

6. Questions to Ask Every Vendor

Bring this list to your next vendor conversation. A vendor who answers these clearly and specifically is telling you something. A vendor who gets vague, defensive, or wants to “circle back” is also telling you something.

CONTRACT STRUCTURE

How does your contract structure affect how quickly you respond to my building?

TECHNICIAN CONSISTENCY

Will the same technician service my building each visit, or does it vary?

ROUTE SIZE

Roughly how many stops are on that technician's route?

AFTER-HOURS

What happens, step by step, when I call after hours—do I reach a person?

SAMPLE INVOICE

Can I see a sample invoice before signing?

EMERGENCY RESPONSE

What is your guaranteed emergency response time for this building's specific location?

WHO DOES THE WORK?

Who performs the work—your own employees, or subcontractors?

REFERENCES

Can you provide references from buildings similar in size and age to mine?

TECHNICIAN TENURE

What's your average technician tenure? High turnover often means inconsistent service quality.

EXIT CLAUSE

If we're not satisfied, what's the contract term and exit clause?

BOTTOM LINE



It's less about finding the cheapest flat rate and more about finding a provider whose incentives are lined up with yours. The building owners who avoid elevator headaches tend to have a dedicated mechanic who knows their building, response times that are contractual rather than aspirational, and pricing they can actually explain.