



One of the most important goals of a remodel should be to create space that fits the way your family lives

Remodeling Strategies:

A Guide for the Discriminating Homeowner

So you're thinking about remodeling your home. How do you decide which project, or projects, will best serve your changing needs? How can you control costs while remaining true to your vision? And how can you optimally manage the impact a remodeling project will have on your daily life?

Indecisiveness, budgetary concerns, and strangers working in your home can make remodeling seem like a daunting undertaking. Yet, it is possible to get crystal clear about your wants and needs, remain true to your budget and values, and create space for yourself and your family that is beautiful, useful, and wonderfully designed.

This Guide will help you to hone in on what you really want from a remodel, and will offer practical tools, insight, and ideas to help you change or add to your home joyfully and with inspiration.

We begin by tuning into the marketplace and looking at how current trends may impact your project, particularly in light of the ongoing economic crisis.

Tuning Into the Future of Remodeling

For 2009 and beyond, the most current and pressing trends in remodeling are quality design, quality construction, and quality materials. Also at the top of the list are energy efficient homes, and homes that honor aging in place.

Sources: Builder, the Magazine of the National Association of Homebuilders, 1/09
Www.babyboormagazine.com, Changing Baby Boomer Remodeling Needs, February 15, 2009



If you plan to age in place, your home should contain:

- ◇ Lever style door handles
- ◇ Master bedroom and bath on first floor
- ◇ Bright lighting in all areas
- ◇ Non slip flooring at main entryway
- ◇ No change in level on the first floor
- ◇ A low maintenance exterior
- ◇ An open floor plan

Source:

<http://www.nahb.org>

With 76 million American Baby Boomers approaching retirement, many remodels will include first floor master bedrooms and bathrooms and roomier living spaces.

According to the National Association of Homebuilders, buyers will want and expect better workmanship, higher quality finishes and more energy efficiency.

Since home buyers want homes made with quality materials, it makes sense to create this in a remodel, along with space that is 100% useful, thoughtfully planned, and designed to fit the way you live.

The best way to create a timeless, gorgeous, usable space that will serve you far into the future is to approach your project with absolute clarity of purpose and a well defined plan that is simple to implement.

The Homeowner Needs Assessment: Get Clear About Your Project

It is sometimes difficult for homeowners to pinpoint exactly what they want from a remodel. For example, many believe they need “more space,” when in reality, a strategic reconfiguration of existing space, with perhaps some new features, will meet their needs as well as or better than adding additional square feet.

There is a huge risk in moving forward without being clear about what you want from the outset. Your result will likely end up as something much less than what you envisioned, yet it will still cost hard earned dollars and time, as well as the tremendous stress trying to “figure it out” as you go along.

A Homeowner Needs Assessment allows you to leverage your time, resources and talent to the fullest. Just as no house should be built without a foundation, no remodeling project should start without a Homeowner Needs Assessment.



Clearly Identify the Project:

Write down each remodel project you are thinking of doing (example: we want to add a large patio cover in the backyard, we are thinking of adding a downstairs master suite) :

Who Will the Project Benefit:

List family members and ages (including pets) living in the home now or planned to live in the home in the next five to ten years, and how each person will benefit from the remodel (example: Son, age 13, will benefit from us adding a downstairs master suite because he will have more privacy upstairs):

What You Don't Want:

Think forward in time. Your project is about to start. Write down what you DO NOT want to happen (example: I do not want the project to go over budget and yet I also do not want to compromise on the size of the walk in closet in the new master suite). List everything you can think of that you *don't want*:

The ideal project will improve your home and appreciate your property. When it comes to creating your ideal space AND adding value, nothing beats a kitchen remodel.



When it comes to popular projects, the bathroom is second only to the kitchen.

Here are some ideas:

- ◇ Fresh paint
- ◇ New vanity
- ◇ New fixtures
- ◇ Creative tile designs for sink, shower or floor
- ◇ Wall coverings
- ◇ New counters

What You Do Want:

Now, write down what you DO want to happen (example: I want the project to stay on schedule so the new patio cover is up in time to use the new outdoor space it creates before it gets really hot out); list everything you can think of and have fun with it. Pretend that time and budget are no object:

What You Can Do:

Outline what leg work you intend to do yourself (example: we can sketch out what we want our new master suite to look like. We can research online for new bedroom furniture):

How You Want to Feel:

How you want to feel when the project is done (example: having this new downstairs master suite makes me feel so much better about the future because I have the option of not going upstairs as much). Have fun with this too.:



Potential Energy and Cost Saving Project Ideas:

- ◇ A patio cover can add useable outdoor space and help to keep the home cool in the summer
- ◇ Foam attic insulation is a new technology that can reduce air conditioning ductwork losses
- ◇ LED and fluorescent lighting provide a viable energy and cost saving alternative to traditional high wattage light bulbs

Determine Your Budget:

Determine and *write down* what you intend to spend on the project and where you intend to get the money (example: savings, home equity line, etc). It is important to be completely honest about how you are going to allocate your resources to pay for your remodel. It is acceptable to have a budget range, as long as the high end is firm and communicated to everyone who contributes to the project.

