



15 Things to Consider when Selecting a Cleaning Company





15 Things to Consider when Selecting a Cleaning Company

1. Your Judgement



Based on your experience of dealing with the cleaning company so far, (e.g. website, telephone

conversation etc), do you think it is likely that they will deliver great customer service? If you get a good initial impression from the company, they clearly want to demonstrate quality in what they do and can provide customer references, then you should listen to what your instinct is telling you. Thereafter, the most important thing to do is assess the quality of staff the company will place with you to see if they will deliver on what the company is promoting it will do.



3. Company Experience



It is important to get evidence that the company has experience in what you are asking

them to do. Questions to ask include: does the cleaning company have sufficient experience in the cleaning industry? Can the company give project examples of where its experience will add value to you?

2. Price, Specification & KPI Management



Right up front, you are most concerned with how much your cleaning will cost and what you will get for your money. Don't always go with the cheapest, which can often lead to a false economy, more of your time

managing issues and a subsequent change in contractor down the line. It is far better to make your selection based on value. Who will do the best job for the budget you can afford? Usually that means choosing a cleaning company that is not the cheapest but delivering great service and value for money. Never resent paying 50% upfront for one-off projects. This usually is a good sign that the company is committing to a significant level of resources. But, always ensure you are paying the remainder after the clean has been completed when you are totally satisfied. For ongoing contract cleaning, best practice includes flexibility on behalf of the cleaning company to change the pricing and the specification to suit your needs and not be locked down to a restrictive contract, and to liaise with you on the quality of service delivered (via KPI's or key performance indicators) in the manner most convenient to you.

4. Customer Reference



If you have a large commercial project, it

will be important to verify trade references prior to any clean. You will need to establish whether the company can provide multiple customer references for you and ideally of a similar size and profile to your site. It is useful to assess whether the company can give high profile customers as a mark of their quality of service and probe how well the company retains such customers. Also, is the company actively engaged in community projects such as schools and charities, demonstrating wider social recognition?

5. Customer Responsiveness



One of the most critical aspects of selecting a cleaning company is how responsive they are to

customer needs, e.g. does the company have a 24-hour reception service and will they respond to enquiries within 24 hours? Is the company ISO9001 registered in demonstrating its commitment to quality management procedures and has the company a published customer care policy? Ask the company to provide examples of great customer service.

6. Employees & Subcontractors



For any cleaning company it is the quality of their employees and subcontractors that is the

single most important factor in delivering their service. Are the employees happy, motivated, experienced and well trained? What is their rate of pay? You know what they say... you get what you pay for. Is it above the minimum wage? What is the staff churn? Is the cleaner you are given specifically selected according to your individual needs? Will the cleaner provide continuity in service? Can the cleaner be trusted? Do they look like they are a doer? Do they have good communication skills? Good personal hygiene? Can the company provide alternative cleaners to ensure continuity in service? How long have the subcontractors been associated with the company and are they temporary or trusted valued members of the company?

9. Industry Credentials



Having industry accreditations is not a guarantee of you receiving an excellent service but it

clearly demonstrates the company's intent to adopt industry best practice. Does the company actively develop its image in the professional marketplace and does the company belong to any industry associations? Good examples include Checkatrade and Rated People for single contractors and ISO9001, BICS (British Institute of Cleaning Science) and BIFM (British Institute of Facilities Management) for larger companies.

7. Cleaning Suppliers & Equipment



Do you want a cleaning company that operates as a one-man band with a knackered old van and

shabby leather tied to the ladder on its roof? Or, do you want a company that clearly uses well-maintained and industry-recognised equipment from leading manufacturers? Is the electrical equipment new or been PAT tested for safety? And does the company use leading recognised brands? Good examples of professional cleaning brands include Prochem, Selden, Numatic, Jeyes, Neutradol and Delphis Eco.

8. Company Insurance



It is essential that your cleaning company has professional insurance and to a suitable level of cover. For a

cleaning company, it is recommended that this cover include Employers Liability to at least £10m and Public Liability to at least £5m. Any senior manager should also have Professional Indemnity to at least £100,000. Can the company provide a copy of their valid insurance certificate and is the insurance provider credible, specialising in cleaning services?

10. Health & Safety



Health and safety is extremely important. Much of it is common sense and relies on the quality of staff and training the company provides. But, never take health and safety for granted and ask the company the following questions: what is

the company's Health & Safety record? Has the company had any serious incidents at work? Has the company had any previous legal or professional investigations? Does the company provide Health & Safety training to its employees? Has the company a Health & Safety policy document? Can the company provide a risk assessment and method statement? Does the company have an independent Health & Safety Advisor? Is the company Safe Contractor accredited?



11. Quality Management



Making sure your cleaning company is customer focused is far more important than any quality management

accreditation, but if a company does not have such accreditation that should at least make you ask the question why? Is the company ISO9001 certified? Does the company have a robust set of quality management processes and systems in place? How easy will it be to deal with the company in managing a customer enquiry, complaint, delivery, invoice etc?

12. Environmental Management



Having an environmental management policy may be extremely important to you, based on your business operations, managing public tender requirements or simply based on your own personal values. If a company has an environmental

management policy it demonstrates that they are a progressive company. Is the company committed to reducing its impact on the environment? Can the company offer environmentally friendly cleaning solutions? Does the company continually monitor and reduce its impact on the environment? Can the company deliver site management consistent with ISO14001 environmental standards?



13. Product / Service Innovation



Another measure of a company being progressive is to assess whether the company adopts latest

products and techniques to improve the service they provide. Does the company use industry leading equipment and supplies? Is the equipment new or well maintained? Can the company give examples of specialised cleaning that might add value or make the job more cost effective to you? Is the company looking to add value to their basic service by, for example, offering garden/grounds maintenance or house removal/clearance services?

14. Organisational Structure



Depending on the size of your cleaning requirement, the organisational structure will usually have an influence

on the quality of service you receive. Usually it is best to deal with a limited company, which should provide greater service capabilities and continuity of service. Does the company have a published organisational structure? Can the company provide additional supervisory management, if you require this to monitor the quality of service being delivered by its staff?

15. Company Financials



A cleaning company needs strong financial resources to manage the cash flow demands of the business. This is especially important for larger ongoing contract cleaning, where you don't want your cleaning company to not have the financial strength to deliver its contractual commitments. Does the company have strong company financials and cash in bank without significant levels of debt?



Established
Since 1977

 Follow us on Twitter @TCClean

0845 222 2000

www.townandcountrycleaning.com

BIFMTM
CORPORATE MEMBER