

10 MISTAKES TO AVOID WHEN

DEVELOPING A COMMERCIAL PROJECT

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Building Design ❖ Interior Design ❖ Project Management

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WELCOME

This guide was prepared after seeing so many people struggle with understanding the development process for commercial projects. This process can seem like a complex and frightening road block for those who haven't been through it before. The first and most important step is to find and hire your building design professional.

You may be wondering: how do I find the site for my project? Do I really need to hire a building designer and other consultants? How much are their fees? What about builders? And most importantly: what are the key, critical steps I need to take to ensure that my development project will be successful?

In the following pages, you will discover the answers to these questions – and more. We hope you enjoy this guide and look forward to your feedback on the contents.

01. NO EXPERIENCE

Do you have experience in building a commercial project? If so, was it a good or bad experience?

The issues you encounter when developing a commercial building differ from those involved in building a home for yourself. It is less about your personal preferences and more about making smart decisions that affect your organization's users, consumers, and the general public. These issues include functionality, economy, life safety, security, efficiency, flexibility, and the environment. If you lack the specific experience, it might be useful to put together a building committee comprising the various key stakeholders in order to make important decisions about the project. It will be useful to hire an architectural designer who can guide you or the committee through the process. For more information on this, download our Client Guide, 'How to Hire a Building Design Professional,' available at pwdesign.com.au/resources

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02. NOT HAVING PROPER DOCUMENTS AND SITE STUDIES

Have you done an Environmental Assessment?

Make sure that you get an Environmental Site Assessment from a qualified professional. This report is an investigation of the current and past history and uses of the property in question. It will identify if any contamination exists or if any hazardous materials and chemicals are present.

Did you complete a Site Survey and Geotechnical Report?

A Site Survey will identify important site information, like property lines, electric poles, water bodies, topography, etc. You will need this to give this to your architectural designer. Also, make sure that you have a Geotechnical Report of your site before proceeding with any construction. No one knows what is underneath the ground until you drill down and analyse the soil condition. There could be an old mine shaft, unstable soil, or bedrock, for example.

The recommendations in this report inform the design of the building foundations and can identify issues that may make the site unbuildable or more expensive to build upon.

03. NOT CONSIDERING OTHER SITE DEVELOPMENT OPTIONS

Have you considered all the options for use on your property?

While you may already have a plan in mind, you may be underutilizing your property's potential. It also may not be the right project for your site, or it may be overly ambitious.

04. UNREALISTIC VIEWS ON TIME, COST AND QUALITY

How clear are you on exactly what you need, what it should cost, and how long it should take?

These critical factors are directly related to one another. There are building procurement options that accelerate the speed of construction, but add risk in other areas such as quality or cost. Higher quality may have longer timelines and cost

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more, while building inexpensively may mean lower quality but not necessarily fast delivery. Determining the right balance of time, cost, and quality is a delicate balance that your building designer is trained to provide guidance on for your project.

05. LACK OF CLARITY ON NEEDS AND EXPECTATIONS

How confident are you that the type of project you are planning will meet your needs and expectations?

It is important to discuss with your architect what your needs and expectations are, not only to solicit his or her advice but also so that the design can be tested against these metrics as it is being developed. Design is not merely about what it looks like, but more appropriately how efficient it functions in meeting your needs as well as the needs of the building's users.

06. HAVING AN UNREALISTIC BUDGET

Do you have a budget, and are you confident that you have taken into account all cost elements?

Building estimates move from very broad to more detailed and accurate as a design is developed and specified. A quantity surveyor, with the correct guidance from a building designer, can develop a preliminary budget that will take into consideration all cost elements as well as provide the right amount of contingency.

07. NOT UNDERSTANDING THE PROCESS OF CONSTRUCTION

How well do you understand the process that is required to get the project completed on time and within budget?

This is where an experienced consulting team will be valuable to you, as addressing too many unforeseen issues later can have serious time and cost implications. This is not to say that there will be no surprises, but, the more experience a team has, the more likely this risk will be reduced.

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08. LACK OF KNOWLEDGE OF LAWS, CODES AND STANDARDS

How aware are you of the legal requirements, codes, and standards to be met?

When you are trying to achieve a certain standard in your new building or provide a building that is compliant with the building and zoning codes, it is critical that your consulting team be well versed on these matters to properly advise you.

09. LACK OF UNDERSTANDING OF THE APPROVALS PROCESS

Do you have a solid understanding of the approvals process, the requirements and regulations to be met?

Here, experience plays a fundamental role in guiding you through the process with realistic expectations.

10. LACK OF UNDERSTANDING OF PRIORITIES

How important is this project to you?

Developing a new commercial building or renovating an existing building is a major investment and it takes time to plan, design, and construct. It will require taking time to clearly establish goals and priorities that will act as a compass throughout the project. It will also take your commitment throughout the process. The importance of the project to you will determine your drive to getting it done as well as procuring the right team to assist you.

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THE NEXT STEP

Congratulations! You now have the key information that will help you avoid costly mistakes when developing your commercial project.

Unfortunately, I can't include every important piece of information in this guide.

Actually, that would be impossible because each project is unique and the requirements differ based on a multitude of factors. But with this guide, you have the critical information to help your project to be a success.

If you are in the process of looking for a building designer for your project, let's talk. I can help you wade through the necessary requirements and make sure you aren't overlooking a crucial factor that could doom your project to failure. I offer a custom **initial consultation** where I will provide a needs and options review and identify the specific requirements pertaining to your project and your available options.

Typically, the **initial consultation** saves my clients thousands of dollars and weeks of lost time, not to mention the stress and headache of getting something wrong.

To read more about the **initial consultation** as well as the price for this service and why it is critically important to your project's success visit my website. If you are ready to talk now, please give me a call.

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Best wishes for the success of your project!

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