

# I Like It, But I Don't Know Why

By Joe T. Veal

## LANDSCAPING

Many times we see something in nature or in man-made landscapes that we like, but we're not sure why. The secret is that there are specific landscaping principles that produce a pleasing aesthetic design. For the purpose of this article, we will focus on three elements of professional landscaping: mass, scale, and accents.

**Massing** is the practice of placing several single-type plants in large clusters. Plants appear in nature in clusters or groups. Seldom will you find a single species growing alone. Plants are created to live in harmony with each other, especially those of the same type. Successful groupings will occur by placing together 3 or more of the same type of plant. I prefer to do this in clusters of 3, 4 or 7. Plants take on a special dynamic when grouped like this.



A correct **scale** is achieved when the designed space is consumed properly with an abundance of a consistent material. Do not use too many different types of plants in a constricted area. Likewise, a landscaped area may look too bare, which is often a consequence of inadequate budgeting. When money becomes the driving issue, you are better off to phase the landscape in over a period of time and plant the spaces properly.

**Accents** in a garden add drama and interest. When plants are effectively massed it is much easier to create a unique accent with a specialized plant. Quite often you will see a Japanese maple used effectively in this way. A mass of low growing ground cover can be accented with a sculptural maple emerging out of the planting bed.

Next time you are out for a drive, take a critical look at residential and commercial landscapes. Evaluate the use of mass, scale, and accents. Your eye will begin to pick up on the effective use of these principles. You will know why you like what you see and how to reproduce it at home.

*Joe T. Veal graduated from the University of Georgia with a degree in Landscape Architecture. He worked for Arnold Palmer as a Golf Course Architect. He has been involved in the design and or construction of some 25 Championship level Golf course developments. Locally he participated in the design of The Oasis in Loveland and at The TPC at River's Bend. Most recently he has helped design The Arboretum at Station Road for Elegant Estates, LLC. Joe is currently employed with Stawicki & Associates Architects as a landscape architect and can be reached at (513) 860-4818 ext. 212*

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WINTER 2005

## Who is a Registered Architect?

By Jeffrey L. Stawicki



A registered architect is a professional who must be knowledgeable and well versed in building design, interior design, ergonomic space planning, building systems, construction technology, structural engineering, interior design, site design, and landscape design.

Earning the designation of registered architect can be an 8 year process covering both the scientific and artistic disciplines noted above. After earning a Bachelor of Architecture degree in a five year collegiate program, or a Masters degree in Architecture in a six-year collegiate program, the graduate then follows the path laid out by the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards (NCARB). The first step is sponsorship by the Council in the Intern Development Program. After working as an intern for approximately two years after graduation, the person takes an Accredited State Board Examination. This test generally consists of 6 sittings for a total of 24 hours.

The successful completion of a graduate degree, an on-the-job internship, and the state exam earns the new registered architect his or her "seal" which goes on all documents and drawings. This seal consist of the person's name, the state in which the project is located, and the architect's registration number for that state.

In addition to drawing on the academic and work experience of a registered architect, the client also benefits in three additional ways. First, comes the architect's role as facilitator. The architect works with clients to develop their dreams and ideas, then documents them in drawings and blueprints. Secondly, the architect assists clients in their relationship with a builder, who ultimately brings the project to fruition. Finally, the client enjoys the benefits of an "implied copyright", meaning that neither the architect nor the builder can use the design for anyone else, making the project a one-of-a-kind creation co-authored by the client and architect.

Expertise, discernment and creativity – the three characteristics a registered architect offers clients and builders in producing truly custom homes.

