

Elizabeth Winton's ambition had always been to run her own business. From the very earliest age her interest had always been in the arts. Some years ago, when she was working for the Foreign Office in California, she realised that she desperately wanted to work in colour and design. Interior design seemed to be the perfect area to develop into a career. She was immediately offered a job in PR, promoting fabrics and wallpapers for well-known suppliers such as Tallow & Lake. Her knowledge increased when she then moved to a company that specialised in Chinese silk wall coverings.

HER TEAM

She places great emphasis on excellence. Her team now has specialists who can carry out, for instance, special paint finishes, marbling, dragging, stippling or stencilling. In addition to a designer/



Elizabeth Winton

be taken in the planning stages so that office staff can enjoy working in an area which has been surveyed for their needs.

THE IMPORTANCE OF COLOUR

Elizabeth Winton confirmed that she was very careful in the choice of colours. They portray different moods. You will notice in most restaurants the colours are predominantly red. It has been proven that they whet your appetite. You often find that restaurants which are predominantly blue do less business. It is deep psychology that we associate blue with detergents and cleaning.

"Colours have to be balanced", and it was her belief that there must be a little bit of blue in every room. She was keen on aqua – "it does look good in a business context. Peach can be nice where one wishes to give a welcome."

Conveying who you are

"I like designing for offices, hotel and banks, – I focus on purposes"

Elizabeth Winton Interviewed by Martin Posner

architect, she employs a superb perspective designer who carries out extensive work throughout the world for many royal houses.

Her highly qualified team of designers and architects offer a specialised range of services in interior design for executive suites, reception areas, hotels, banks, interiors of retail shops and private homes.

"Discoveries" believes in offering a comprehensive design, purchasing and project management package. There is a full back-up support service to ensure the best finished result for convenience and economy for their clients.

What was her philosophy, I asked Elizabeth Winton?

SNAPPY IMAGE

"We want to help people get together their identity, their interesting image for their business, and to create their appropriate "business identity". Our clients will give us a brief of what they want. We discuss their modern image and their feelings for their business. We produce a prospectus so that they can see how it would look when it was completed. The people in my team work quickly."

At the moment her team is working for a bank in the City. She felt that the most important area for a bank is the reception area. First impressions are made immediately the customer walks into that small area.

THE PURPOSE

You have to use marketing to get the right image in the market place. Consider designing for a bank? What is the purpose of the bank? Is it a merchant bank? What is appropriate for that organisation? You cannot be subjective about it, you must pinpoint your customer's needs. A high perspective is often needed. The area has to be attractive and interesting

but at the same time practical in every sense. Everything must be durable and easy to replace. A scheme should be timeless.

THEIR OWN STAMP

Once the purpose is in focus, Elizabeth Winton can then bring in her team. Every organisation has their own paradigm. Detailed discussions with executives often help to bring out their real objectives for business.

In one of her designs she created a luxury atmosphere by using upholstered walls. Special paint finishes can be used on skirtings. "I believe in being adventurous, having one's own stamp. Everyone loves to have their own stamp. Clients come to me for new ideas and this is how I work. It's very exciting. You state who you are."

PLANNING THE OFFICE

Discoveries International has a data bank of thousands of suppliers and a selection of specialists are used who are producing really fine quality products. I wondered how these schemes were tackled when designing an office. The seating plan is reviewed and great emphasis is placed on the comfort of the chairs.

Turning to lighting and colour-schemes, it was emphasised that it was not realistic for people to work at their optimum if they do not have natural ventilation and daylight. It is not a healthy environment if the air is constantly recirculated. People do get bugs – even the BBC! Great care has to

EXPORTING

Recently Elizabeth Winton revisited Bahrain. She went as part of a trade mission organised by the Kent and Sussex Exporters Club. The mission also visited Kuwait, Doha, Abu Dhabi, Dubai and Muscat. She had taken a wide range of fabrics, soft furnishings and wall papers to promote, but even so she was surprised at the variety of taste in the individual Gulf States. In Abu Dhabi and Doha more pastel shades were in demand, whereas in other areas of the Gulf region far brighter colours interested her buyers.

Although the entire Gulf region is most price conscious, she has come back with many thousands of pounds worth of orders.

THE FUTURE

Discoveries International aims to be the leading exporter of soft furnishings to the Gulf, offering a unique service specialising in British collections. Their international experience as interior design consultants attracts discerning clients who seek fine quality and true style. This perhaps sums up why Discoveries International is now expanding.

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