

Minster
Cleaning



7 essential considerations

when looking for a
commercial cleaning company



Choosing a commercial cleaning supplier requires careful consideration.

Standards can vary between companies and it is important you research your options to ensure you appoint a contractor that delivers a quality, reliable and value for money service that is tailored to your requirements.

This guide details seven key factors you should consider before appointing an office / commercial cleaning contractor.



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**experience
matters**

Check how long the cleaning company has been established for.

This is important as a supplier that is long-established is likely to be delivering a quality service (any company providing a poor service is unlikely to survive for long in the marketplace).

Ask a potential supplier if they have **experience of cleaning across a range of sectors**.

Organisations in different sectors can have specific requirements for the cleaning of their premises. For example, medical practices (under regulation by the Care Quality Commission (CQC)), are required to not only maintain clean and hygienic premises but also to evidence cleanliness over time. A supplier cleaning for a medical practice should be conducting detailed cleaning audits and cleaning to the exacting standards required by the CQC. This level of cleaning expertise, including infection control processes, can then be applied to their other customers in different sectors.

Depending on your sector, **a supplier who cleans for other clients in the same sector** is also preferable as they will understand the key cleaning outcomes required. For example, a supplier that cleans car showrooms understands the importance of having sparkling windows, highly polished floors and immaculate lounge and washroom areas to best reflect the quality of vehicles on display and will tailor their service accordingly.

Establish what **cleaning accreditations** the potential supplier has. These demonstrate a level of expertise within the cleaning industry. For instance, are they corporate members of the British Institute of Cleaning Science (BICSc)?

“BICSc is the largest independent, professional and educational body within the cleaning industry, with over 66,000 Individual and Corporate Members.” *

*Source: www.bics.org.uk/what-we-do

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recruitment,
induction and
training

High calibre cleaning operatives are needed for you to receive great service from a supplier. Understanding their recruitment, induction and training methods is key.

TUPE (Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006)

If cleaning operatives currently clean your premises (either directly employed by you or by your current contractor), under TUPE they may have the right to transfer from the current employer to any new cleaning contractor appointed and retain their existing employment terms and continuity of service.

When choosing a commercial / office cleaning contractor, they should be able to assure you that they can **manage the TUPE process itself and effectively manage any staff members** that were cleaning your premises that transfer to their employment under TUPE. This is particularly important if standards of cleaning are currently poor or inconsistent or if you are experiencing disruptions in service due to planned or unforeseen absences of cleaning operatives.

Recruitment

Where TUPE does not apply, a potential cleaning supplier should also be able to assure you that they have robust recruitment processes in place to provide you with competent cleaning operatives. Potential suppliers that employ cleaning operatives directly are in full control of who they are recruiting and how staff are inducted, trained and managed on an ongoing basis.

Clearly outlining the expectations of the role when advertising and during the interview process and **securing references** is key, as is gaining **an understanding of a candidate's right to work, cleaning skills, previous cleaning experience and reliability**.

Where required, **DBS checks** should also be made to confirm the suitability of the individual to work in the specific environment to be cleaned.

2

recruitment, induction and training

Induction

Your new cleaning contractor should ensure that any cleaning operatives they employ are taken through a **comprehensive induction process**. This will give employees a full understanding of the company's values, the expected behaviours that underpin these values and **what is required to deliver great service**. It is also an opportunity to identify specific training requirements any new employee may have.

New employees should also be given a **uniform and ID badge** during their induction.

Training

Cleaning operatives should receive **initial and ongoing training** to ensure they can perform their roles well. This will preferably include accredited, industry recognised training such as training supplied by the British Institute of Cleaning Science (BICSc).

Accredited BICSc training can be delivered directly by BICSc Business Services. Alternatively, some cleaning contractors are BICSc accredited training centres.

National Vocational Qualifications (NVQ's) are also available in cleaning and support services.





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3 health & safety and insurance

Health and safety is important for the protection of employees, visitors to your premises and the cleaning contractor's staff. You should ensure that the potential supplier has robust procedures and processes in place to safely deliver the cleaning service.

Check whether they have had any reportable incidents with the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) in the last three years.

Ask the potential supplier for proof of both **Employer's Liability Insurance and Public Liability Insurance** and check that you are satisfied with the level of Public Liability cover.

A contractor should produce **risk assessments and method statements** for all tasks due to be conducted on site to ensure that these are carried out safely and all identifiable risks are mitigated. Request examples of risk assessments and method statements they have produced for other sites.

COSHH (The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health) is applicable to the cleaning products used for cleaning your premises. Ask the potential contractor for examples of COSHH data for the products they propose using.

Once you have appointed a contractor you should make sure that they include risk assessments, method statements and COSHH data sheets in a **site file stored on your premises**. This is so that cleaning operatives can regularly refer to them and that they are available to first responders in the event of an incident.

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**a tailored
service**

Getting it right at the outset

A potential supplier should take the time to fully understand your precise cleaning requirements and recommend how these can be best met.

