

HIRE IT DONE U

5 Questions to Ask Every Contractor

These 5 questions will help you Hire It Done Right!

May I call some references? Get relevant references and actually call them!

Contractors expect you to ask for references, so don't be shy! Make sure you ask for similar jobs completed recently - within the past year - and also, jobs completed several years ago, to compare how the work has stood the test of time. When you talk to the references, be nosy! Ask detailed questions like:

- Was the project completed to your satisfaction?
- When you had problems, how did the contractor handle it?
- Was the project completed on time and on budget?
- Were there unexpected additional costs? What were they?
- Did the contractor keep you updated as the project went along?
- Did the crew(s) show up when expected?
- Did the crew(s) do a complete cleanup after the project was completed?
- Would you use this contractor again? Have you referred others to him?

May I visit a current jobsite?

This may sound like a pain, but when you're spending thousands of dollars for a major home improvement project that should last years, you want to make sure you've done your homework. The work you do now will benefit you in all the years to come. When you visit a current jobsite, try to talk to the homeowner and some of the crew members. Get a sense for the satisfaction as the project is in process. If a contractor says no - our advice is to thank him for his time and move on. There are plenty of good contractors who are willing to do this, and it helps ensure your peace of mind.

What quality standards do you follow?

The NAHB (National Association of Home Builders) has published a consumer reference called "Quality Standards for the Professional Remodeler". The contractor should tell you if he subscribes to these standards, and it should be stated in his contract. Please note that all Hire It Done Network contractors have signed our "Code Of Ethics", which includes adherence to this standard.

Why should I choose you?

Ask the contractor how his pricing, quality, crew, equipment, and experience compares to the competitors you are considering. Ignore any "competitor bashing" and focus on the tangible differences between companies. Take notes and follow up with his competitors. What is the contractor

bragging about, and what is he NOT talking about! Sometimes what is not said is more telling than anything.

Will you put all the details in writing?

Get the contractor to commit in writing to all aspects of the job - timing, materials, people - and make sure you clearly understand how the process will flow. Make sure everything you expect is in writing and signed by both you and the contractor. That includes:

- Start and end date
- Contractor's name, address, phone number, license number, insurance information
- The payment schedule for all parties involved in the projects
- Contractor's requirement to get all needed permits
- List of all materials to be used, including product, brand, color, size, model
- When changes occur, the process for authorizing cost, schedule or material changes. Change orders are written authorizations to a contractor specifying a change or addition to the work described in the contract. Change orders usually affect the cost and schedule of the project. Some contractors require payment for change orders before they'll start work.
- Warranties covering labor and materials. The warranty section must include the names and addresses of the contractors, distributors, and manufacturers standing behind the warranties. The warranty period and any limits to the warranty must be clearly stated.
- State clearly - so you understand it - what parts of the project the contractor is responsible for-and what the contractor isn't responsible for. Often, debris removal may not be included - so be sure you understand what is not included!

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NOTICE: The laws regulating home improvement projects and contractor certification vary from state to state. This advice is intended to offer general guidelines and is not a substitute for legal advice. If you have comments or questions, please contact us at info@HireItDone.com.