*Jeffrey L. Stawicki is a practicing architect and custom builder. He is the president of Elegant Estates LLC and Stawicki & Associates Architects. Jeff can be reached at (513) 860-4816 x201*

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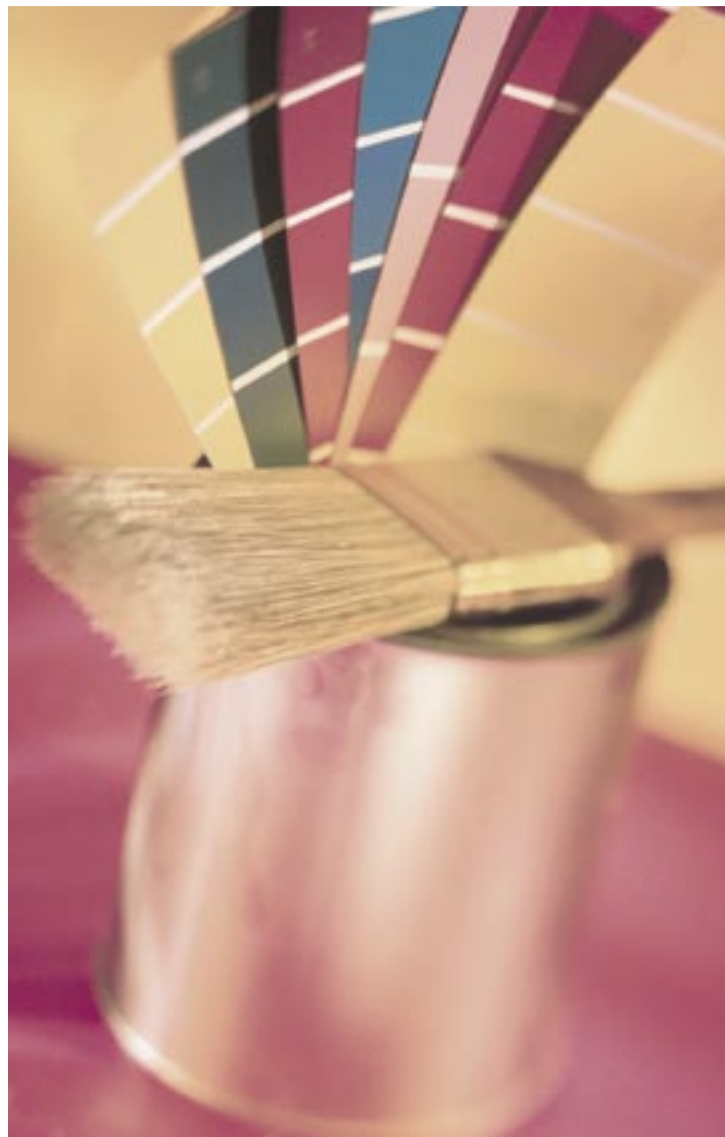
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# Choosing the Right Colors for Your Home

By Holly Rebensdorf **INTERIOR DESIGN**



Think about color the next time you walk into a friend's house. Do you envy their bold use of color or are you overwhelmed by it? Does a more subdued color scheme seem restful or just bland? Paint colors trigger many responses, all of which are clues to choosing your own palette for your new home.

Reconsider your first choice of "builder beige". It will look "safe" and decidedly boring. Paint color can bring a house to life and showcase the architectural details that are already there. Plan your colors carefully. Even if you enjoy color, don't place it everywhere. Your eye needs to rest. This allows it to appreciate the drama you add to special areas. Large, open areas that have no definitive stopping points benefit from using a more subtle color, a shade that has enough depth to it to accentuate the woodwork but not consume the space. Too much color in a large area can become tiresome. In these large areas I sometimes will use the next paint chip on the card to create a shadowing effect, not changing the color, just the intensity of it.

Dining rooms are one of my favorite rooms to play up with color. Rich colors envelop your guests and give a sense of intimacy that adds to the dining experience. Your dining room furniture comes to life against a little color. Chandeliers and candlelight are all the more beautiful in this setting. Another room to have fun with is the powder room. Deeply stacked molding and some color on the ceiling top off a small but very important room. I love pattern on the walls, whether it be a faux finishing technique or wallpaper. Make it dramatic but keep the scale of the room in mind. Pull a color from the walls or do a soft metallic wash on the ceiling. Light bounces off and people will always remember it.

Kitchens, studies and bedrooms can be bold, tranquil or subtle. These are all often used and very personal spaces. Your personality, as well as your furnishings, comes into play here. Kitchens typically don't have a lot of wall space since cabinets, doors and windows fill much of this area. Therefore, it can be an opportunity to go with more color. Studies with wood stained paneling and trim are complemented by color. Don't go too dark in these areas. Your task lighting will have to be bright to compensate, which can make it hard to spend extended periods of time working there. Bedrooms can go in so many directions. Keep in mind that this is the place you will start and end your day. Make it pleasing to your eye.

