



**How do you select a design professional for your building project which is not yet well defined and for which the scope of professional services is therefore not yet established?**

Whether you have extensive experience with design and construction or are coming to both for the first time, it can be helpful to ask yourself a few questions before interviewing prospective architects. You do not need firm or complete answers at this point. Rather, these questions will help to ensure that your initial communications will be clear and productive and enable you to select the design professional best suited to your needs.

- How will your project be used? Do you have specific ideas on how to translate these activities into spaces and square footage?
- Do you have a site? Or will this also be a subject of discussion with the architect?
- Have you decided upon a schedule and budget?
- What are your overall aspirations for the project—aesthetic and emotional as well as practical?
- Who will be making the critical decisions—you alone, your family, or a committee of some sort?
- Where will the resources come from to create and operate your project?
- Are you willing to pay a little extra up front on systems that will save energy or bring other operations savings and pay back over time?
- Do you have previous experience with design and construction? If so, in what ways were you successful, and was the experience in any way disappointing? A good architect will listen closely to your answers, help you solidify your goals and desires, and translate them into an effective building. Look for a good listener, and you'll find a good architect.