



Kevin Francis O'Gara is inspired by a mix of traditional and contemporary design, and loves dogs, dinner parties, and big windows.

Kevin is the brother of two sisters and the best friend of one spunky wired-hair fox terrier. With a childhood love for interior environments – especially homes, and after voraciously pinning interiors throughout his early teens, Kevin decided to create a platform to write and produce his own content. In 2013, he created Thou Swell, named after the famous jazz standard and inspired by the song's spirit and nostalgia. In just a few years Thou Swell has become a destination for interior lovers and entertaining enthusiasts, and Kevin has collaborated with over 60 national home decor brands from Target to The Home Depot. Sharing home and garden, decorating, entertaining, and a little of his hometown Atlanta, he shares his fresh eye for design and passion for beauty.

Kevin is an undergraduate in Cornell University's hospitality management program. With a passion for transformative design and development, he brings a unique residential perspective to projects ranging from interior design to product development. In the summer of 2018, he launched his product atelier, Kevin Francis Design. KFD's first collection is inspired by the traditional garden maze. With its roots in myths, meditation, and lush landscapes, these verdant garden designs are brought to life with luxurious wool and bamboo silk rugs that preserve the asymmetries of each maze in their patterns.

kevin o'gara

EDUCATION

CORNELL UNIVERSITY, SCHOOL OF HOTEL ADMINISTRATION, ITHACA, NY - 2016-2020

THE WESTMINSTER SCHOOLS, CLASS OF 2016, ATLANTA, GA - 2003-2016

THE OXBOW SCHOOL, ART-FOCUSED SEMESTER PROGRAM, NAPA, CA - FALL 2014

EXPERIENCE

FOUNDER & EDITOR, THOU SWELL (thouswell.com) - SEPTEMBER 2012-PRESENT

Atlanta, Georgia

Weekly writing and photography, collaborating with national brands including Target, Home Depot, and West Elm, platform for noteworthy design with over 80k social reach

PRODUCT INTERN, SUZANNE KASLER INTERIORS - JULY 2017, JANUARY 2018

Atlanta, Georgia

Supporting junior designers, creating design schemes, supporting product development team, revising furniture drawings, organizing sample library, attending meetings

INTERIOR DESIGN INTERN, 22 INTERIORS - JUNE 2017

Los Angeles, California

Organizing vendor library, creating design boards for clients, attending client meetings, taking new client measurements, drawing floor plans

DESIGN STUDIO INTERN, RESTORATION HARDWARE - JANUARY 2016

Corte Madera, California

Branding new concept, researching market competition, creating design boards with samples, organizing sample library, researching retail and hospitality concepts

REFERENCES

Celia Tejada, ct@rh.com

Suzanne Kasler, suzanne@suzannekasler.com

John Lineweaver, john@lineweaverdesign.com

11/14/18

Pam Sessions
Hedgewood Homes
Atlanta, GA

Dear Mrs. Sessions,

Through my design work with Perrin Quarshie for Dwell City, you were referenced as an Atlanta contact whose work I might be interested in. When I explored Hedgewood Homes, I was inspired by the ways in which you bring design and community together within a New Urbanist framework in your development projects.

As founder and editor of Atlanta-based interior design blog Thou Swell, I have always had a deep appreciation for residential design. I have always been sensitive to the impacts of the built environment on shaping and inspiring people's lives, and I have always wanted to be part of residential design processes that have a broader impact than individual residences. I am a Junior in Cornell University's Hotel School, but transferred from their Design + Environmental Analysis program. At Cornell I have been able to explore my interests in design, real estate, and urban planning. Hedgewood represents so many of the tenets of good design that I truly believe can transform communities.

I would love the opportunity to bring my design perspective to Hedgewood as an intern during the summer of 2019. I look forward to continuing to follow the incredible Hedgewood projects in development in Atlanta.

Thank you,

Kevin O'Gara

BP10 Commitment Card

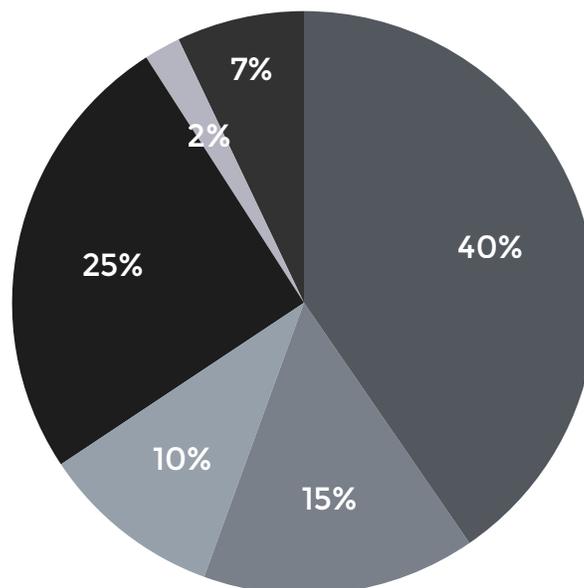
I am committed to using my top BP10 Talents in the following ways:

