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# DO YOUR HOMEWORK

By Brad Little

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As you embark on your remodeling journey, homework is key to a successful transformation.

Fortunately, you have a wide range of choices when it comes to choosing the professional who will guide you through the process of designing, planning, and executing your renovation, but deciding *whom* to choose is possibly the most important decision you will make. Once you've narrowed down your list to two or three remodeling professionals, it's important to prepare for your meetings so they can apply their expertise to your specific needs. Here are some easy – but critical – bits of homework to help you prepare:

## **Think through your short-term and long-term plans.**

Whether you intend to sell your home within the next five years or plan to stay in your home until your last day on earth will make a big difference in how you approach and budget for your project. Your remodeling professional will help you make prudent decisions related to your plans.

## **Decide how involved you will be.**

There will be myriad choices and decisions that you will be asked to make when it comes to planning your project. You may want to be very involved with every single one of those decisions, or you may choose to defer many of those decisions to your remodeling professional and trust them to guide you with





## "HOMEWORK IS KEY TO A SUCCESSFUL TRANSFORMATION."



their expertise and experience. Letting them know which decisions are most important to you is key.

### **Identify your “big rocks.”**

Don't overwhelm yourself with details early on. Focus on your headline goals, such as wanting your kitchen to have better traffic flow or wanting a more modern bathroom. It's OK if you already know specifics like colors and products you want to use, but most of the time those are the “little rocks” that will fill in around the “big rocks” as your project-planning progresses.

### **Set your expectations for timing.**

The amount of time required for planning, preparing, and constructing your project can vary greatly depending on the size and scope of the project. Your remodeling professional may also have a backlog of projects that will impact when they can begin work on yours. If you have a deadline such as the birth of a child, a major event such as a wedding or graduation, or anything else that will conflict with having your home partially under construction, make sure you share that with your remodeling team early on.

### **Talk to friends and neighbors.**

If you know others who have gone through a remodeling project, ask what they might have done differently. Yes, you can watch remodeling shows and read stories on the internet to get a baseline of what to expect, but having real-life conversations with people you know and trust is usually a better way to get valuable information. ♦

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