To do this accurately, they should **meet with you and undertake a detailed site survey of your premises**. This will give them the information they need to tailor an appropriate cleaning schedule for your premises, with consideration of any budgetary constraints you might have.

You should receive a **quotation and detailed cleaning specification** shortly afterwards. If you have any questions regarding the information, you should contact the cleaning company for clarification. If you do not receive a fully detailed quotation and specification then be sure to ask for one. Any companies that are not forthcoming with this information are not demonstrating that they have captured your service requirements properly.



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5 quality
of service
delivery

Reliability

Your new commercial cleaning contractor should have provisions in place to ensure you receive the same quality service in the event of any planned or unplanned absences of cleaning operatives. Your contractor will preferably employ a team of **mobile cleaning operatives to cover for any absences**.

The mobile team should have easy access to your cleaning specification so that they can ensure that your premises are cleaned to the agreed requirements in the event of any absences.

Flexibility

From time to time, you may have **short notice cleaning requirements** such as increased frequency of cleans or changes of cleaning times which will need to be met by the supplier. In the unfortunate event of an infection outbreak, you also need to have confidence that they can **respond quickly** to ensure your organisation remains operational.

Consistency

Service consistency is also key. Ask any potential supplier what **procedures and monitoring systems** they have in place to ensure that the cleaning is done to the same exacting standards during every visit.

Ideally your new office cleaning contractor will employ a **team of field supervisors**. One element of a supervisor's role should be to visit your premises to monitor service levels on an ongoing basis. **Regular cleaning inspections and audits** can help in this respect.

You should also be able to easily contact your supervisor and / or your contractor's office team to report any issues with the service you receive if or when they arise.

Where identified, **issues should be addressed quickly and effectively**. This can involve the identification of additional training requirements or appropriate disciplinary measures.

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quality of service delivery

Safety

Organisations have a duty of care to ensure that the workplace is safe for staff and visitors. This includes having appropriate cleaning measures in place to make sure premises are both clean and hygienic. Choosing a cleaning supplier that can deliver this is imperative. They need to demonstrate that their cleaning operatives understand **the importance of not only cleaning but also sanitising and disinfection**. This applies especially to frequent touch points (areas that numerous staff members come into contact with) such as door handles/push plates, handrails and light switches.

You should confirm with a potential supplier that they implement **stringent colour coding practices to prevent cross-contamination** within premises. Hygienic premises reduce infection risks which, in turn, helps keep staff absences to a minimum and improves productivity.



Equipment and materials

If you have previously experienced poor cleaning standards in your premises, this could have been the result of poor-quality equipment or cleaning materials being used rather than any underperformance of the cleaning operatives themselves. Your new contractor should provide operatives with the **correct materials and equipment to clean to the agreed high standards**.

They should quickly replace any equipment that becomes defective and have stock replenishment processes in place to ensure that operatives do not run out of cleaning materials.

Additional services

As well as regular, ongoing cleaning, there are other periodic requirements you will need to consider to ensure your building is safe and welcoming. These include suitable arrangements for carpet cleaning, floor treatment, window cleaning, washroom services and consumables.

If these services are sourced from multiple suppliers or managed in-house, you may wish to consider a single supplier as an alternative. **Using a trusted cleaning company to deliver all services reduces the risk of poor service**. If any issues arise, these can be quickly resolved via one point of contact.



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**customer
satisfaction**

Understanding how satisfied the customers of a potential supplier are will give you an indication of the level of service you are likely to receive.

Review their **social media profiles and independent reviews online** (for example any listed on the company's Google My Business Profile) and on their **website**.

Ask if they can provide you with **referees** that you can speak with about their experience of the cleaning service provided.

Do they undertake regular cleaning inspections and customer feedback surveys? These are strong indications that the supplier cares about standards delivered and welcomes feedback from clients in order to make service improvements where required.

Does the supplier have many long-standing customers?

If so, this is an indication of a loyal and satisfied customer base.



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7 financial
health

You may wish to check the financial health of a potential supplier using a credit check company and information available at Companies House.

Any record of poor financial performance could be an indication of a poorly managed business. A strong credit rating shows financial stability and a well-managed business that is likely to be operational in the long-term.

Summary

Doing your research before choosing a new cleaning contractor will give you the information you need to make an informed decision. A supplier that can evidence compliance, proficiency and experience in all seven areas should be well placed to meet your cleaning requirements and deliver a seamless, quality and value for money service.

Be wary of any companies that position their service primarily on price. While any company should be pricing its service competitively, a particularly cheap quotation could be an indication of an inferior level of service, including poor and inconsistent cleaning standards and unreliability.

To arrange a no-obligation consultation and quotation with your local Minster Cleaning branch, please visit www.minstercleaning.co.uk/uk



About the author

Established in 1982, Minster Cleaning is a leading and trusted provider of office and commercial cleaning services, with a UK network of over 40 locally managed and owned branches.

Minster Cleaning delivers reliable, safe, quality cleaning to thousands of valued clients, large and small, across a wide range of sectors.

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