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## THE ROLE OF THE REAL ESTATE PROFESSIONAL

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Armed with the client's building criteria or space strategy report, the real estate professional, who is representing the client, finds and screens prospective locations/buildings that meet the client's criteria. He or she will liaise with the strategy development team to provide the interior designer with base building information, floor plans, and services provision information. However, being primarily financially driven, he or she brings to the team the market knowledge and negotiating skills to obtain for the client the best lease terms, landlord contributions and incentives, building management, and services provision. We, as the design professionals, are expert witnesses to what is on offer in terms of existing conditions, upgrade requirements, and compliance of the building with the client's pro forma. This collaboration between interior designer and real estate professional very often leads to an advantageous negotiating position for the client if the building is spatially inefficient, loss factors are exceptionally high, or specifications fall below those "reasonably" expected.

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## WORKING WITH OTHER CONSULTANTS

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For most predesign phases or projects, the primary consultants in addition to the interior design firm are the MEP and FP engineers and the structural engineer, who, depending on the requirements of the project, needs to confirm structural loading and provide supplemental design. As a result, the structural engineers play a smaller role than the mechanical engineers.

It is this group of three consultants who provide the primary professional licensed service to the client. They take the legal responsibility for their portions of a project and are held accountable by the state that granted them a license to practice. Quite often, code consultants help expedite the filing of the documents with statutory authorities having jurisdiction over the project while providing expert advice on the design's compliance with city, state, and federal codes.