

New Route for your Career: “10 Talking Points”

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You’ve been practicing interior design in the business world. You are at a crossroads or you want to add value to your current position.

IDEA-Line (Interior Design Education Assistance Line):

Think about a new route, one that brings you to higher education. Did you know that to sustain interior design in the future, we need to increase the pool of qualified educators? Ask yourself, “Would I want to invest my expertise where others would learn from it?” Teaching interior design or advancing your degree might be right for you at this time.

10 points to consider when positioning yourself in design education

1. Know that academic programs value your expertise in interior design. Consider teaching and/or graduate school.
2. Consider different types of teaching opportunities in Higher Education
 - Part-time appointments (existing; new single offering; new delivery format)
 - a. teaching 1 or 2 classes that a program lists (posting of part-time positions found on web sites of institutions)
 - b. teaching a class that hasn’t been offered, but in conjunction with the program you develop; bringing something new to the curriculum (These usually come about through discussion with program Chair or Coordinator. The class might be team taught as well.)
 - c. On-line class: (Discuss with a program Chair or Coordinator)
 - Teaching Assistantships combined with enrollment in a graduate program
 - Full time academic staff appointments and some faculty appointments where experience and a bachelors or masters degree in ID or Related field meet position requirements. (Positions posted on web sites and print material of institutions)
3. Don’t make assumptions before you find out more information. Interior Design programs are found in a variety of types of institutions. Become acquainted with types of programs, finding out what fits you and your interests. There are numerous places to find information—IDEC, CIDA, State offices, professional associations, a friend in academics--IDEA-Line
4. Become acquainted with the needs and expectations of academic settings and translate where you are now in light of those.
5. Repackage your resume and portfolio in terms of teaching or returning to graduate school—seek examples of position descriptions and application forms used.
6. Identify your niche—in what areas of interior design do you lead? This could be a selling point for a class or an area of study.
7. Draw upon your experience of team approaches, giving workshops, presenting and speaking to clients.
8. Formats for teaching and study do vary among studio, lecture, small group discussion or a combination.
9. Shape an outline and description of a class similar to the process used for a project as an example. Attend a workshop on how to teach design or find a mentor.
10. Network—interior designers are a generous community of people holding numerous roles. Include a professor in that network if you haven’t before.

One appointment leads to another and learning continues.