

PICKING THE RIGHT MOVING COMPANY

One of the important factors affecting the quality and cost of your move is the selection of a mover. Be extra bit careful in selecting a mover. Ask friends for references of the movers they know and had good experience but mind you- every mover had done good moves and bad moves in the past. So the experience of your friend if it is positive need not be so and same way a bad referral need not be the same with you. You need to dig deeper into the details and verify whether the mover is reliable. Never use a mover whose main source of advertising are signs posted on trees and telephone poles.

Here are a few items to keep in mind when you interview prospective movers:

Allow 8 to 10 weeks to select a mover

The process of finding the right moving company for you will probably take this much time. You'll request bids from each mover, check references, and make your final decision about which company is the best value for your money. Moving companies will need time to fit your move into their schedules, especially in the summer months, which is their busiest time of year.

Only deal with licenced companies.

Ask the representative to demonstrate that it carries worker's compensation insurance to protect the company and its customers.

Ask the right questions:

- Does your company subcontract its moving services?
- Which subcontractors could be used to move my home?
- Will the contents of my home be on one truck the entire time? (Moving goods between trucks increases the potential for damage).
- What services are not listed on this quote, and what do you charge for them? What training do your movers and/or packers receive (especially for packing and moving fragile items)?

Ask about the firm's experience and client list.

Ask each of your prospective movers for references from previous customers and for documents on their history of service.

Take advantage of free estimates.

And get them from several movers. Having several free estimates will give you a very good idea of how costly your move will be. Keep in mind that certain movers offer estimates that are outrageously low, and then hand you a large bill when the move is complete. In order to avoid this predicament, always make sure that any estimates you receive from movers are either binding or include a "not to exceed" clause.

Check out for any incentives available from any companies. Free packing material, higher discount

rates and don't forget to cross check the incentives from some other companies.

Types of quotes:

- Binding - Study the mover offers a guaranteed price, within a small percentage of deviation that is based on a complete list of items to be moved and the type of service performed.
- Non-binding or hourly rate - This is not an estimate at all, only a price list. These rates are based upon the movers' previous experience of jobs similar to yours.
- Not to exceed - This quote is binding only on the mover. The final price for the move cannot exceed the estimate figure; but if the move comes in under the estimated amount you pay the lesser price.

Get a written quote.

Determine whether it's binding or non-binding. The most accurate way to estimate your moving costs is to get an in-home, visual assessment from the mover. Decide whether you want full service (they pack, unpack, and move everything) or self-service (you pack and unpack everything and they move it).

Know how to read your quote.

Quotes should include all moving charges, such as carrying up stairs or in an elevator, overtime, additional transportation, moving bulky articles, carrying an excessive distance, storage, and more. These types of charges usually involve obstacles the mover has to overcome, which you can determine ahead of time and include in the bid. Packing bids should state not only labour charges but the amount and cost of boxes. Make sure each quote is estimated the same way, so you can easily make comparisons.

When you're ready to sign the contract, insist on a guaranteed price in writing.

This includes guaranteed pick-up and delivery dates. The contract should include a guarantee of how many hours the job will take, allowing an overrun of no more than 10 percent.

Coverage for loss or damage.

Make sure you understand the coverage for loss or damage of your shipment. All licensed movers must provide liability for the value of goods, which they transport. But there are different levels of liability. You must be aware of the amount of protection provided and the additional costs that may apply.

Make sure the mover is properly insured.

Particularly check if the mover has workmen's compensation which is required by law in most places. If this coverage is not in place and a worker gets hurt on your property, you could be liable for his injuries.

Sources

- Lending Tree (www.lendingtree.com)
- Canadian Relocation Systems (www.relocatecanada.com)