provider. However, this is much more easily attained with clients who are more able and willing to "engage" the project process.

The truth is, not every organization needs or is prepared for the support of a professional designer. Organizations that *are* in the best position to engage design professionals have defined a specific business problem and are prepared to put forth the resources to reach a solution. These organizations recognize that the design of a workspace is a full-time job, even for the client, and they are ready and willing to apply their will, people, time, and resources to make decisions and advance the project process.

At an even grander scale, there are concepts embedded in the design process that go beyond the simple exchange of interior design services for payment. The interior designer's broader, altruistic mission is to create environments that meet human needs and support human activities. The most mutually gratifying relationships may be with clients who respect and share this mission and are willing to embrace the process of creating the built environment. And, as might be expected, the most rewarding relationships include an atmosphere of mutual respect. As the designer respects the client's business needs, the client respects the designer's potential to make a creative contribution to the client's business.

This is not to suggest that a designer cannot win new assignments unless both client and designer live up to "ideal" expectations. And interior designers sometimes accept work that does not fit their ideal client profile. These are the circumstances that require an intense commitment to client service and delivering total satisfaction. With proper attention and action, these less-than-perfect situations can become long-term relationships in which loyal clients return again and again for the designer's services and support.

THE PROJECT CIRCLE

The client/interior designer relationship is not a simple experience between two parties. Rather, it is an integral piece of a larger business collaboration involving a number of organizations represented by the Project Circle (see Fig. 39-2). The Project Circle depicts a key feature of design projects: inside

FIGURE 39-2
The Project Circle.
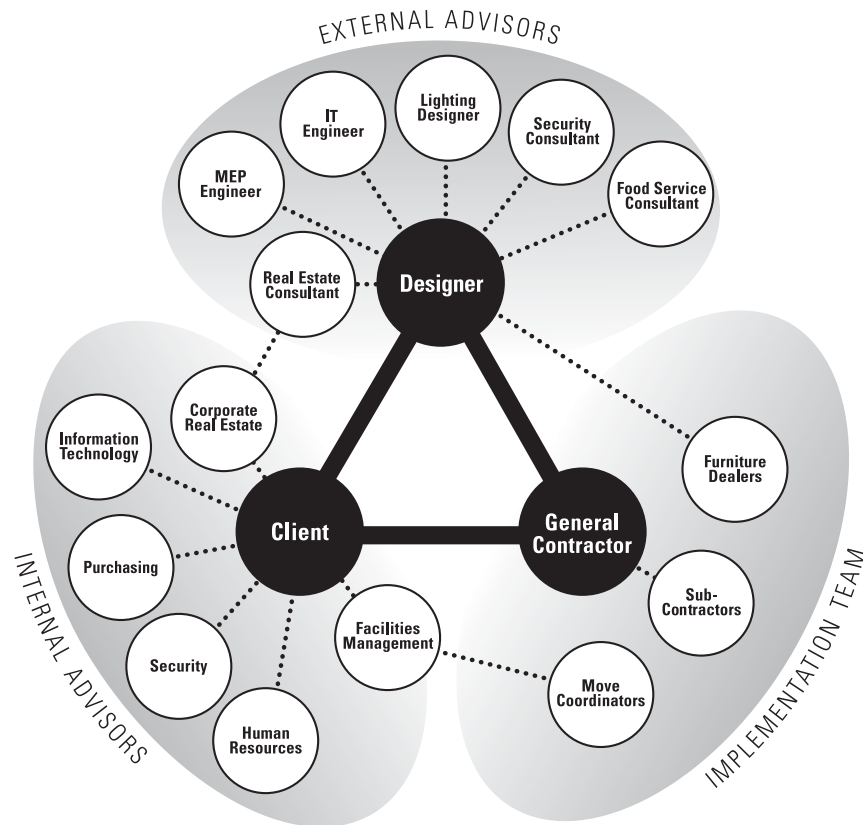
it is the client, a unit made up of competing interests, and surrounding the client is a web of players, all with their own professional interests and their own roles to play in providing a quality experience for the client.

Inside the Client

Within the client organization itself, several groups and individuals represent "interest groups" for which the designer must provide an integrated and workable quality experience.

- **Sponsor.** *The sponsor is "the client" personified. Generally speaking, he or she is the client's most senior person involved in the project and is a member of (or reports to) senior management. In turn, everyone working on the project—both within and outside the client organization—must satisfy the sponsor. The sponsor represents the client organization's business vision, builds the internal business case, and secures and manages funding for the project.*