- **Client project manager.** *Client project managers generally come from either a corporate real estate or a facilities management department. They are involved in the project's details and participate in ongoing work with the interior designer and other service providers. They are concerned with critical decisions and operational matters, such as space allocation, project scheduling, and adherence to fee and construction budgets. Client project managers also serve as a central point for communication within the client organization.*

- **Human resources.** *The client's human resources staff may be involved in a project from a communication standpoint. They may relay information to the design team, providing details about the organization's practices, structure, headcount projections, policies, culture, and employee behaviors—factors that define the client's needs and therefore the design response. They may also communicate with the workforce, helping the organization to manage change. For example, when a move is necessary, the human resources team often works closely with the facilities manager to facilitate the transition for employees and business groups, informing them of move schedules and particulars and fostering a cooperative environment.*

- **Information systems and telecommunications.** *The technology requirements are among the most critical challenges faced by the project team because they are very costly and integral to nearly all business today. Representatives from the client's technology departments can speak for current and anticipated requirements, enabling the project team to design an infrastructure that will support present and future plans.*

- **Users.** *The users are the people who ultimately will occupy or use the designed environment. Depending on the facility, the users may be internal or external to the client organization—employees, customers, recruits, vendors. In addition to their desires and preferences, these users depend (albeit unknowingly) on a design solution that allows for their personal safety and health.*

Each of these interest groups may claim to be entirely distinct from the rest, and each may assert that its priorities should take precedence over the rest. For example, an individual department may declare that its unique activities

call for a deviation from the standard floor plan to achieve an efficient work process. The project manager, on the other hand, may hold fast to standardized space and/or amenity allocation to help reduce management costs, consolidate suppliers and buying power, maintain equity among various users, or other defensible strategies that may serve a larger objective.

Who resolves this conflict between efficiency and cost savings? Occasionally the client team is led by an authority figure who defines the priorities and makes such decisions. More often than not, however, projects are complicated by a variety of points of view, and the designer is left to reconcile the conflicts. The designer's challenge, then, is to:

- *Integrate all the interests to achieve a workable compromise. Each constituency must feel "embraced" and assured that the designer has made reasonable efforts to accommodate all points of view.*

- *Understand whose interests must be served for the project to meet the client's business objectives. Rarely can a design solution satisfy every desire of every individual or group. By identifying the client's larger business goals and realities, the designer can make fact-based decisions about the inevitable trade-offs.*

Outside the Client

As if the client's internal structure didn't hold enough challenge and complexity, an even more intricate organization develops outside the client's walls . . . a virtual team of service providers who are all part of the project delivery mechanism. The interior designer must operate effectively as a part of this team throughout the entire project process. A host of additional players around the Project Circle bring both support and challenges to the designer:

- **External project manager.** *The project manager, sometimes known as "program manager" or "owner's representative," is a third party hired by the client to ensure that all phases of the work proceed as planned. In this capacity, the project manager may be in a position to serve as advocate for or monitor of the interior designer and allied team members.*

- **Real estate consultant.** *From the interior designer's perspective, the real estate consultant is both customer and service partner*—customer,