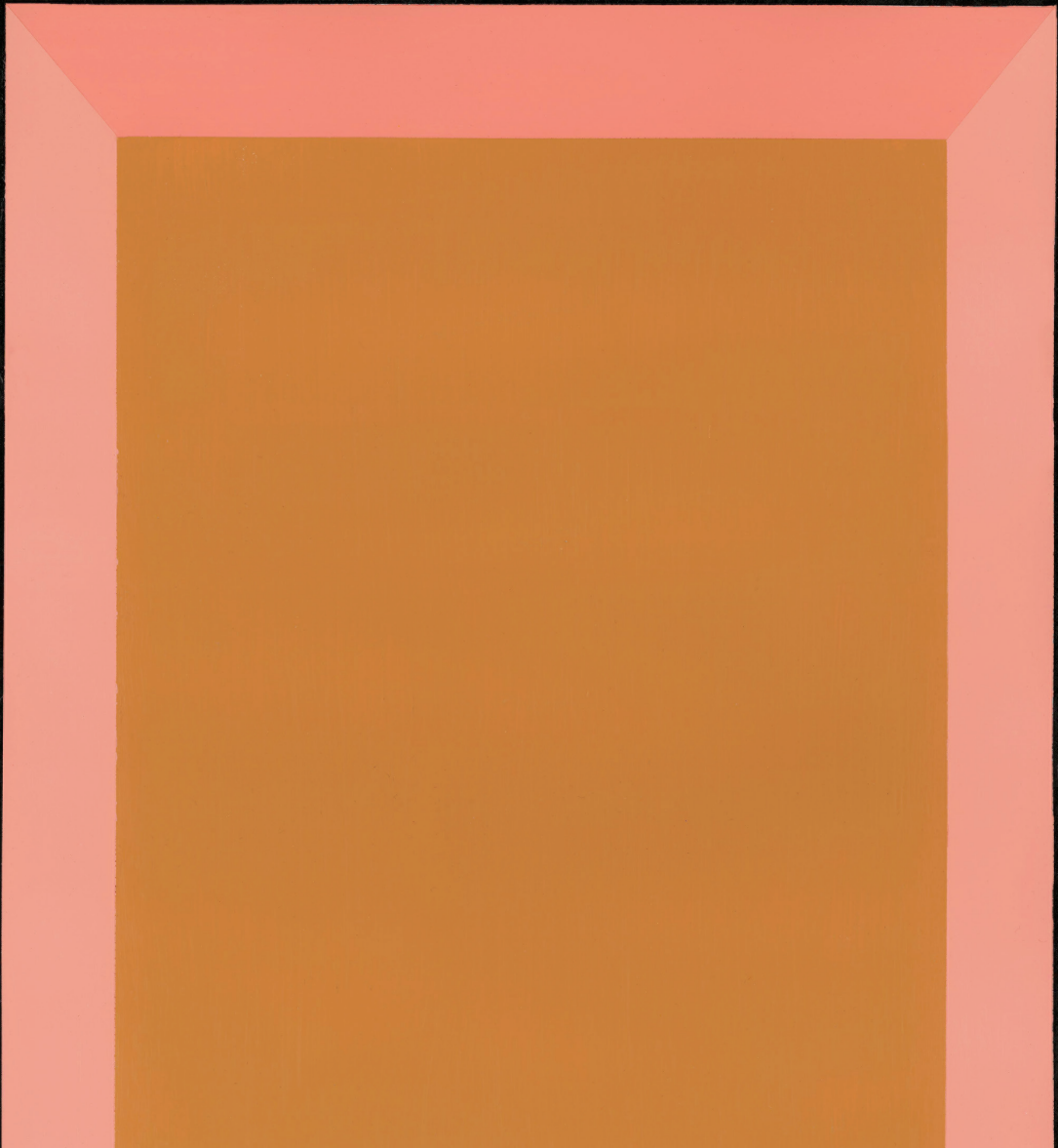


DESIGNERS TODAY

style. substance. soul.



OCTOBER 2019

STEPS TO SUSTAINABILITY

Rachel Cannon has lived in Baton Rouge, Louisiana her whole life, and building a design business where the median income is \$38K a year has been no small feat. She points to five milestones that led her to create a sustainable business in one of the poorest states in the nation.

1. Knowing and understanding that interior design is a luxury.

In the beginning, I tried to work with everyone. I had bought into the idea that I could deliver amazing design on any budget. As a business owner, I had to accept the fact that working with a designer is not an entitlement, so I stopped re-negotiating my terms and planted my stake in the ground. This helped me push forward in my goal of having an actual business and not a hobby, and allowed me to begin marketing to the audience who could (and would) willingly pay for a luxury service.

2. Identifying my ideal client.

If you want to take your business to the next level, you need to become a profiler. The more you know about the type of client you want, the more targeted your messaging, and the easier it becomes to attract that person. Gather information — age, work, marital status, shopping and vacation preferences, etc. — to be able to catch them.

3. Using a contract and never wavering on its terms.

It is too risky to provide interior design services without a contract. My attorneys have told me that letters of agreement aren't worth the paper they're printed on, so we drafted a comprehensive contract that precisely spells out the deliverables, the timeline, payment schedule, penalties for certain activities, what happens upon completion, etc. We do not proceed if the client has not agreed to the terms in our contract. All decision makers are required to sign it, along with the proposal for our design fees.

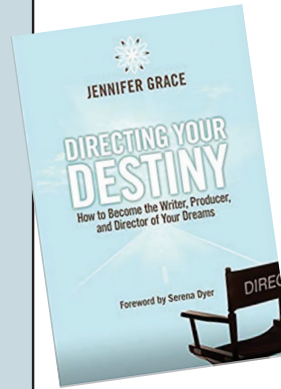
4. Developing and sticking to a project management process and system.

This makes our lives easier and instills confidence and trust in your client as they see you already have the lay of the land and know where you're going. If you aren't articulating the process from the beginning, you haven't done enough to set yourself apart from the sea of others who appear to do the same thing. And it's not enough just to tell them how you work — you have to stick to what you say to prove your value and build loyalty.

5. Be authentic.

In every way, from how you design to how you interact with clients, be yourself. If you try to emulate someone else, it will eventually ring hollow and clients will see through it.

GOOD READS FOR GETTING IN THE SPIRIT

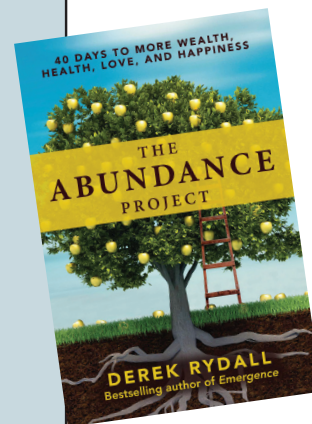


Directing Your Destiny

by Jennifer Grace

With humor and generosity, celebrity life coach Jennifer Grace has created a four-week program full of daily practices and tools for

manifesting. With an emphasis on cultivating clarity, setting intentions, reprogramming belief systems, gratitude, practicing non-attachment and harnessing past emotions to propel forward, Grace equips us to become the writer, producer and director of our dreams.



The Abundance Project

by Derek Rydall

"If you're interested in manifesting abundance, I recommend this book suggested to me by my business coach, Gail Doby. It's really an incredible guide to

the principles of prosperity. Rydall breaks it all down into simple concepts and has manifesting exercises he designed so you can get straight to the good stuff." —Lisa Kahn