

# INTERIOR DESIGNER'S ROLE TOWARDS THE EXECUTION OF A PROJECT

The designer has to act as the chief supervisor towards the execution of a project. There might be other supervisors, *mistries*, client, or contractor himself supervising all along. But the designer knows their limitations. So, for a successful execution, the designer has to periodically visit the site and scrutinise and supervise.

## Limitations of other People in Supervision

Mistries and hired supervisors are interested only in their routine work, not quality. The contractor is interested in quick completion of work, and not quality. The client wants to but can not, due to his lack of knowledge, extract quality. It is the designer only whose vocation, career, aim and duty is quality. So he has to strive to attain it.

## How to Achieve Quality in Work

The periodic visit at the site and strict supervision by the designer would result in quality work. Besides, his amiable relations, mutual understanding, the spirit of cooperation would be conducive in eliciting the best response and efforts from the client, contractor, material/service suppliers, consultants and other people concerned in obtaining quality work.

## Dynamics of Visit at Site

Once the *Work Order* is issued from the client to the contractor and the agreement made between them, the designer should finalise with the contractor the day and time of visit at site. The contractor must always be present at the site

during the visit of the designer.

The visit to the site or workshop is usually made once or twice a week. The daily visit would be unfruitful as the progress of work made during one day would be meagre, and for that reason difficult to judge. In case something has remained unexplained, the contractor may meet the designer at his office with prior appointment. If the site visit is fixed for twice a week, the designer and his assistant should alternate their visits. The progress made, defects noted, miscellaneous notes put down, extra work entailed, etc, should be put down in triplicate in the *Project Progress Report Book* lying at the site by the designer and his assistant. The original would remain in the book, the duplicate sent to the client and the triplicate to be retained by designer.

## Method of Checking on Site

As we have seen earlier, the designer alone has the qualification, experience, expertise, aptitude, inclination, vocation and obligation towards obtaining quality work. He alone is responsible for the excellent workmanship. So this is the way he should go about his job. Please remember that the difference between a good and excellent job is of only a few degrees.

### 1 Checking of Materials

All the materials like plywood, TU (teakwood), laminates, foam, wires, etc, lying on the site should be checked by the designer to confirm whether the

brand and quality of the materials purchased by the contractor is the same as specified in the estimate, and whether the brand is the genuine one.

In case it is not so, the designer should order the contractor politely, but firmly, to remove them immediately from the site and warn him against such happenings in future.

If the specified material/s is/are not available, the designer should confirm this himself from the suppliers, and if it is so, should use his own judgement to specify any other brand after informing and receiving the approval of the client in the matter.

The designer should also keep a keen eye on the finishing materials like polish, wax, etc, to ascertain whether they are of high quality or not.

### 2 Checking of Alignment

Levelling and alignment are the basic requisites of fine craftsmanship, and are taught first. But only in these matters you would often find inconsistency.

#### Levelling and Alignment

Levelling means the proper and regular horizontality or verticality of a surface or plane, like the surface of a liquid. Alignment means the proper and regular horizontality or verticality of a line, surface or plane like a plumb line hanging

from a hook. For proper levelling and alignment, things have to be at right angles. In an interior, all the horizontal lines of various fixtures and items must be parallel to one another. The same thing with all the vertical lines. An item might be properly levelled but not properly aligned.

For checking the levelling of the wall, stand on the side and see. Any irregularity would show through the tiny shadows. If in doubt, use a plumb line. To check the right angularity of furniture, use right-angles.

Develop a sharp eye for levelling and alignment.

With practice, you will be able to check with naked eyes only, and will not require any instruments.

### 3 Checking of Finishing

Finishing means to end, complete. In interior parlance, it means treatments leading to completion of an item, like polishing is finishing of a chair. To check finishing, consider:

- i Whether finishing is of the required material, like in the case of a chair whether it is waxing, french polish, lamination or melamine.
- ii Whether finishing is of the required hue, like in the case of furniture whether it is natural shade, cedar, rosewood, teakwood, ebony, or any other shade.
- iii Whether finishing is of the required sheen—of proper gloss or mattness.
- iv Whether it is even, without any patches.
- v Whether it is durable.

### 4 Checking of Workmanship

The durability and inner strength of an artefact emerges from excellent workmanship. So check the primary facts:

- i Execution is carried out according to specifications.

- ii The joints are carpented properly, and appropriate joints are being employed like mortise, tenon, cross or dovetail joints.

- iii The nails and screws are of specified metals, eg in a humid climate, iron nails would rust and deteriorate soon, there you have to use brass or stainless steel nails/screws, etc.

- iv Nails are not being used in place of screws. Screws facilitate trouble-free dismantling of furniture.

- v The distance between TV frame and panelling behind is according to specifications.

- vi The frame, panelling and other items to be made in plywood have been treated with anti-termite material.

- vii In the plaster of Paris ceiling, brass screws or sheetmetal or nettlefold screws are used.

- viii The finishing materials are fixed according to specifications.

