet Resources 484

12 Recreational Facilities 485

Fitness Center 486
Planning and Design Elements of a Fitness Center 486
Day Spas 488
Planning and Design Elements of a Day Spa 489
BOX Salons 493
Golf Clubhouses 494
Planning and Design Elements of Golf Clubhouses 495
Auditoriums 500
Planning and Design Elements of Auditoriums 502
Summary 506
Bibliography and References 507
Internet Resources 509

Appendix 510
Trade Associations 510
Periodicals 512

Glossary 513
Index 538

Preface

The commercial interior design profession has changed and, therefore, this edition has been influenced by those changes. The importance of global and cultural influences on design impacts all types of facilities. Sustainable design is a critical issue in the design of commercial interiors, whether that means specifying low-VOC paints or helping a client achieve a high level of LEED certification. Accessibility for an aging population is an ongoing concern that is an absolute necessity in planning any of the facilities covered in this book. Security and code issues continue to be of utmost importance.

Interior design is still problem solving. Practitioners and students are requested to plan and specify interiors that are aesthetically pleasing, yet these interiors must also be functional and help meet the business goals of the client. No designer can solve the client's problems without appreciating the purpose and functions of the business. Understanding the business interests of the specific commercial facility is essential to help the interior designer make more informed design decisions. Doing research about a facility before beginning to design and plan a project may not be fun, but research is an indispensable part of successful interior design practice. Of course, an ongoing premise of this book is the importance of learning the "business of the business."

The third edition remains a practical reference for many of the design issues related to planning a variety of commercial interior facilities. It retains its focus on the types of commercial design spaces most commonly assigned as studio projects and those typically encountered by the professional interior designer who has limited experience with commercial interior design. The book is organized similarly to the second edition so that the subject matter can be used by professors in whatever sequences are required for their specific classes. Professionals seeking information about specific types of facilities can easily reference the relevant chapters they need.

There are, of course, some changes to the outline of topics. In this edition, the first four chapters provide an overview of important issues that have an impact on commercial interior design work. Chapter 1 remains an introduction and overview of the commercial interior design profession. It gives the student a glimpse of what it is like to work in the field and where the jobs are. Chapter 2 includes material concerning the critical issues of global and cultural impacts, a discussion on sustainable design, and a brief overview of the triple bottom line. The discussion of the design of accessible restrooms has been placed in this chapter for easier reference, because this type of ancillary space can be found in all the project types.

Two new chapters provide additional background information important to commercial design. Chapter 3 focuses on research and the project process. Research is an important element of the design process; by carefully studying a project, the commercial designer can develop evidence to back up any design decisions—decisions that go beyond aesthetics. Discussions in this chapter include research methodologies, problem solving, and evidence-based design. The design process and programming are also covered in this chapter. Chapter 4 concerns project management. This material has been returned to the text at the suggestion of reviewers. Many important topics in project management are included here to help the student realize that a project cannot

be completed without someone managing all the parts and pieces involved. Topics included in this overview are working relationships, project delivery methods, and the project process. A section on adaptive use has been placed here, as this design assignment can be applied to any type of facility.

The chapters that focus on the types of commercial facilities were selected based on the comments by reviewers as to which types of facilities are most often assigned in classes. They are also the most common categories of commercial facilities that a professional may encounter. They are corporate and small offices, lodging, food and beverage, retail, healthcare, and senior living. A concluding chapter discusses planning the design of a variety of recreational facilities, including fitness centers and spas, golf clubhouses, and auditoriums.

These chapters are updated and reorganized to have similar content from type to type. Their basic outline is similar to that established in the second edition. New material appears in chapters to discuss topics of interest to the specific type of facility. For example, brief discussions on collaborative office spaces and the knowledge worker have been added to the office discussions. Information on the changing lodging guest has been added to the lodging facilities chapter. A discussion of the forces impacting healthcare and senior living design has been added to those chapters.

New images and graphics—many in color—have been added to enrich the text. It is exciting to exhibit these great project accomplishments in color in this edition. These new images enhance the discussions of design detail and design applications. The detailed "Design Applications" sections in Chapters 5 through 12 are provided to clarify important characteristics in designing these facilities. Existing design applications have been updated. New design applications discussions include small professional offices, quick-service restaurants, a small gift store, specialized medical practice suites, and hospice care facilities. The discussion of the fitness center and day spa is essentially new material.

