

suburban life

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It Still Starts With a Conversation



For 25 years and counting, **Diamond Kitchen & Bath** has been reimagining spaces based on homeowners' precise needs, wants, and dreams.

When someone walks through the door at Diamond Kitchen & Bath in Huntingdon Valley, Co-owner Mike doesn't begin by asking which cabinet they like or what kind of countertop they want. He usually asks a much simpler question: "What are you looking to accomplish?" It's a question he has been asking homeowners for more than 25 years. Despite everything that has changed in kitchens, bathrooms, products, and design during that time, Mike and his longtime business partner and fellow co-owner, Paul, believe understanding what a homeowner truly wants from the space is still the best place to begin.

Maybe the kitchen simply does not work for the family anymore. Maybe a bathroom needs to change, as the homeowners have gotten older. Maybe they have been saving photographs for three years and are finally ready to move forward. On the other hand, maybe they



Photos courtesy of Diamond Kitchen & Bath

know their kitchen needs help but have absolutely no idea where to begin.

That's OK, too.

"You don't have to come in knowing exactly what you want," Mike says. "Tell us what you're thinking about, what isn't working, and what you'd like to change. We can start there."

It's a remarkably simple philosophy for a company that has spent more than two decades doing something as complicated as remodeling homes.

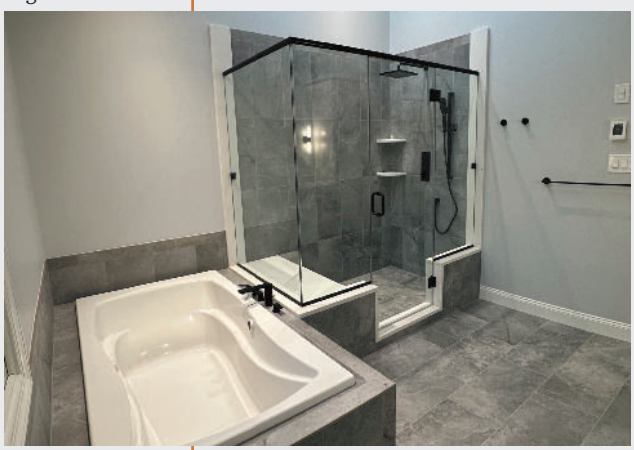
Perhaps that's because Diamond Kitchen & Bath itself started pretty simply.

Mike and Paul met 27 years ago while working for another company. Mike was a designer and salesperson, while Paul worked as a project manager. Together, they helped establish that company's remodeling division and became close friends along the way.

After a few years, a thought occurred to them: *If we're going to work this hard building a remodeling company for somebody else, why not try building one ourselves?*



> **"Tell us what you're thinking about, what isn't working, and what you'd like to change. We can start there."**



Looking back, Mike describes what followed with a sense of humor. "There was probably a fair amount of naivety involved," he says. "That, and some crazy long hours."

They knew they wanted to do it differently. They had watched the remodeling business become focused on the size and profitability of the next project. Mike and Paul wanted to build something more personal, where the first priority was understanding what the homeowner actually needed and then finding the right way to bring that vision together.

Even the name they chose reflected that personal approach. Diamond Kitchen & Bath was named after their children—their "little diamonds."

The company began with two installation crews. As those teams gained experience and Mike and Paul became confident in their skills, experienced members paired with new helpers. Those helpers learned the business, gained experience, and eventually helped train others.Two teams eventually grew to as many as nine.

What is perhaps more telling than the number of crews is how long many of those people stayed with the company. With few exceptions, most of the people working with Diamond Kitchen & Bath today have been with the company for more than a decade. Some have been part of the story almost from the beginning.

Mike and Paul stayed close to the work, too. Mike generally takes a customer through the design process, helping turn that first conversation into an actual plan. He works through the design, selections, pricing, and agreement with the customer.

Before a project moves forward, Paul goes to the home for the final measurement and project review. It's an additional set of experienced eyes on the project before materials are ordered and work begins.

For customers who want Diamond Kitchen & Bath to handle the complete remodel, the company can take the project from design and material selections through installation. For homeowners who already have a contractor they know and trust, the company can work with that contractor while providing the design and materials.

That flexibility is intentional.

The objective isn't to fit every customer into the same process. Rather, it's to understand what that particular homeowner needs and develop the right approach for the project.

More than 25 years later, Mike and Paul still enjoy doing it. They enjoy solving a difficult layout. They enjoy seeing a room that existed on a computer screen become a real space in someone's home. And, of course, they enjoy seeing a homeowner pleased with the result.

Something else has begun happening after all these years. Customers come back. Someone whose kitchen Diamond Kitchen & Bath remodeled years ago may return for a new bathroom. Previous customers send friends and relatives. In some cases, the company even starts working with different generations of families it did work for years before.

Those relationships have become such an important source of new projects that Diamond Kitchen & Bath does not rely on advertising nearly as much as it once did. For Mike and Paul, there may be no better compliment.

"We really love what we do," Mike says. "When somebody comes back to us years later, or sends a family member or friend to us, you know they remembered how they were treated. That means a lot."

It also explains why, after more than 25 years, a new project still begins much the same way the old ones did—not with a sales pitch, not with a particular cabinet, and certainly not with the expectation that a homeowner already has everything figured out.

It starts with a conversation.

So, if you've been thinking about remodeling your kitchen or bathroom but haven't taken that first step because you aren't sure where to begin, don't let that stop you. Call Diamond Kitchen & Bath or simply stop by the Huntingdon Valley showroom.

You don't need to bring all the answers. Bring your ideas, your questions, and even the things you haven't quite figured out yet. As Mike says, "We'll help you turn them into a plan." ■

Diamond Kitchen & Bath

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