



INTERIORS GURU:
Interior decorator and advisor
Olubunmi Khonjwayo

AH, DÉCOR

Assisting busy people who
love beautiful, stylish homes

THEO NYHABA

Olubunmi Khonjwayo studied fashion design at the Eastern Cape Technikon and then moved to Gauteng a few years later where she participated in various fashion shows.

It was while subsequently working as a visual merchandiser that she decided to explore the interior décor industry.

What do you do?

I am an interior decorator and advisor.

What does your job entail and what are your responsibilities?

Visiting clients' home or office and taking pictures of the rooms that need attention and listening to what the client wants to do. I then compile a booklet or CD giving advice on each room – what colours to use what furniture to buy etc. and where to buy it.

If the client approves we then implement ideas. I am basically responsible for creating an individual style for each home or office and giving a signature to each room.

How long have you been doing this?

Since 2006.

What else do you do?

I train house-minders (domestic workers) on house keeping principles. I also design and make clothes and create wedding albums.

Who is your target group?

Busy people who love beautiful and stylish homes but do not have the time to attend

to improving their own homes.

What do you like about your job?

Working with people and colours.

What do you hate about your job?

Nothing, I love everything about it.

What are the challenges?

Redoing a home where people have been living for a while and there is a sentimental value to items, even those that have lost their market value. The challenge is to get the client to part with these without hurting them.

What is your label called?

It is called Olu-K.

What are the pros and cons of the industry?

The market is wide and there are few decorators, so if one markets oneself well the opportunities are endless. The cons include the fact that when people hear or see the word "deco" they associate it with expenses and then run as far as they can from you. But in most cases you do not really part with much – it's just a matter of having the right things in the right place.

How do you balance work and family?

I am single and live alone, so I have all the time in the world although I keep contact with my parents in Durban almost every day and they are very supportive.

What advice would you give to up-and-coming business people?

Be assertive. Believe in your product or service before others can believe in you.