



What You Should Look For When Comparing Janitorial Companies

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Executive Summary

In today's economy, property owners and managers alike are constantly scanning the horizon, searching for opportunities to outsource their custodial services to custodial companies in order to improve operational efficiencies. When it comes to finding a custodial services company that will provide best practices at the right price, successfully managing the vendor selection process is key.

(RFP) Size Matters

Long before drafting an RFP or narrowing the field of custodial companies, spend plenty of time clearly identifying your requirements. The more detailed your expectations - and your RFP - the more precisely your needs can be met. If you're new to the game, talk to vendors informally to help you uncover the range of services available.

Once you've nailed down performance measures, it's time to tackle the RFP. A finely-tuned RFP gives janitorial companies the necessary information that ensures an accurate response — and makes side-by-side bid comparisons much easier.

Later, when the bids come in for your custodial services, don't get caught comparing apples to oranges. Be specific about your requirements (see the chart below).

RFP Requirements for Custodial Services

- Cleaning specifications
- Employee training
- Indemnifications
- Quality assurance
- Supplies (quality, quantity, who pays)
- Cleanable square footage
- Equipment (new vs. used)
- Insurance requirements (rates and coverage limits)
- Recycling
- Supply storage areas
- Communications
- Hours, days of service
- Payroll taxes (FICA, FUI, SUI)
- Safety, workers' compensation
- Contract duration
- Identification (badges, uniforms)
- Personnel screening

Narrowing the Field of Custodial Companies

When deciding which custodial companies to consider, use this criteria as a guide.

Commitment to Quality

Does the company really have a quality assurance program to “Inspect what you expect?”

Reputation

History repeats, so references should be a major factor in your decision. Talk to references, visit their buildings and inspect the quality of the vendor’s custodial services.

Scope of Resources

Is the vendor able to expand with you? Do they offer the operations manuals, training programs, or back office support you need?

Existing Relationships

Relationships are a key factor for the RFP inviting process. Not all janitorial companies are created equal. Large contracts require a large trust level.

Cultural Match

Is the vendor large or small? Local or national? Do they mirror your company in terms of scope, locations, objectives? Do they participate in reputable industry organizations?

Added-Value Capacity

Do they offer additional services that can be easily absorbed within their existing custodial services?

Price

The bottom line is critical, but beware of the “penny-wise, pound-foolish” syndrome. Inexpensive janitorial companies could end up costing you more in the long run. Make sure you identify the labor, equipment and supplies needed to do the job right.

The Dreaded Walkthrough

Hosting a janitorial walkthrough is probably not high on your list of fun, but it is the second major ingredient in receiving an accurate bid package. To get a true feel for the scope of your work, janitorial companies must see the facility’s level of cleanliness, types of supplies, square footage, flooring surfaces, building density and the like to ensure they can provide the custodial services you need.

Pulling Back the Curtain: Understanding Pricing Models

Once you’ve reviewed RFP responses from the janitorial companies and walkthrough information, you can prepare your pricing model. Most include:

- Labor, including payroll taxes, insurances and benefits
- Direct Operating Costs, including supplies, uniforms, transportation, cell phones, employee screening, etc.
- Overhead and Profit

Vendors should be willing to fully explain their pricing model and answer any questions about their custodial services and pricing methods.





Apples to Apples: Selecting the Vendor

Selection often boils down to two simple (yet complex!) factors:

- Can the vendor do the job?
- Can we work well together?

How well do the janitorial companies stack up? Which one offers the right mix of service, staff, tools and price to get the job done right?

To find the answers and ensure fair comparison, revisit your RFP requirements and examine these details:

1. **Labor** — Verify the number of cleaning hours and total hours in custodial services received per day.
2. **Payroll Taxes** — Ask for taxes to be broken out by their categories and compare FICA, FUI, SUI. Ask for explanations of any large discrepancies.
3. **Insurances** — Accredited janitorial companies should be able to document proof of required general liability and workers' comp.
4. **Equipment** — Does the bid have enough budgeted for the job? Compare among different janitorial companies.
5. **Supplies** — Be sure to agree on quality. Tissue, soap and towels are a major expense in custodial services and can be a major complaint area if quality is not agreed upon.

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