

let's remodel

Building trust with your contractor

Now that you have the names of some remodeling firms to choose from, remember the most important element is the comfort and trust in the company you ultimately choose. You can increase your chances of having a successful project by conducting qualifying interviews, following up on references and credentials and considering all aspect of the remodeling project, the physical work and emotional strain.

There are several questions you should ask potential remodelers to establish credibility and credentials; but in your search for facts don't overlook asking questions that will reveal personality traits of the contractor and the company.

The following questions will help you establish a company's qualifications and reputation.

1. How long have you been in business? Look for a company with an established business history in your community. Make sure their company has a

strong survival record. NARI members are required to have been in business one year.

2. Who will be assigned as project supervisor for the job? Also ask who you should contact if the supervisor is not available.

3. What is the time frame for starting the project? This is your platform for asking questions about work scheduling. You should ask: What is your estimated time for completion? How early will your crew normally begin work? When will they normally quit for the day? Will I be contacted about delays or changes in the schedule? By whom?

4. What is your approach to a project for this scope? This will give you an idea of how the contractor works and what to expect during the project. Listen carefully to the answer. This is one of the big indicators of the company's work ethic.

5. How do you operate? In other words, how is your firm organized? Do



you have employees or do you hire subcontractors? Do you use a project supervisor or lead carpenter to oversee the project? You should know which part of the project will be handled by staff and which will be contracted out to independent contractors, such as electricians or plumbers.

6. Is your company a full service or specialty firm? If your project involves multiple changes, entire rooms or additions, you should consult a full-service

contractor or design-build firm.

7. Do you have design services available? If you are considering a large project, you will need design services. If the contractor does not offer this service, you should consider hiring an architect or licensed designer.

8. Do you carry workers' compensation and liability insurance? Ask for copies of the insurance certificates to verify coverage. Ask for a copy of his current builder's license and verify the number and expiration date with Lansing.

9. Are any company employees certified? Trade certifications are good indicators of dedication, professionalism and knowledge of the industry. Remodelers are required to meet certain industry criteria to maintain their certifications.

10. May I have references for projects similar to mine? This was covered in our

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