



A marble backsplash pops in this kitchen by L+P Interiors John Merkl

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What's the biggest lesson you've learned from another designer?



By *Aidan Taylor*

Leaning on your network is a great way to improve your business and avoid pitfalls along the way. This week, we asked eight designers—Melanie Arguello, Stephanie Brown, Dezirae Bruni, Heidi Houdek, Ansley Majit, Dvira Ovadia, Brooke Sabia and Christopher Shields—about the essential lessons they've learned from industry peers.



Dvira Ovadia Courtesy of Dvira Interiors

EMPOWER YOUR EMPLOYEES

“The biggest lesson I learned from a fellow designer came from someone who completely reframed how I think about growth within a team. When her employees approached her asking for raises, she never shut the conversation down. Instead, she welcomed it, making it clear that compensation should reflect performance and merit. What stood out was how she used these moments as an opportunity to shift the mindset: She encouraged her team not to focus solely on what they were earning, but on what they were becoming. She emphasized continuous self-evolution—going beyond day-to-day project work and

staying curious about the broader industry. This includes understanding new materials, keeping up with innovations in lighting and integrated appliances, exploring custom millwork solutions, and staying aware of evolving design trends and technologies. Today, I actively encourage my team to step outside their immediate responsibilities and explore areas they may not yet know. Whether diving into the technical side of a product, exploring new design systems, or attending seminars, workshops and trade shows, ongoing curiosity strengthens individual growth and elevates the quality of our work as a whole.” —*Dvira Ovadia, Dvira Interiors, Dallas and Toronto*