ROOFING CONTRACTOR VETTING CHECKLIST

This is a checklist for vetting a commercial roofing contractor before you ask them to quote, or before you accept a quote they have already given you.

It separates the checks that produce facts from the ones that produce impressions. Both matter, but they are not the same and should not be weighed as though they were.

THE FACTS

CHECK	HOW TO VERIFY IT
☐ Contractor license	Directly with the state licensing board, by number
☐ License classification	That it covers the class of work being quoted
☐ General liability insurance	A certificate sent by the insurer, naming your interest
☐ Workers compensation	Current, and covering the crew that will attend
☐ Manufacturer approval	With the manufacturer, for the specific system
☐ Trading history	How long under this name and this license number
☐ Business address	A real address you can find, not a mailbox
☐ Any license history	Suspensions, lapses or changes of entity

THE EXPERIENCE

ASK	WHAT A GOOD ANSWER SOUNDS LIKE
☐ What proportion of your work is this building type?	A specific figure, not a reassurance
☐ What is your largest recent project?	A named building and a scale you can picture
☐ Who would run this project?	A named person, with their own track record

ASK	WHAT A GOOD ANSWER SOUNDS LIKE
☐ Is the crew directly employed?	A clear answer either way, with the subcontractor named
☐ How many of these systems have you installed?	A number, and ideally a nearby example
☐ Who is your manufacturer contact?	A name, which confirms a real relationship

THE REFERENCES

TAKE	WHY
☐ Similar building type and size	A roof of a different type proves little
☐ Completed two or more years ago	A new roof that has not leaked yet is not evidence
☐ Buildings you can visit	A letter tells you what somebody chose to write
☐ The project manager, not the signatory	They know what actually happened
☐ One reference you found yourself	The chosen references are chosen for a reason
☐ The question: what went wrong?	Something always does; the handling is the test

THE DOCUMENTS

REQUIRE	WHY
☐ Written scope	The only basis on which two quotes can be compared
☐ Named exclusions	Unstated exclusions become variations
☐ Payment schedule	Proportionate to work completed, not to signature
☐ Change order process	Agreed before the first variation, not during it
☐ Specimen warranty	The conditions are the warranty
☐ Safety documentation	Method statements and evidence of training

THE WARNING SIGNS

SIGN	WHAT IT USUALLY MEANS
☐ Pressure to sign today	A price that will not survive scrutiny
☐ A large cash deposit	Cash flow being funded by your project
☐ No written scope	Nothing to hold anybody to later
☐ Reluctance over insurance	It may not exist, or may not be current
☐ A price far below the others	Work has been left out, or will be added later
☐ An out of area address after a storm	A contractor who will leave with the weather

WHAT TO DO WITH IT

1. **Do the four factual checks first.** Before any preference has formed.
2. **Take references on buildings you can visit.** And ask what went wrong.
3. **Match the contractor to the project, not to a size.** Fit beats scale.
4. **Get everything that matters in writing.** The reaction to the request is informative.
5. **Refuse to be hurried.** A roof that has lasted ten years will last another week.

Want the reasoning behind these checks? Read how to choose a contractor and what to look for in a roofing company.

Walked by _____ Date _____ Roof _____