

Design Director - Wellness Products, Jan 2024 - Kohler, WI

One of the key leaders of the newly formed Wellness Business entity, played key contribution to 5-year New Product Strategy (vision, roadmap, project charter, trend / theme, concepts) for annual Chairman and Executive reviews. I owned end-to-end industrial design execution across multiple product categories - experiential showers, steam, ice baths, ice showers, saunas, hydrotherapy, light / sound / aroma therapy systems, and therapeutic accessories. Within two years, we successfully launched multiple platforms such as newly acquired Klafs brand, Kohler Sauna expansions, Kohler X Remedy Ice Bath, ice shower integrations, and residential and commercial steam. Launched Kohler's first Wellness Spatial Design Service model, which secured high-value contracts with major builders, dealers, and prominent clients, including Ave, Aman Saudi Arabia, Flower Showhouses, Nina Magon projects, Fitlab, NFL prototype facilities. Promoted high collaborative leadership and culture across business and functional teams, consistently improved design process efficiency.

Design Manager - Faucet, Bathing, Showering, Oct 2020 - Jan 2024

Expanded design leadership responsibilities to oversee Kohler's largest business categories - Bathroom Faucets, Bathing, and Showering. Actively leveraged regional and global Kohler capabilities while managing a team of 12+ direct and indirect designers to drive tangible results. Led multiple high-impact strategic projects and expanded new design capabilities in smart connected IoT, electronics, and appliance features. These initiatives future-proofed product platforms, including the global Wellness business vision and roadmaps, high-profile partnerships with Samuel Ross and Remedy Place, the 150-year anniversary suite and campaign, the Aging in Place suite, and a forward-looking global suite featuring advanced composite materials and innovative UI/UX.

Lead Designer - Toilet, Vanity, Mirrored Cabinet, Light, Global Suites, May 2017 - Oct 2020

Assumed direct leadership responsibilities, managing multiple product categories — Global Suite, Commercial Space, Toilet, and Styling Space. Led design development, design reviews, and portfolio management across these categories. Revamped the declining furniture category by reviewing and successfully launching 30 different furniture collections with the Chairman. Leveraged Kohler's rich heritage, including the iconic 1927 Metropolitan Museum of Art collection, to strengthen the brand story and product appeal. Made significant contributions to the annual executive and chairman-level New Product Strategy (NPS) reviews. As the first design leader to adapt during the COVID-19 pandemic, implemented new ways of working by introducing shared digital platforms and virtual executive design reviews. Successfully managed monthly Design Reviews with the Chairman, achieving design approvals 30%+ faster than average.

Senior Designer - Global Commercial Space, Light, Global Suites, Sept 2015 - Apr 2017

Revamped commercial projects in Toilet, Urinal, Sink, Faucet, Accessories, resulting major contracts and business results with innovative designs that fulfill real-world consumer and client's needs. Led multiple strategic global hospitality and CMF projects on suite and collections. Led Kohler's first Alexa embedded smart lighted suite - Veil collection, leading innovative global launch setting Kohler as smart solution leader

Industrial Designer - Global Faucet, Sept 2013 - Aug 2015

Focused on new product design and development for showroom and retail Kitchen & Bathroom Faucets and Showering products. Personally interviewed over 120+ key stakeholders and consumers to gain deep insights, resulting in the development of a new kitchen faucet platform that outperformed competitors and successfully reversed declining sales in the category. Established a new feedback system by partnering with the Customer Service department to capture ongoing insights, directly informing and strengthening future product designs.



Industrial Designer - Adv Creative Team, July 2010 - Dec 2010, Seoul, South Korea

Received the LG Hausys Silver Award and was selected to present at Salone del Milano 2008. This recognition led to a special contract with creative team to lead an advanced concept project exploring LG Hi-Macs, a newly developed thermoset composite material. The project focused on applying the material across various LG appliances, including refrigerators and air conditioners.



Owner & Designer - Custom Motorbike Shop, July 2010 - Dec 2010, Seoul, South Korea

Owned and operated design service for customizing motorbike - personalized designs and style customizations, full fiberglass, paint, tune-ups.