The glossary has been updated, and each chapter concludes with references to the topic, as well as general references and websites relevant to the chapter main topic. Website addresses of trade associations affiliated with the design industry are listed in the Appendix. With these references, students, professionals, and professors can obtain more detailed and specific information about the many different commercial interiors discussed. This combination will make this book an important reference for all readers.

I hope that this third edition will be a valuable resource as you undertake the interior design of commercial facilities. Whether you are a student or a professional, I hope that it will help you enjoy this very exciting and challenging career.

Christine M. Piotrowski

Acknowledgments

It is always a challenge to write a textbook. A revision is no exception. This third edition involved extensive research to update all the text, prepare the new material, and obtain new photos and drawings. Many people have provided guidance, support, and expertise in regard to this effort.

I want to especially thank educators and other reviewers who have had an important impact on this revision. A special thank you goes out to Robert Krikac at Washington State University; Paul Smead, Director of Design, Interiors HOK Houston (retired); Robin Wagner at Marymount University; Charlene Conrad, IDNS, IDC, of Conrad Interior Design; and LuAnn Holec, FASID, of Thoma-Holec Design for their reviews of materials and other suggestions.

In addition to the numerous designers, photographers, companies, and individuals who provided materials and assistance with the first two editions, nearly 30 new firms provided exciting new color images and drawings in order to enrich this edition. These new images make for a more visual experience to supplement the text. I thank them not only for their contributions, but for their patience in going through the process. Space does not allow us to name them individually here, but their names and/or their company names are gratefully provided in captions throughout the book.

I especially want to thank Herman Miller, Inc., The Cottage Inn, The Lied Lodge and Conference Center, and Hospice of the Valley in Phoenix, Arizona, for their contributions. A special thank you goes to Esther Gonzalez, ASID, who provided finished drawings from my sketches for many illustrations. Esther, your patience and perseverance are greatly appreciated.

There are some other people I would like to acknowledge. First, the many students in the commercial interior design classes I taught several years ago at Northern Arizona University. They showed me the need for this type of textbook. Their struggles helped instigate this book in the first place. Of course, I want to acknowledge Elizabeth A. Rodgers, my former coauthor, for her work and contributions to the earlier editions. I am also indebted to Paul Drougas, my previous editor, who encouraged me to develop this revision. He provided tremendous support in many ways in the early phases of this project as well as many previous projects.

I want to thank the staff at John Wiley & Sons for their guidance and assistance, especially Seth Schwartz, editor, professional development, my current editor, and Melinda Noack, senior editorial assistant, professional development. Also a big thank you to all the other production support staff who helped bring this book to reality.

Finally, every effort has been made to correctly provide the proper credit information of interior designers, architects, photographers, and the projects if the client chose to be identified. We apologize for any errors or omissions that may have occurred.

Christine M. Piotrowski

CHAPTER 1

Commercial Interior Design

You interact with commercial interiors every day. Perhaps you visit a textile showroom to pick up samples for a project or join a friend at an athletic club to work out. You may have a meeting with a client at a restaurant or need to keep your doctor's appointment for a checkup. Maybe you pick up your child at a daycare center. All these facilities and many others represent the kinds of interior spaces created by the division of the interior design profession commonly called commercial interior design.

Commercial interiors are those of any facility that serves business purposes. Facilities that fall under the category of commercial interior design include businesses that invite the public in, such as those mentioned above. Others restrict public access but are business enterprises such as corporate offices or manufacturing facilities. Commercial interiors are also part of publicly owned facilities such as libraries, courthouses, government offices, and airport terminals, to name a few.

These interiors can be as exciting as a restaurant in a resort hotel, or as elegant as a jewelry store on Rodeo Drive in Beverly Hills or a casino in an international hotel (Figure 1-1). A commercial interior can be purely functional, such as the offices of a major corporation or a small-town travel agency. It may need to comfort and treat the ill, as in a healthcare facility. It can also be a place to relax, as in a spa.

