

LET'S TALK ABOUT MONEY

At Leslie Saul & Associates, we collaborate with our clients to design spaces that have both beauty and function. We are passionate about solving our clients' design needs and about bringing space to life with creativity and originality.

At the same time, however, we are well aware that financial requirements are as much a design constraint as the confines of a space, zoning regulations or taste.

We take great care to develop a design that meets your needs *and* your budget. To do this requires an ongoing dialog about money.



Budget: All about Choices

Designing and building a new space is all about choices. We begin with what we value and what matters to us, and what we are trying to achieve with the space. After that, we make choices that reflect those values and our aesthetic point of view.

As we move through the design process, we will listen to your ideas and dreams and try to incorporate these into our designs for you. At the same time, we present the financial implications of various choices to aid you in the decision making process. Since we are not contractors (the ultimate provider of the space) we cannot be counted on for final pricing, only the relative costs of various choices. We send out our drawings to builders for pricing at the end of each phase of the design, so that the final budget numbers are not a surprise.

Most people consider budgets as a constraining nuisance. We take a different approach. *Budgeting is a process of choosing where to spend, not on where to sacrifice.* We will make the best use of your budget, identifying creative solutions, spending where it really matters to you, and looking for value and savings where it is less important for your objectives.

Some of the choices that affect the budget are obvious, such as size of the project, scope of the work, number of built-ins, quality of materials, etc. However, there are other choices where the financial implication is not as obvious. Some examples include: the level of service and guidance required when selecting specific items such as furniture or fixtures, the level of reporting you prefer during design, bid and construction, controlling the number of change orders, and custom detailing.

Working as Your Partner

Working as your trusted advisor, and adding value through our experience and design intelligence, we act as your guide through the uncharted territory of your project. As we work together to design your space, we will create a process that is comfortable, with enough options, showroom visits, and deadlines to help you make decisions that are consistent with both your vision, your budget, and your timeline. Expect to get push-back from us when your choices are *not* consistent with your stated priorities.

Design is not something you order in a catalog. It is unpredictable and time consuming, but it is one of the most exciting of human activities. Collaboration, openness, frequent check-ins, and a willingness to solve problems as they arise (nothing is perfect) are some of the keys to a successful project.

During construction we will act as your representative. After working closely with you through the design process, we are prepared to communicate to the builders and contractors the shared values, the priorities and the choices we have made together. We will help maintain/communicate the design intent of our drawings that will culminate in a project that exists in reality. Partnering with us to make good design will help you enjoy many years in a space you helped create.