Associate Industrial Designer, July 2008 - Jan 2009, Seoul / Bahrain

EDI is an architectural and civil design firm specializing in bridges, public squares, commercial spaces, and installations. Led concept development and presentations for the billion-dollar architectural Tower Design Project for Durrat al Bahrain (Pearl of Bahrain), as well as an Island Resort in Bahrain. Successfully expanded the scope to include twin tower projects, effectively doubling project profit. Spent several months in Bahrain, Dubai, and Doha, presenting directly to key stakeholders, board members, and members of the Royal Families.



Sergeant, Aug 2005 - Aug 2007, Yangju, South Korea

Troops Information & Education, Public Relations - in charge of launching first Korean army website, online community, 25th Infantry Division Museum and Memorial Park design, Monthly Magazines / Newspaper, Joint broadcasting with major TV and media, translator and communicator between US Army



MFA Interdisciplinary Design at College for Creative Studies, 2011 - 2013, Detroit, USA



BFA Industrial & Spatial Design at Seoul National University, 2004 - 2011, South Korea
(2005 - 2007 served in South Korea Army)



Frontier / Innovator / Enabler
DONGHA LEE

Hybrid design leader, expert in building high performing design function that launches industry-defining products, spaces, and experiences -winning hearts and driving strong business results. With over a decade leading premium residential, wellness, and lifestyle design, I bring strategic planning and an entrepreneurial spirit to every initiative. I empower talent, align cross-functional partners, and turn vision into reality through thoughtful, human-centered solutions that fuse creativity, empathy, and real-world values.



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Human-Centered Leadership

Blend profound empathy, deep human insight, rigorous analysis, and bold creative vision to craft intuitive, emotionally resonant user experiences and designs that truly center people.

Design Strategy

Formulate strategic, forward thinking solutions and cohesive product portfolios / roadmap that deliver measurable business impact while prioritizing human needs and long-term value.

Design Philosophy

Essential unity of form, function, and environment to create harmonious designs that seamlessly integrate the individual with their tools, products, and surroundings - fostering effortless connection and meaning.

Specialties

Design Leadership, Industrial Design, Spatial Design, UI / UX, Design Strategy, Planning, Portfolio Management, Contextual / Trend Research, Insight Analysis, 2D / 3D CAD, Rhinoceros, Keyshot, Adobe Creative Suite, Miro, Gen AI

Languages

Korean, English, Chinese

For the past 16 years, I have worked as a hybrid design leader - not only executing design but also running organizations as if they were my own business. I believe great design goes beyond aesthetics; it is about solving real human problems with deep empathy, precision, and a relentless focus on elevating everyday experiences. I consistently look beneath the surface, transforming insights into tangible innovations that deliver both emotional resonance and strong commercial success.

Most recently, I served as Design Director for the Wellness Business Unit at Kohler Co., 150-year-old family-owned global company that began as a plumbing products manufacturer in North America and has since grown into a premium leader in kitchen, bath, interiors, and wellness. With near 50,000 employees worldwide, Kohler is renowned for its heritage and innovation.

I joined Kohler 13 years ago as an Industrial Designer and gained broad experience across all product categories. In 2022, when Kohler expanded in establishing the new Wellness Business Unit in response to the global rise in health consciousness — despite advanced medical systems, chronic diseases continue to surge, driving demand for proactive self-care — I assumed the role as Design Director. We played a key role in shaping the unit's vision by co-authoring the 5-year New Product Strategy and Roadmap, new product platform development, marketing, and overall business strategy through a design-led innovation approach.

The business initiated strategic acquisition of Germany's renowned sauna brand Klafs, which we adapted to fit American home structures and successfully brought to market. We also partnered with Remedy Place, a leading social wellness brand, to develop and launch the Kohler x Remedy Place Cold Plunge Ice Bath and Ice Shower. Following the successful completion of these major initiatives, the Wellness team was elevated from a project to a formal business unit. Since then, we have launched new product platforms and expanded into residential and commercial wellness space projects for hotels, sports facilities, and premium clubs.