### 5 Checking of Samples

Before the contractor commences painting, polishing, upholstery work, etc, or the making of mass items like chairs or desks, it is advisable to make a few samples with a few variations. Then the designer should check, approve and sign one sample. He should not approve anything unless he gets his required quality, craftsmanship and finish. After that, mass manufacture should start. This ensures quality control.

### 6 Checking of the Progress Report

For successful and on-time completion of a project, it is essential that a certain amount of work is completed in a certain duration of time. So on your visit, you should check how much work has been completed during your previous and present visit and entered into the *Progress Report Book*. In case the work is lagging behind, the cause for it should be found out and problems solved. The contractor should be reprimanded if the delay is due to his laziness or callousness, and necessary

expedition of work should be enforced to recover lost ground.

It is a prudent policy to insist that contractor complete the work in half the stipulated time and other half to be utilised for finishing only. (See PERT/CPM for the proper organisation of work.)

### 7 Other Miscellaneous Items

There are a few basic things to be observed. Always supply two sets of drawings to the contractor. If one set gets lost or spoiled, the other is available. One set should always remain in the portfolio on site with the *Progress Report Book* for convenient reference.

For proper selection of materials, like veneer, marble, tiles, etc, visit the suppliers with the contractor or send your assistant with proper instructions.

Visit the suppliers with the client for the selection of items like linen, bedspreads, curtains, rugs, carpets, tapestry, accessories, paintings, etc, for these are items of intimate like/dislike. Moreover, these items are not included in the estimate because they have a very wide price range. Also the selection is not made in the beginning because their range is wide and something new is always coming up in the ever-growing market of these items. It also affords you close encounter with the client which makes you aware of his personal preferences—the knowledge so essential while designing and decorating personal interiors.

Before you go on this jaunt, note down the quantity and colour scheme of the materials to be selected.

### 8 Final Measurement

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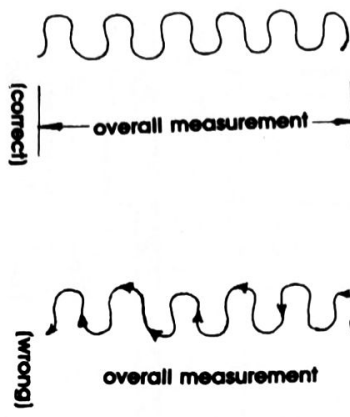
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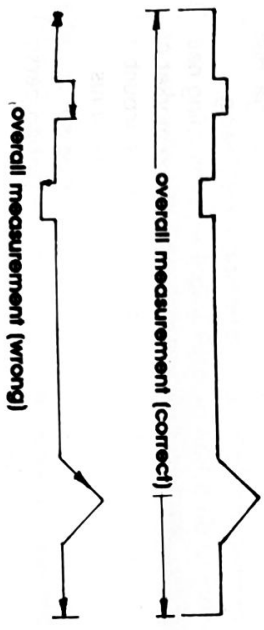
measurement of a work, or you have, it is better to get it measured accurately in your own presence before it turns into a dispute. This saves a lot of heart-burn later. Usually, the doubts are about the measurement of painting and flooring. So keep this in mind before issuing the Certificate of Completion. And if there are any amendments, make the right corrections. Here are the few tips regarding measurement:

i. The linear measurement shall be made as shown below for the estimate.

**MEASURING OF A ROLLING SHUTTER**



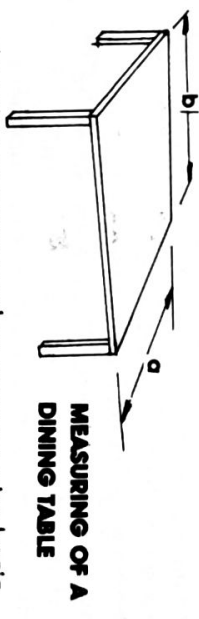
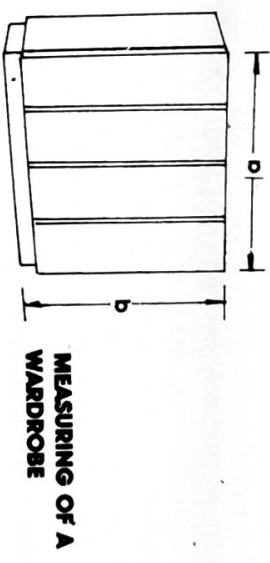
**MEASURING OF A FALSE CEILING**



ii. The estimate submitted by the contractor is made considering the wastage, labour, cartage, etc. Therefore, the area considered for finalising the bill shall be finished size only. A dining table of 198cm x 107cm size should not be charged for area of 213cm x 122cm as the contractor has to pay rate for glass of only this size.

iii. Measurement on square metre or running metre basis? There is always a confusion about which items shall be considered on square metre basis and which on running metre basis. The following explanation will clear this:

a. All the items in proportionate form in plan or



elevation are measured on square metre basis (a x b), like dining table and wardrobe.

b. All items in strip form in plan or elevation are measured on running metre basis, like sideboard and skirting.