1. Confidence: Engaging with as many viewpoints as possible, and continuing to learn more about myself so I can be as authentic as possible
2. Selling: Use my persuasiveness and passion to bring my ideas to fruition, and turn my readers in consumers to expand my brand channels
3. Knowledge: Continue to engage with my industry, learn from the network I've established, and make note of the possibilities that I have access to by nurturing these relationships
4. Relationship: Identify my most influential contacts and work to build deeper relationships with them through authentic and meaningful dialog

The first action I will take to use my top BP10 Talents in my life is to:

Identify potential product placements for my rug collection using my Knowledge talent, then reach out using my confidence to form a connection and utilize my Relationship talent to enable me to Sell my products through wholesale orders. I will keep myself accountable by creating written documentation of the pitch process and checking off each step as I progress with each contact.

Wheel of Life Diagram



● Family ● Leisure Travel ● Hobby ● Health ● Saving Money ● Dreaming

My Entrepreneurial Journey Project Portfolio can be shared as an example with future classes.

Kevin O'Gara, 11/14/18

Jon Murray

It was amazing to see the connections between Jon Murray's career as a wrestling coach and career as an entrepreneur. His affinity for people and relationships is incredible, and understanding how he approaches human resources in his company was a great example of how to take full advantage of employees' skills. The dedication Jon gave to teaching himself new skills when he first started his business and the care in which he selects, trains, and encourages his employees were my main takeaways from his presentation.

Erica Vetra

Out of all the speakers, Erica's presentation was most significant for me, since she was a solo-preneur with a predominately digital growth strategy. Since her product/service encapsulates both her lifestyle and personality, it was inspiring to hear her approach to work-life balance. Erica helped redefine my definition of balance through her standing exercise, and I'll always remember the feeling of being balanced – but still moving.

Ken Fearn

While Ken started out with many more resources, both professionally and financially, than a lot of the other entrepreneurs in the roster, his professionalism and dedication to the details stuck out to me. Naturally, his story about the hotel he is building in Atlanta (my home), was especially memorable, as he emphasized his dedication to creating a beautiful property through design, and avoiding cutting corners.

Networking

This semester I have been networking both digitally and physically through the opportunities afforded to me by my blog platform. From attending High Point Market as part of the Design Bloggers Tour to

reaching out to bloggers and companies on Instagram, my follow-up is typically through email if it was a physical contact or through social media if the contact was there. On Instagram, I had tried harder this year to stay connected and supportive of my peers and partner companies, through engaging with their content. This helps me stay top-of-mind and also encourages engagement on my posts as well, which helps me land new brand partners and sponsorship opportunities.

Student Self-Understanding Themes

Artistic Creativity, Digital Prowess, Marketing & Branding

While these themes are evident in my resume, I think that my skills in the digital realm and in marketing and branding are not immediately evident, due to the nature of my internships at larger companies. Thou Swell always sits at the top of my list of experiences, which I think best represents all of these skills in the culmination of my own business. I think that as my entrepreneurial ventures unfold I will be able to better showcase how I weave my digital, marketing, and branding skills through new brands that I build in my business.

The Coming Jobs War

Mr. Clifton gave a very interesting analysis of the state of our business environment in America. His observation that the new generation of workers don't want a boss – they want a coach – I find to be very spot on, knowing myself and my peers. While I'm not completely sold on his thought that America is so fantastic at democratically identifying and accelerating specialized kids, I do believe that entrepreneurship could definitely be identified and emphasized more, and at earlier levels of education. Beyond what he said, I believe that we must address the monopolist corporate environment that stifles small business in our country (I recently read an article on this in the NYT: <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/11/25/opinion/monopolies-in-the-us.html>)

Spartan Up: Elizabeth Wei

My two non-negotiables would be my health and my independence. Right now prioritizing my health means going to sleep when I need to whether or not I have more emails to answer or projects to finish. It also means supporting my body through healthy eating and access to green space. My independence is something that has become increasingly important, and means that I would rather work for myself than in a large company. I find most fulfillment in pursuing the growth of my personal brand, and lose a lot of motivation when I am growing someone else's brand. Being able to work for myself and pursue my own growth keeps me going each day.

Website Tool

I will be using my existing self-hosted [wordpress.org](https://www.wordpress.org) website on my blog Thou Swell (www.thouswell.com), created using Bluehost. I was referred to Bluehost through many blogs I visited before starting my own, and read a lot of articles on setting up a Wordpress blog that recommended Bluehost as an affordable and reliable host. I have used their technical support often through live chat and have been successful in working through technical issues on my own. The website design was creating by Blogzilla Studio, with custom tweaks made by myself through additional CSS coding.