There are many ways to specialize or work in interior design and the built environment industry. Of course, the *built environment industry* includes those professions that are involved in the development, design, construction, and finishing of any type of building. Specializing can be very sensible, as the expertise one gains in a specialty can provide added value to clients. Be careful not to create a specialty that is too narrow, as there may not be sufficient business to support the firm. Numerous specialty suggestions are listed in Table 1-1.

Figure 1-1 High-limit area. Casino at the Venetian Resort, Macao. *Reproduced with permission of Wilson Associates.*

This challenging and exciting profession has had a huge impact on the interior design and construction industry in the United States and throughout the world. *Interior Design* magazine reports on the industry's 100 largest design firms. In the January 2014 issue, it reported that approximately $3 billion in design fees were generated by these firms in commercial projects alone in 2013 ("The Top 100 Giants" 2014, 84). This not only represents an increase from previous years, but it reflects only a portion of the total commercial interior design industry because it only relates to the top 100 firms reported by the *Interior Design* giants.

This chapter begins with a brief historical overview of the profession. An essential part of this chapter is the discussion of why it is important for the commercial interior designer to understand the client's business. It continues with an overview of what it is like to work in this area of the interior design profession. A brief discussion of topics focused on design professionalism concludes the chapter.

These terms are relevant to discussions in this chapter and throughout the book:

- *Business of the business*: Gaining an understanding of the business goals and purpose of the client before or during the execution of the project.
- *Commercial interior design*: The design of any facility that serves business purposes. May be privately owned or owned by a governmental agency.
- *Furniture, Fixtures, and Equipment* (FF&E): All the movable products and other fixtures, finishes, and equipment specified for an interior. FF&E is also called furniture, furnishings, and equipment.
- *Stakeholders*: Individuals who have a vested interest in the project, such as members of the design team, the client, the architect, and the vendors.

■ *Spec*: This is a slang term used to indicate a building that is developed and built before it has any specific tenants. Developers of commercial property are "speculating" that someone will lease the space before or after construction is completed.

Historical Overview

It is always helpful to have some historical context for a topic as broad as commercial interior design. This chapter provides a brief overview to set that context. Other chapters also include a brief historical perspective on the specific facility type. An in-depth discussion of the history of commercial design is beyond the scope of this book.

One could argue that commercial interior design began with the first trade and food stalls centuries ago. Certainly, buildings that housed many commercial transactions or that would be considered commercial facilities today have existed since early human history. For example, business was conducted in the great rooms of the Egyptian pharaohs and the palaces of kings; administrative spaces existed within great cathedrals and in portions of residences of craftsmen and tradesmen.

Another example comes from lodging. The lodging industry dates back many centuries, beginning with simple inns and taverns. Historically, hospitals were first associated with religious groups. During the Crusades of the Middle Ages, the *hospitia*, which provided food, lodging, and medical care to the ill, were located adjacent to monasteries.

In earlier centuries, interior spaces created for the wealthy and powerful were designed by architects. Business places such as inns and shops for the lower classes were most likely "designed" by tradesmen and craftsmen or whoever owned them. Craftsmen and tradesmen influenced early interior design as they created the furniture and architectural treatments of the palaces and other great structures, as well as the dwellings and other facilities for the lower classes.

As commerce grew, buildings specific to business enterprises such as stores, restaurants, inns, and offices were gradually created or became more common. Consider the monasteries (which also served as places of education) of the twelfth century, as well as the mosques and temples of the Middle East and the Orient; the amphitheaters of ancient Greece and Rome; and the Globe Theatre in London built in the sixteenth century. New types of interiors slowly began to develop. For example, offices began to move from the home to separate locations in a business area in the seventeenth century, and hotels began taking on their grand size and opulence in the nineteenth century (Tate and Smith 1986, 227). Furniture items and business machines such as typewriters and telephones, as well as other specialized items, were also being designed in the nineteenth century.

The profession of interior decoration—later interior design—is said by many historians to have its roots in the late nineteenth century. When it began, interior decoration was more closely aligned to the work of various society decorators engaged in residential projects. Elsie de Wolfe (1865–1950) is commonly considered the first professional, independent interior decorator. Sparke and Ownes called de Wolfe "the mother of modern interior decoration" (2005, 9). De Wolfe supervised the work required for the interiors she was hired to design. She also was among the first designers, if not the first, to charge for her services (Campbell

and Seebohm 1992, 17). In addition, she was one of the earliest women to be involved in commercial interior design. She designed spaces for the Colony Club in New York City in the early 1900s (Campbell and Seebohm 1992, 7).

