



Tips To Consider When Selecting A Cleaning Company

Introduction

Finding a new cleaning service can be a problem especially if you do not know what to look for. Lots of businesses struggle with this. So hopefully these tips will help by guiding you through the most important issues.

Investing time and resource will help you find the company that best suits your requirements, and could save your business a lot of time and trouble later.

Procare is happy to provide you with the following information to help you to solve your cleaning problems.

Selecting the best cleaning company

There are lots of commercial cleaning companies to choose from, but they do not all provide the same service.

It is important to take your time when you are looking to solve cleaning problems and choose the company that is right for you.

Ask questions of each of the providers that you select, and if you don't get the answers you want, look for someone else. Keep looking for a company that will provide you with the cleaning services solutions that you need.

It makes sense to spend time at this stage, to ensure you select the correct company rather than wasting time and effort dealing with people that simply cannot meet your needs or standards. This process takes time. You don't want to repeat it!

Consider what is right for you

Every organization is different and is therefore like to have different requirements form a cleaning service. It is therefore important that you start by listing criteria that is important to your company. Try to ensure that the list is reasonable and achievable.

Some considerations may be:

- Do you require a particularly high standard in some areas because you receive visits from either clients, prospects or suppliers etc?
- Are there any specific obligations in the lease, if you have one?
- What cleaning frequency (times per week) do you require. (This could be influenced by the number of staff in your building or by the budget!)
- Does your work environment generate specific soiling issues? Some industrial areas require a higher frequency or may be satisfied with a different standard. You should define your needs and expectations.



- Ensure you list every area that needs to be covered by the service and understand what level of cleaning is required in each. (i.e. do you require the washing of crockery to be carried out in the kitchen)
- In addition to routine cleaning do you have a need for periodic maintenance (e.g. carpet cleaning, floor stripping & resealing, steam cleaning)?
- Consider what things that are really important to you and your staff? If you currently have cleaners what are the problems?
- What insurance cover does the cleaning company hold, and is it sufficient for your needs.
- Consider the timing at which you need the service to be carried out. Consider the pros and cons of after hours vs. daytime cleans. As this will also affect the cost of the service. Some points to consider are:
 1. *Day time cleaning can impede cleaning efficiency, disturb your staff, cause potential safety risks and normally carries a price premium.*
 2. *Security concerns are often the reasons for not using after hours cleaning but should it be? If you select the right company this should not be an issue.*
- What BUDGET constraints do you have? If you can't afford the service you would like then you should be realistic. You must decide whether it is the specification or the budget that must change. If someone is offering a price that appears too good to be true, it probably is.
- A professional cleaning company will advise how to cut costs, if that is what is necessary. The most obvious way is to reduce frequency but there are many others.

The site 'Walk through'

The site walk through is very important for both client and contractor for many reasons. The communication between the two parties reduces the risks of misunderstandings and gives the client the opportunity to stress the issues important to them. Which should lead to a proposal and quotation meeting your needs.

More importantly, the walk through provides an opportunity to meet potential service providers and form an opinion of the sort of company they represent. Also those companies that invest time and effort to visit your premises to learn about you and your requirements are the ones most likely to protect that investment by making every effort to ensure your satisfaction.

Some cleaning companies skip the walk through and simply quote a price based on a cost per square metre. We believe this is wrong, because it does not take account of either your specific requirements or those of your site and therefore cannot produce a sufficiently accurate quotation to be the basis of a long-term contract, which would be satisfactory to both parties.



A quotation based purely on size of area ignores the following important considerations:-

- Areas that require special attention i.e. – reception (for which higher standards may be required)
- Condition and age of building
- General layout
- Number and size of kitchens/ toilets
- Approx staffing levels
- Specific client requirements i.e. Washing up.

A cleaning company that omits any of these items may provide a low price, which will lead to them being unable to allocate the necessary time to do the job properly and they are therefore likely to cut corners.

Small may not be best!

Employing individuals directly or very small cleaning companies may appear to be a cheaper option but this can lead to problems which in turn can lead to higher costs. For example:

- They may not have any or sufficient insurance cover (which could cost your company thousands of pounds)
- They may not be able to send replacements to cover periods of sickness or holidays
- They may not be aware of the health and safety requirements of your premises.

A good cleaning company is aware of all these issues and will ensure they are adequately covered.

Value experience

Although the length of time they have been in the business does not ensure that a provider will not fail, it does count and will provide a certain level of security. If you have a choice then it is normally best to select a company that has proved itself over a number of years. They will have a proven business model generally leading to higher standards and greater reliability.

Consistency of personnel

Try to find a company that will ensure a good level of consistency of personnel on your premises, because this leads to better standards and is much less of a security risk. Some cleaning companies tend to switch their staff in and out of sites depending on new business commitments and workloads. This tends to lead to lower standards and can certainly produce security issues.



References

You should always seek references from existing clients. A good cleaning company will have no problem in providing them. Taking a few minutes on the phone checking them out should ensure you are dealing with a reliable and established company and could save a lot of time later on.

Solid relationship

Remember you will need a good relationship and good communication with your cleaning company if you are to achieve the standards you are seeking. Find out how their company deals with complaints or issues and how it keeps in contact with you.

Then try to form a judgment on how responsive they might be to you.

The contract

Ensure the terms and conditions clearly define the obligations of both parties, and make sure you are happy with them.

We hope the above assists you in your selection. Good luck!

P.S. You could save yourself a lot of time by contacting your local Procare office.