



ADVICE ON EMPLOYING A COMPANY'S SERVICE.

As a partner in National Service, one of the UK's fastest growing business directories, one of my jobs is to oversee the inclusion of company's who offer a truly National Service. With this in mind here are top tips for employing the services of a company.

Looking for a good tradesman or service can be a daunting task with many risks. If you are having difficulty knowing where to start, hopefully this advice will help you to make sure you get the right person for the job.

Dealing with an established firm helps with any trust issues. Established firms will be members of a reputable trade association.

Ensure that the company have a genuine office address, check their given telephone numbers and that they use headed note paper.

Recommendation/ word of mouth are usually the best way to find a service provider.

Asking your friends and family to recommend a trader that they have used and are happy with is of great value.

If this option is not available to you then it is advisable to ask the trader for any references that they have or the names of previous clients

If it is possible to do so look at their previous work or any feedback section that they may have to ensure that the work carried out was done professionally and that their previous clients were satisfied with the work.

Make sure that a VAT number is shown on paperwork or relevant correspondence (e-mail for a quote etc) if VAT is being charged

As mentioned above make sure that they are a member of a reputable trade association.

Ensure that you specify exactly the service that you want provided and when you are happy that you will be receiving that service get a written specification and estimate.

Don't be embarrassed to get more than one estimate and make your choice based on the guidelines written here.

Always make sure that you agree any stage and final payments before the work starts because changing your mind during a job will add to the time it takes and to the overall costs.

It is important to ask for an insurance-backed warranty for any work that has been undertaken.

Things to be wary of when employing a company's service.

So called specialists that use high pressure sales, people that will not take no for an answer.

Make sure that you understand everything that you have heard and read before you put your signature to anything.

Avoid any advance payments, particularly at the start of the job and any demands for cash payments as you could be putting yourself at risk from rogue traders.

If things do go wrong then here are some suggestions that you may find helpful.

Don't be afraid to speak to your tradesman and tell him that you are not happy with the work done and try to resolve any problems as soon as possible. Put your complaint in writing if your tradesman does not sort things out after you have spoken to him.

If this still remains unresolved then you will need to seek further advice and depending on the problem you can consult the Citizens Advice Bureau, Trading Standards, a solicitor, or Trade Association.

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