Set Parameters for Professional Involvement

Are you handy with tools? Do you enjoy working around the house? Or does doing all or part of your own remodel sound like a bad idea, either because you are not “handy” or simply too busy? How much time do you realistically have to devote to the project (*hint: there are three things that you should never delegate so some sort of time investment will be necessary*)? Are you open to new ideas?

Write down everything that you will need (or consider) having a remodeling professional do (examples: I want to meet with a professional to review my project idea and talk about budgeting and scheduling options. Or: I want to consult with a professional at strategic times throughout my remodel, Or: I want a professional that I trust to oversee, design, and create the entire project). Take some time with this and pretend that there are no limits in the ways that you can utilize a professional to serve you and your remodel.



Significant Changes for Relatively Low Cost:

- ◇ Brighten up a room by removing window coverings and tinting the glass
- ◇ Add new fixtures to sink, tub, or shower
- ◇ Give depth to kitchen counter space by adding a creative tile backsplash
- ◇ Select mid level appliances instead of high end ones.
- ◇ Select corian countertops instead of granite
- ◇ Warm up or cool down a room with a new coat of paint

Once the Homeowner Needs Assessment is complete, place it in a prominent, easy to find space in your project file (or post it on a bulletin board or refrigerator). Refer to it often throughout the project to make sure your vision is being honored.

Arguably one of the most important components of the Homeowner Needs Assessment is the budget. The best executed projects stay on track by staying within budget. Part of staying within budget is being open to opportunities to control project costs.

Creative Ways to Control Costs

Your budget is a living document that you must use to retain control over the cost of your project. To relinquish that control or to shoot from the hip will create additional, unplanned debt and drama that you simply don't need. Quite simply, not controlling costs can derail your vision, or even kill a project. At the same time, while the high end of your budget should remain fixed, there should be room for flexibility in the middle.

There are many ways to make sweeping changes for relatively low cost. For example, in contemplating a kitchen remodel your heart may initially be set on new cabinetry. However, research may reveal that new cabinets will eat into three quarters of your budget. You could get creative and instead decide to have the existing cabinets stripped and stained, and select new hardware. You could still create a dramatic change that honors your vision, and create more room in the budget for things like new counters, appliances, or flooring.

Three Things You Should Never Delegate

Most remodeling projects require some level of expert involvement. Thanks to completing the Homeowner Needs Assessment, you have a solid idea of what that will look like for your project. While factors like project scope, available time, and money differ for everyone, there are three things that you should not delegate:



Some scheduling elements that are typically part of a remodel include:

- ◇ Planning
- ◇ Submission of plans to permitting entity (if applicable)
- ◇ Inspections (concrete, plumbing, electrical, etc.)
- ◇ Application for any variances required by city/county/state
- ◇ Milestones within each particular project

Setting a schedule with some built in flexibility allows room to resolve unexpected issues that may come up.

Setting the Budget: Not only must *you* set the budget, you must clearly communicate the budget to everyone involved in the project. A firm budget helps to quickly distinguish wants from needs, and allows your expert to tell you what is realistic for your project and what is not. A firm budget, and the discipline to stick to it, also keeps unrealistic expectations in check.

Setting the Schedule: From the day work begins, your remodel will impact your daily life. Most likely strangers will be working in your home for a good portion of the remodel.

The way in which this affects you and your family depends on *you* setting aside the time to focus on

- ⇒ an overall project schedule
- ⇒ week by week
- ⇒ day by day

For example, when do you want workers to come to the house and when do you want them done for the day? Are there certain dates that you know in advance that the schedule will need to be altered?

While you may consult with and defer to your expert in terms of some of the scheduling detail, *you* must be involved from the outset to create a schedule that everyone can live with while the project is ongoing.

Creating a Review Process: You must review the project with your expert on a regular basis to ensure that your vision is being honored. The frequency of review can be tailored to fit the project but should be no less frequent than once or twice a week. Ask questions and give feedback. The sooner you speak up about something (no matter how small it may seem) the sooner your expert can address it and keep everyone on the same page.

No matter how excellent a remodeling professional is, that person is not a mind reader, and that person will want to check in with you frequently while serving your project on these important issues of budget and pricing, scheduling, and progress reviews.



A thorough list of specific interview questions will go a long way in helping you determine which professional will be able to best serve your remodel needs

5 Major Benefits of Working With a Remodeling Professional

Collaborating with a professional can bring fresh ideas, specialized knowledge, and invaluable support to a project.

