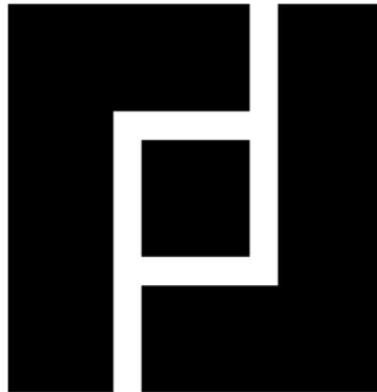


HOW TO CHOOSE YOUR ARCHITECT

A guide by FJConsultants



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INTRODUCTION:

Selecting an architect to concretize the project of your dream isn't an easy task. This is why we have developed the following guide in order to help you with your journey. We hope that you will find all the necessary information you are looking for!

“We shape our buildings; thereafter they shape us.”
Winston Churchill

ARCHITECT'S SELECTION PROCESS:

So there you are: ready at last to take the first step and enter the world of architecture or interior design. You have finally the budget and the time that will allow you to decorate the new apartment you are buying, or to redecorate your office or your business, or even build your dream house.

You are now searching for the architect or the interior designer that will help you turn your dreams into reality. You may sometimes be overwhelmed by the process, thinking that there isn't an easy way to choose your architect and decide to work with the **only one you know or** is related to you. But have you ever asked yourself if they are really fit to do the job?

Your project is your baby and it is your right to choose the most appropriate person to take care of it.

But first things first, let us see what an architect does: "An Architect is a person who designs buildings and in many cases also supervises their construction"¹.

So when choosing an architect to work with, I suggest you follow these simple steps:

- **Step 1: SELECTION PROCESS:**

You can proceed in many different ways in order to choose your architect; you can first ask your entourage if they can refer you to an architect they know or have worked with. You can also search online for architects and choose the ones whose work you like most.

- **Step 2: SELECTION PHASE:**

After reviewing their previous work, either constructed, online, or via their portfolio, you can have a precise idea of their design process. This will enable you to choose the architects whose style is the most similar to yours. (We advise you not to choose more than three architects, as it can start to be confusing).

¹ <http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/architect>

- **Step 3: A TIP ON SELECTING THE FINAL THREE:**

Approach each one individually and discuss with them what you have in mind. Focus on their answers. The ones that will guide your thinking process and help you better understand what will be waiting for you, are worth the keep.

- **Step 4: PREVIOUS WORK**

Ask each one of them to show you examples of their projects in general and ones that are similar to yours. That way you can see how they have treated these projects and what solutions they have provided, and if in fact these solutions are in accordance with your taste.

- **Step 5: QUOTATION**

Ask each of them to prepare you a quotation with the list of deliverables. Remember, the quotation must include all the drawings necessary for the construction process such as plans, details, sections, facades, and 3D perspectives. (The 3D's are necessary for you to understand the final outcome. Many architects overlook them, leaving their clients confused about the end result of their project).

When working on your quotation, your architect should inform you about all the design services they offer and together you choose the ones you want. Some examples of these services that we offer at FJConsultants are:

- Design Drawings (with mood boards, 3D's and sketches that show you the outcome of you project).
- Execution Drawings (we present to you and the contractor a complete set of execution drawings that will enable him and his workers to produce the design agreed upon for your project).
- Permit File (we provide all the necessary drawings and present them to the Syndicate Order of Engineers and Architects and give you the permit that allows you to start your construction).
- Supervision of Construction (where we make sure that everything is going according to plan and that the contractor and the foremen hired are working as per the agreements).

For the following disciplines:

- Architectural Services
- Interior Design Services
- Structural Services
- Electrical Services
- Mechanical Services

ONE LAST STEP:

These steps are generally enough for you to choose the architect whose style fits yours best, whose personality corresponds with yours and whose quotation is in accordance with your budget.

If, after completing all the steps stated above, you are still confused and do not know who to choose yet, you can ask each one of them to prepare you some general references and mood boards, in order to see what they have in mind for you.

This last step should give you a final answer on who to work with and what to expect from them. That way, not only would you have chosen the person you are most comfortable with and trust, but you would have also made a selection process that enables you to know and anticipate, as much as possible, what will be waiting for you.

After reviewing the fees of each architect, you can discuss with them how they priced your project and what Methods of Payment they prefer. Below are examples of some factors that affect the overall outcome of the quotation, and that we, at FJConsultants, take into consideration while pricing:

- The Size and Scale of the Project
- The Type of the Project
- The Type of Land which is being built upon
- The location of the Project
- The Services you have chosen

Once you decide which architect you will be working with, its then best to put everything you have agreed on so far in writing, eliminating this way, all possibilities for confusion. Here at FJConsultants, we sign up a formal agreement with each client and keep a documented relationship that benefits both parties.

CONCLUSION:

So next time you would like to hire an architect or an interior designer, take your time before choosing the easiest way out. Especially that on the long run it might end up causing you more troubles than you would have ever imagined.

Note: If you want to go further on this subject, you can check the list of requirements and questions for your architect that have been prepared by the American Institute of Architects at:

<http://howdesignworks.aia.org/pdf/Twenty-Questions-to-Ask-Your-Architect.pdf>

FJCONSULTANTS' TEAM