Although most of the early commercial interior work was done by architects and their staff members, decorators and designers focusing on commercial interiors emerged in the early twentieth century. One woman designer most commonly associated with the beginning of commercial interior design was Dorothy Draper (1889–1969) (Tate and Smith 1986, 322). She started a firm in New York City and, beginning in the 1920s, was responsible for the design of hotels, apartment houses, restaurants, and offices. Her namesake firm still exists.

There were many changes in the building industry in the late nineteenth and into the twentieth century. These changes were led by the designs of architects such as Frank Lloyd Wright, Walter Gropius, Le Corbusier, Mies van der Rohe, and Charles Eames, to name just a few of these early change influencers, each having a profound impact on interior design of commercial facilities.

Commercial interiors changed for many reasons in the second half of the twentieth century. Technological changes in construction and mechanical systems, code requirements for safety, and electronic business equipment of every kind have impacted the way business is conducted throughout the world. Consumers of business and institutional services expect better environments as part of the experience of visiting stores, hotels, restaurants, doctors' offices—everywhere they go to shop or conduct business. Interior design and architecture must keep up with these changes and demands. This is one of the key reasons that an interior designer must be educated in a wide range of subjects and understand the business operations of clients.

The interior design profession also grew in stature in the twentieth century with the development of professional associations, professional education, and competency testing. The decorators' clubs that existed in major cities in the 1920s and 1930s were the precursors of the current two largest interior design professional associations in the United States, the American Society of Interior Designers (ASID) and the International Interior Design Association (IIDA). The Interior Designers of Canada (IDC), founded in 1972, is the professional association and advocacy group for designers in Canada. Provincial associations also exist in Canada. As interior design is a global profession, many associations are located in other countries to serve their professionals. An Internet search for "international design associations" will help you identify numerous such organizations.

In respect to professional education, competency testing, and licensing of design professionals, the most significant advances occurred in the second half of the twentieth century. Here are a few of those milestones:

- In 1963, the Interior Design Educators Council (IDEC) was organized to advance education in interior design.
- In 1970, the Foundation for Interior Design Education Research (FIDER) was incorporated to serve as the primary academic accrediting agency for interior design education.
- In 1974, the National Council for Interior Design Qualification (NCIDQ) was incorporated to provide for competency testing.

- In 1982, Alabama became the first state to pass title registration legislation for interior design practice.

- In 2005, FIDER changed the name of the organization to the Council for Interior Design Accreditation (CIDA).

Even when coupled with the brief history sections in other chapters, this overview does not give you a complete history of commercial interior design nor the profession. However, if you would like more information, many titles are listed in the references for you to explore.

Understanding the Client's Business

Would you want your doctor to diagnosis an illness or pain without first asking you questions about how you feel? Of course not! Although that example may be a little dramatic, designing any kind of commercial interior without asking questions and understanding the business of the business could lead to project failure.

Understanding "the business of the business" refers to understanding the goals and purposes of a business. In fact, it is important to understand the business specialty even before seeking projects in that specialty. The interior designer and team must understand the client's business in general and the client's goals for the project from a business point of view. This means that the design solutions and outcomes will be more functional for the client and lead to more creative design concepts.

The needs of each type of client will vary by their business focus. For example, space planning and product specifications are different for a pediatrician's suite than for the offices of a cardiologist. Planning decisions are different for a small gift shop in a strip shopping center than for one in a resort hotel. Understanding this from the outset is critical for the design firm.

An obvious advantage of understanding the client's business is that the interior design will be more functional, not solely focused on the aesthetic. Businesses seek interior design firms that are not "learning on the job" with the client's project. Creative solutions that are aesthetically pleasing are important to many clients. However, a creative and attractive office that does not work or is not safe is not helpful to the client. Creativity alone does not mean success in commercial interior design.

Five important issues influence the design direction and eventual solutions to commercial projects. They are

- *Type of facility.* Each type of facility has many different requirements. Space planning, furniture specification, materials that can be used, codes that must be adhered to, and the functions and goals of the business are just some of the many factors that influence the interior design, based on the type of facility.

