

10 Top tips for working with a refurbishment partner



▶ Look at the history of the company and the people.

Find out how long the business has been running and how it began, its origins. Does the staff have the relevant experience in this field? Are they a credible organisation with a solid financial standing? Spend a little time researching this information, as it will give you a good feel for the people concerned.

▶ Can I work with them?

Do the companies you speak with, fill you with confidence? Are they knowledgeable, approachable and friendly? Remember this could be a long relationship as many companies stay with their chosen provider for many years. Look for an extension of your team, someone you can build a long term partnership with, not just another service provider.

▶ What types of work do they cover – look at previous case studies?

It's always a good idea to see previous work completed, so that you can be sure it fits with your requirement. It will also indicate the type of organisation that is prepared to entrust their projects with that provider. Companies will always have this available so don't hesitate to grab it, as it may also give you some ideas!

▶ Does their expertise match your requirements?

Some companies specialise in certain areas and have therefore become 'experts' in what is required for that type of business. Others however have built up their experience in all aspects of refurbishment work and therefore it is a matter of selecting who best fits your business, and who will give you the most effective representation.

▶ What level of service / attention to detail do they have?

When looking at case studies and previous client work ask questions of the recipient and maybe go and see the work carried out. Does it meet with your own standards? Is the furniture used (for example) 'off the shelf' or bespoke? Do they make their own items of furniture? Was the staff prompt, well presented and tidy whilst working? How much interference was caused during the works? These are all important aspects of any works.

▶ Do they offer Project and Site Management during the works?

If your project is on a larger scale you will need the peace of mind that all aspects of the work will be managed in a prompt and efficient manner by the chosen provider. Therefore check that these areas are covered to ensure all activity is monitored and reported on throughout the life of the project.

▶ What back up / aftercare do they offer? Is it ongoing?

Don't be led to believe that once the job is completed, that's it, as far as your chosen partner is concerned. Be sure to check that support, advice and maintenance are given once the work has finished (and for how long after?), you never know what may arise once the dust has settled!

▶ Always provide a brief.

The more information you can give the better. It helps everyone in the long run, when all parties understand exactly what is required and by when. Give detailed information relating to specific items you need / want and advise on what aspects you are leaving to them to fire their creative juices!

▶ Can / do they communicate their ideas visually and effectively?

Once the company understands your requirement, be sure that they present their proposal / costs in an effective manner that shows off your needs and their ideas well and allows you to visualize how your plan could indeed look. Don't just accept a written response.

▶ How much is it going to cost?

Costs are obviously a major factor, but remember that going the least expensive route does not guarantee you getting what you want or indeed need. Try and get a selection of quotations for your project to ensure that you do get a good idea of the price. If however they are all very much the same, it will be down to your personal preference. Where possible it may be beneficial to provide an outline budget cost, as this could save a lot of time and effort all round!



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