

*In residential design, clients, for the most part, are couples with different upbringings who have lived in different environments most of their lives. Aesthetics are one of the last things that any couple ever discusses.*

might talk about how nice it would be to have a house in the country, or that they'd like a larger place in the city, but they rarely talk about what kind of house or place they might have. Most residential clients tell you what they want, but not who they are.

Most design programs are concerned with quantity of space and how that space is distributed. A program generally maps out the working relationships among people, but it rarely touches on how people performing any given function interact on a personal basis or the degree of privacy or social interaction they need to have.

We should recognize that economics and time are integral factors that affect the possible solutions. One should not design for solutions that create delays and discomfort for the client unless the client accepts that these solutions are beneficial. Nor should one design beyond the economic parameters established by the client.

When doing schematics, the designer must be responsible for both budget and time. An experienced designer knows when he or she is pushing the boundaries of one or the other. Sometimes he or she knows that the best solution requires extending the time or expanding the budget, or both. It is then the designer's responsibility to present to the client the repercussions of these ideas, and that these changes are being suggested not to fatten the designer's ego or wallet, but because they are actually the best solutions for the client.

It is a designer's responsibility to adjust the designs' creativity to the economic means of the client. A great idea without the money to execute it is not a great idea. In order to know how to budget for the proper expectations, it is imperative that at least general information is obtained before beginning the schematics. There is no truth to the statement: "I don't know." Clients always know, or at least they know what their limitations are. A client who says to you, "Give me ideas and the price and I will tell you if I want it" offers more drawbacks than you might suppose since it can easily result in solutions that lack a cohesive point of view.

The amount of time it takes for a project to become reality is the factor least within the designer's control. While, in general, we know how long the normal design and construction process takes, approvals and construction considera-