An excellent professional can offer:

- ⇒ Creative ideas for your project that can amp up your vision and make the end result even better than you originally pictured it.
- ⇒ Alternative ways to approach a project so that you have choices that enable you to stay true to your vision in the best, most cost effective, most aligned with your vision way.
- ⇒ Specialized assistance with technical or time consuming issues such as permitting, pricing, coordination, supervision, and scheduling of sub trades so that you do not get overwhelmed or overloaded with stress.
- ⇒ Full project supervision and support from beginning to end.
- ⇒ Consultation at select milestones to help keep the project on track.

SPECIALIZED KNOWLEDGE

Permitting
Pricing

Scheduling Sub trades

Coordination
Supervision

INNOVATIVE IDEAS

Fresh, creative ideas for ways to utilize existing space that may not have occurred to you

Choice of approaches maximizes resources and honors your vision so you love your home even more



Custom wall finishes and floor coverings are a great way to get creative while creating a modern, elegant, or cozy space:

Some wall finishing options:

- ◇ Venetian plaster
- ◇ Stone
- ◇ Wood
- ◇ Tile
- ◇ Paint

Some floor covering options:

- ◇ Carpet
- ◇ Tile
- ◇ Wood
- ◇ Cork
- ◇ Laminate

What To Look For In a Remodeling Expert

Selecting the right expert can make your project come to fruition, perhaps even better than you imagined it. Selecting the wrong professional can tank the project and make you sorry that you ever considered remodeling. It is therefore vital to take the time to carefully consider, and interview, several remodeling professionals.

The following criteria can help with the selection process:

Seek a professional with at least ten years of experience in both residential construction and residential design. This means that your expert should hold licenses in both building and design. More often than not there is more than one way to approach a project. Your expert should be able to tell you the best, most cost effective way to get the result that you envision. Someone trained in both disciplines, who has the talent to connect with you, tap into the way your family uses the home, see the “big picture” that is your project, and provide both creative and technical support will be able to optimally give you this advice.

Your professional should be able to customize his or her services to your project. Someone with design and construction experience recognizes the value of customizing services to fit your project. While fully capable of running the entire project and performing the scope of construction work, this professional is more than willing to offer select services to fit your needs, wants and budget. If your project would be best served by consultation at certain milestones, this professional can offer that. If you simply need consultation to generate ideas or get help with pricing or permitting, this can happen. A consummate professional will be happy to help you prioritize what you need and also to help you fit his or her services into your budget. Utilizing a professional’s services in a way that best serves your project can potentially save thousands of dollars.



If you need more square footage, an addition may be the way to go.

Popular additions are:

- ◇ Home office
- ◇ Extra bedroom
- ◇ Mud room
- ◇ Exercise room

Your professional should have a list of readily available refer-

ences. You should see references from both residential construction and residential design on your professional's list as well as detailed project descriptions. Your professional should provide several references that you may contact.

Seek a professional that has experience on a variety of home re-

modeling projects. Every home and every homeowner is unique. Choosing a professional with experience on a wide variety of projects means choosing to have a wealth of knowledge, ideas, and industry contacts at your fingertips. This also indicates that this expert is open minded and creative about the projects that he takes on and will bring that open mindedness and creativity to your project.

Put price in perspective. The best professionals are rarely the

cheapest. By deciding via the Homeowner Needs Assessment how you intend to use a professional you can afford to choose the best, and not be limited to the cheapest.

What To Do Now

For a limited time, Glenn Frank Design, LLC is offering a one hour consultation, in your home, during which he will answer your questions about remodeling strategies and design one on one and offer you some next steps advice. **Glenn is offering this consultation at a reduced rate of \$75.00 for a limited time.**

Glenn can only keep this offer open until June 5, 2009.

Call or email Glenn before May 15, 2009, in order to ensure you receive a spot on his calendar.

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More Information

If you need help with a current remodel or ideas for a project that you are thinking about, Glenn's companies offer the following services that can help:

Glenn Frank Design, LLC

- ⇒ New home design (includes consultation and full set of plans)
- ⇒ Home addition design (includes consultation and full set of plans)
- ⇒ Consultation on new home design
- ⇒ Consultation on home addition and remodel design
- ⇒ Project management (designer side)

Glenn F. Frank (construction)

- ⇒ New home building
- ⇒ Addition building
- ⇒ Remodeling

More About Glenn:

Glenn has over twenty years of experience in the construction and design professions. He grew up working in his family's construction business on Long Island and has spent nearly ten years helping his clients create their dream homes in Las Vegas, Nevada

Nevada Licenses:

Residential Designer, Nevada State Board of Architecture, Interior Design, and Residential Design. License #161P

General Contractor (B2, Residential/Small Commercial)
Nevada State Contractors Board License #0056921

Other State Licenses:

New York Licensed Architect #025549.1

Florida Licensed General Contractor #CGC051928.

Education: New York Institute of Technology, B.S. Architecture