If you are moving into a house that lacks something that you just can't put your finger on, maybe it is color. Work with a professional to choose a color scheme that will complement your furnishings and the house itself. The colors you select should flow nicely off one another, giving you a sense of progression through the house. Create a statement in some areas to pull your eye into the house and stir visual interest. The shades you select can be the perfect backdrop for artwork or any collection. Remember, your home should be the place you hate to leave in the morning and can't wait to return to at the end of the day.

*Holly Rebensdorf is an Interior Designer with June Sturber & Associates. She has won eight Homearama awards for her work. Holly can be reached at (513) 793-7600.*



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## SALES IDEAS

### Promoting Your Real Value

By Liz Craciun

"It's a great value" usually means "It's a bargain". Something's value is judged relative to its price. Let's look at a definition of "Value" that focuses instead on the buyer-seller relationship: The value of any product or service is its impact on someone's personal or professional life. This usually affects any or all of these four areas of our lives: ego, comfort, safety, money.

Stand back and take a fresh look at the value that you and your business offer. The following process is a great agenda for your next sales or business review meeting: 1.) make a list of your product's or service's main features, then do this for the process of delivering and implementing it, and finally make a list of all the people involved; 2.) circle your top 1 or 2 strengths; 3.) consider how each strength helps someone reach their goals in the area of ego, comfort, safety, and/or money. Please note that "comfort" includes both physical, emotional, and aesthetic comfort.

Now comes the really hard part: describe your value in one or two sentences. Here are some examples.

- For a Process that impacts Ego: "As we help our clients improve their customer service activities, we make a point of gaining industry recognition for the executives."
- For an Experienced Staff that impacts Safety: "When you have us service your cars, you can feel better about driving long distances or at night because of our seasoned mechanics."
- For a Service Feature that impacts Comfort: "Our software program is very easy to learn. Your employees will not be afraid to use it right away."
- For the Design Features that impact Money: "Our restaurant is a favorite meeting place for serious business luncheons because of our quiet, private areas. A lot of contracts are signed here."

Be sure to have 2-3 proofs for your claims. Evidence can be in the form of examples, data, or references, etc. Articulating your value is very difficult. But if the people in your market don't understand it, they are forced to use "Price" to evaluate you – and it's your own fault.

*Liz Craciun has delivered business development workshops to both international corporations as well as individual business owners and sales professionals. She practices her value-oriented sales approach with her clients at Elegant Estates. Liz can be reached at (513) 860-4816 x210*

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## PERSONAL INSIGHTS

### New Year's Resolutions for Your Home

By Laurie Taylor



Resolutions are goals or changes we want to make for ourselves, so why not make some changes or set some resolutions for our homes as well? Please come with me as we contemplate setting some new goals for the place we call "home."

My first question is: "What is our family's main goal for our home?" Is it to do some minor updates? This goal is probably the easiest of choices. Painting, buying new furniture and accessories, or replacing outdated appliances all fall into this category. The goal to do a major renovation project is more complex. Adding room additions, finishing the basement, or completely remodeling the kitchen or master suite fall into this choice. Finally, the resolution might be to build your dream home. Preparing your current home for sale, finding a builder, and locating a new neighborhood are part of this decision.

Whatever choice is made, the next step is to start the process of making it happen. I always find it easiest to break down my goals into smaller pieces, so I don't feel overwhelmed by all the details. I should select a date by which I want to have the project done. Then I work backwards and put my action steps into daily, weekly, or monthly tasks to reach my goal. Of course, I think it is important to be flexible and realize that nothing is written in stone, because as they say, "Life happens!" The important thing is to make the goal and see it through to completion.

So now I'd like for you to think about your own home resolutions. Have you made them yet? Most of us make goals for our personal and professional lives; why not consider our living place too? After all, our home knits our memories together, gathers our family and friends, and creates a safe haven from life's storms. Doesn't it deserve some resolutions too?

*Laurie Taylor is a freelance writer residing in Cincinnati. Contact her at: ldianet@msn.com about your professional writing needs.*