- *Location.* The location of the business will relate to the client base the business wants to attract. The dollars spent on the interior may very well be different based on the project's location. Customer expectations will be greater when the business is located in a high-end area versus a strip mall.

- *Target customer.* When a business begins its planning, it determines a target client base. Different design decisions will be made based on that target client. For example, a hotel located along an interstate will have a different target client than those of a resort in the mountains.

- *The actual product of the business.* Design specifications for a coffee shop will be quite different from those for a luxury full-service restaurant. The design of the office of an advertising agency will vary from that of a law firm.

- *The client.* The client can be a sole proprietor (of any kind of commercial facility), a branch of a multilocation business, a developer, or the board of directors of a nonprofit. The client might be the board of directors and the facility manager for a major corporation, or the local jurisdictional governing body for the school district.

Every client has different business goals, and the interior designer is challenged to satisfy all their unique demands. Thus, understanding the business of the business and its characteristics is important to understanding how to go about designing the interior. The more you know about the hospitality industry, for example, the more effective your solutions will be for a lodging or food service facility. Gaining experience and knowledge about retailing will be an advantage for you in designing any kind of retail space. In fact, the more you know about any of the specialty areas of commercial interior design, the greater your success will be in working with those clients.

Subsequent chapters provide an overview of the business of many kinds of commercial interior design specialties. They will help you begin to appreciate the critical issues that a business client will expect you to understand as you become engaged in the project. These chapters will also provide references for many of the design issues related to planning and designing commercial interiors, as well as indicating areas for additional research.

Working in Commercial Interior Design

The design of commercial interiors is complex and challenging. The number of project details can be enormous, and organizing those details is of paramount concern for the designer. Commercial interior design requires the designer to be attentive to details, be comfortable with working effectively as part of a team, and have the ability to work with numerous stakeholders. He or she must also understand the client's type of business before accepting a contract.

Often the interior designer works with employees of the business rather than the owner. However, design decisions must also please the owner. Few commercial design projects will be undertaken without the involvement of an architect. Being able to collaborate with the architect as the team seeks to meet the functional and aesthetic goals of the client is critical.

Teamwork and collaboration are necessary components in commercial design. Because projects can be very large, it is difficult for one or two people to handle all the work. Willingness to be part of the team, effectively doing one's job, and offering to be involved are not only important in completing the project but also bode well for advancement in the firm. Whether your role is small (which will be the case at the

Figure 1-2 Employee lunch areas are often places for teamwork and collaborative discussions. *Photo courtesy of Gary Wheeler, FASID. WheelerKänik, London, England.*

beginning of your career) or you are the prime designer/project manager as your experience grows, your ability to work with a team and collaborate with others is fundamental to success. So do not be surprised if project managers and senior design staff are in charge of projects rather than an entry-level designer.

Effective communication goes hand in hand with teamwork. Project communications occur by email, texting, telephone, written documents, design graphics, and other electronic means. Designers use tablets, smartphones, and laptops on the job site as well as in the office. These electronic devices help document meetings, jot ideas, and provide a place to archive photographs of issues or good ideas on the site. Marketing and progress presentations are likely to be conducted using PowerPoint presentations, Pinterest, or other computer-based media. Naturally, skill with computer-aided drafting (CAD), SketchUp, or other media is mandatory in commercial interior design.

Communication must be conducted in a professional manner. Whether you are standing in front of your client discussing the project, sending an email, or texting a vendor (not while you are driving!), be professional in what you say and how you say it. Older clients may not easily interpret the shorthand used by many younger designers to communicate on wireless devices. One more caution: Those electronic messages don't just disappear; they are almost always archived by the client. What you say in an email must be what you can do or you could have legal and ethical problems.

In a commercial project, it is important to determine and discuss with whom the designer will be working. In residential design, the designer must satisfy the homeowner and family members. A commercial project involves satisfying several users in

addition to the actual property owner. Those who might have an impact on design decisions include the property owner, employees, and, very indirectly, the businesses customers.