I have actively contributed to the company's long-term vision by supporting the 5-year New Product Strategy and presenting it annually to the Chairman and executives. To inform our strategy and trend, we conducted interviews with external experts, including medical advisors, Global Wellness Summit, and university research institutes. Recognizing the immense influence of sports fandom in the U.S., we also supported in forging strategic partnerships with sports teams and brands, incorporating athlete experiences and medical insights into platforms such as Cold Plunge, Hydrotherapy, and Infusion.

Key Highlights working at Kohler:

- Co-authored the 5-year New Product Strategy (NPS) and Roadmap and presented it annually to the Chairman, board, executives, driving long-term business growth and direction
- Revived and modernized Kohler's century-old furniture heritage (including the iconic 1927 Metropolitan Museum of Art collection), reviewing 30+ historic collections with the Chairman and launching 10+ new freestanding vanity and console families in a single year
- Designed the forward-looking 150-Year Anniversary Suite and Campaign featuring advanced composite materials and innovative UI/UX
- Built the Design Service program that scaled complete wellness spaces and experiential offerings into hospitality spaces, sports facilities concepts, premium wellness space, and dealer / builder offerings.
- Led the development and global launch of the Kohler x Remedy Place Cold Plunge Ice Bath & App (TIME Magazine Best Inventions 2025, Edison Awards Bronze, iF Design Award, and featured in Fast Company, KBIS, Interior Design, and AD Magazine)
- Led EvoCycle, Kohler's first recirculating shower system (Best of KBIS Sustainability Standout, iF Design Award, UX Design Award, EPA WaterSense Partner of the Year)
- Veil Collection — the world's first Alexa-integrated global bathroom suite with circadian smart lighting and voice control (Best of KBIS, iF, Red Dot, and widely featured in CNET, Business Insider, Dezeen, Designboom, and Interior Design)
- Collaborated with British designer Samuel Ross (founder of A-COLD-WALL*, Creative Director at Apple and Whoop, and longtime collaborator of Virgil Abloh) on the Formation Series, featuring premium material experimentation and contemporary forms (Salone Milano FuoriSalone, Platinum A'Design Award, iF, Red Dot, Interior Design Best of Year, Dezeen Award)
- Successfully launching new sauna and ice bath / shower platforms with Wellness Business Unit's establishment

What I Can Offer:

- **Human-Centered Leadership** - My team blends profound empathy, deep human insight, rigorous analysis, and bold creative vision to create intuitive, emotionally resonant user experiences and designs that truly put people first. I excel at fostering strong cross-functional collaboration across design, engineering, marketing, and business teams to achieve both creative excellence and commercial success.
- **Design Strategy** - We formulate forward-thinking strategic solutions and cohesive product portfolios/roadmaps that prioritize human needs while delivering measurable business impact and long-term brand value. I have proven experience authoring and executing long-term product strategies in close alignment with executive leadership.
- **Design Philosophy** - We pursue the essential unity of form, function, and environment to create harmonious designs that seamlessly integrate individuals with their tools, products, and surroundings — fostering effortless connection and meaningful experiences. This is supported by deep expertise in material innovation, manufacturing processes, hands-on prototyping, and turning concepts into production-ready solutions.

Before Kohler, I led large-scale luxury interior and architectural projects at EDI Design, developed premium furniture and appliance collections for LG Hausys that debuted at Salone del Mobile Milano, and owned a custom motorbike shop where I personally designed and fabricated one-off products. My full portfolio of shipped products, wellness ecosystems, new product strategy and roadmap, design-leadership case studies, and hands-on prototypes is available at www.donghalee.com

Having lived and worked in Korea, China, Germany, Singapore, Bahrain, and the United States, I bring a strong cross-cultural perspective (fluent in Korean and English, conversational in Mandarin). I would be deeply honored to bring my strategic creative leadership and passion for elevating human experiences to your team. Thank you for your consideration. I look forward to discussing how I can contribute to your organization.


Dongha Lee
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