

Nothing to Fear

Do you know what most often hinders the success of a remodeling project? Fear. Fear of the unknown, of unscrupulous contractors, shoddy materials, of somehow getting caught in a money pit and ending up holding the bag.

This high level of concern is understandable. Home improvement, especially on a scale that requires significant structural and cosmetic work, is a complex undertaking. Most homeowners engage in this kind of project only once or twice in a lifetime. It requires a large financial commitment and there is a lot to learn.

Professional remodeling contractors understand and respect the uncertainty that can sneak up on clients and impact their enjoyment of the home improvement process. That understanding helps them support clients to identify and understand their concerns -- whatever they are -- and overcome them quickly and confidently.

In addition to being good listeners and problem-solvers, professional remodelers operate on solid business principles and practices that alleviate the majority of what clients often fear about the home improvement process, including:

**Reliable partners.** The best remodelers seek out, work with, and retain top-quality subcontractors and materials suppliers. These trade partners should possess similar philosophies and approaches to running a successful business and be committed to the same high level of construction quality and standards. This helps mitigate disputes, foster cooperation, and produce better results.

The best remodelers regularly review their trade relationships to ensure that their pool of subs and suppliers consistently delivers high-quality work at a fair price. That diligence protects your investment and helps remove the fear of poor workmanship and unreliable performance.

**Record keeping.** The best remodeling contractors are diligent (some say obsessive) about documenting their projects to make sure costs, schedules and progress align and meet their standards of quality and those of their clients.

For the same reason, those remodelers demand similar diligence and reporting from their trade partners -- not so much to keep them in line, but more to enable their own accounting processes to be complete, accurate and current.

As such, professional contractors can present completely transparent and reliable reports at any time to their clients to ease concerns about whether their home project is on track.

**Protection.** People remodeling their homes are often afraid that they'll somehow be on the hook for unpaid work or materials once the job is over and their contractor has moved on to the next project. It's a legitimate fear and an all-too-common reality.

Professional remodelers easily manage these concerns. As part of their standard business practices, they pay their bills on time and only from each project's budget. In addition, they routinely collect lien releases from their trade partners upon satisfactory completion of their work.

Collecting lien releases on a timely basis (as the project progresses, not just at the end) removes the chance that a subcontractor or materials supplier will make a claim for payment against the home or owners; in fact, the best builders provide copies of those lien releases so that owners can rest assured that the bills have all been paid.

Sophisticated remodeling contractors practice "fear management". They take a professional approach to their business and are sensitive to the concerns of their clients. They help clients manage any anxiety from project inception through final walk-through. The key, as always, is communication. Helping clients manage their fear goes a long way to keeping communication lines open and promote a satisfying experience for all.