There are many types of property owners, including:

- A single business owner developing a building and needing tenant improvements
- A developer having an office or retail structure built on spec
- A corporation building a branch facility
- A chain remodeling a property
- A government entity building agency offices, schools, or the like

Employees will also have an impact on and perhaps have direct input into the design of the facility. Research shows that if the facility has been designed with a pleasing and safe atmosphere as well as a functional environment, employees will work more effectively. An exciting interior for a restaurant that attracts large crowds willing to spend on food and drink will bring better-quality waitstaff to serve those customers. Unfortunately, employees don't usually get to vote on design decisions; however, they may vote unofficially through their willingness to stay with the company and serve its clients effectively.

A third influencer is the customer who comes to the facility. In some instances, the ambiance of a restaurant or the beauty of the setting influences whether a customer returns. In other circumstances, ambiance plays a minimal role in this decision. The relationship of a doctor to a patient is more important than the doctor's exquisitely designed office. If your local city government offices had marble on the walls and floors and gold faucets in the restrooms, as a citizen you might think that your tax dollars had been misspent. Designing for these various users is challenging, to say the least.

As for working on a project itself, commercial interior design projects follow all phases of the design process. Of course, the interior designer's responsibility within each phase will vary based on the project, licensing issues, and the designer's experience. Missing steps or doing any of the tasks halfheartedly can be disastrous. Margins for error are often nonexistent, as many projects are *fast-tracked*, where design plans for one phase of the project are created as construction is proceeding on another phase to ensure early occupancy. These challenges are discussed in Chapter 4. Being detail oriented and organized are very important qualifications for a commercial interior designer.

Commercial interior designers must know how to manage a project as well as design it. This task is defined as project management. *Project management* is a systematic process used to coordinate and control a design project from inception to completion. Project management requires leadership, planning, coordination, and control of a diverse set of activities, people, money, and time in order to accomplish the goals of the design project. Project management is primarily the responsibility of experienced designers who oversee the team of designers and others who are involved in a project.

Project delivery methods have evolved into four approaches. These will be discussed in some detail in Chapter 4. However, brief definitions are provided here to lend context to the overall scope of this chapter.

- *Design-bid-build*. This is the traditional project delivery method, where a client hires a firm to design the project. It is then sent out for competitive bids to multiple suppliers, and a contract is awarded to the firm chosen by the client.

- *Construction management*. The client hires a firm to be in charge of the execution of all responsibilities of the project from feasibility studies and design to construction and installation, together with supervision of the work of all the stakeholders.

- *Design-build*. This is a collaborative process where multiple stakeholders are likely to be included under one contract for both the design and construction of the facility.

- *Integrated process*. This team-oriented process puts more emphasis on the people involved in the project so that a better outcome is delivered.

Nearly all the project types discussed in this book flow through the design process of programming, schematic design, design development, contract documents, and contract administration. It is important for a designer specializing in any type of commercial design to be very familiar with all the tasks that occur in each of these phases, whether or not the designer is actually responsible for all those tasks.

Programming is of particular importance, and the information obtained at the beginning of the project must be carefully gathered. (A discussion of the design process can be found in Chapter 4.) Information about the client's space and aesthetic preferences is only the beginning. Of course, it is important to understand what codes or other standards may apply to the project. Regardless of the type of facility, the client's business goals and plans are very important in the successful functional design of the interior. Knowing where the business wants to go is as important to the designer as where it is on the day that programming information is obtained. Many large interior design firms offer assistance with strategic planning for businesses that do not already engage in this type of planning.

There can be no margin for error with the codes in a commercial project. Adherence to building, life safety, and accessibility codes is another critical part of the work of commercial interior designers. The health, life safety, and welfare of the client and the various users of the facility affect many design decisions, including space planning, architectural materials, lighting, furniture and fabric specification, and even the color palette in some situations. The user of the facility trusts that the design and specification of the facility are safe in all the ways the jurisdiction requires. Understanding and application of regulations implicit in the type of project are a necessity, not a choice.

Finally, as mentioned in the previous section, the interior designer should know something about the client's business before seeking a commercial interiors project. Understanding the business of the business is crucial to solving problems and achieving the functional and aesthetic goals of the client. No designer can solve the client's problems without understanding the problems as thoroughly as possible.

Table 1-1 lists numerous examples of specialties in commercial interior design. Please understand that this list is not all-inclusive.