

The Right Security Company For You ?

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Developing relationships with key suppliers is one of the most important aspects of running a business. It isn't above or below other issues such as price but having a rapport that enables trust, reliability and commitment to each other can, in the long term be far more profitable than a few pounds saved here or there. All suppliers have their own legal requirements, equipment they use, price structure etc. So when using a security company what are the things to look for ?

Finding and selecting a security company are two very different areas. Finding a company as we all know can be the result of an internet search, use of a directory, reading an advert or word of mouth - both can lead to working with a great company. However the selection of the right one is the more important of the two..

An area of special importance is that you can relate to and feel comfortable with your contact at the company. The following points of course will dictate whether or not you select them, but if they tick all the boxes and you just don't get on with them, you will not have a win win situation.

- 1) **SIA LICENCE** - it is essential that any security company uses SIA licensed guards. This is now a legal requirement, and proof of this is that the guard will have an SIA badge. The only way a guard can work without a badge is if they are being supplied by an SIA Approved Contractor. This means that the company is allowed to supply a percent age of its workforce that do not have the badge but who have completed the course and are in the application process.
- 2) **INSURANCE** – as with all service

companies make sure Public & Employers liability insurance is up to date and ask to see copies if necessary.

- 3) **PRICES**– There are no set prices as it is dependant on many criteria and the company so it would not be right set out a figure out. The type of event, location, hours, number of security required etc all have an influencing factor as does your relationship with the company. Many companies are now undercutting each other and this is not always the way forward, the calibre of the security may vary considerably.
- 4) **REFERENCES / CURRENT CLIENTS** – Ask to see these to ensure proven track record. New companies may be much better than an established one. Ask to see current client portfolio, and examples of work done to date or attend an event they are supplying security for.
- 5) **UNIFORMS** – Discuss exactly what they will be wearing for the event. There is a distinct difference between a synthetic blazer and a tailored suit, crisp shirt and silk tie with shiny well-heeled shoes.
- 6) **PERSONNEL ENQUIRIES** - such as staff turnover, number of personnel on their books, how they pay their security, if the guards are self-employed or PAYE. This can identify more about the legitimacy of a company and the type of security personnel they use.
- 7) **FIRST AID / RISK ASSESSMENT** – Ensure at least one member of the security team is qualified in first-aid. Also a visit to the location should always be carried out to complete a Risk Assessment.
- 8) **REPORTS / FEEDBACK** – Discuss with the security company if any reports and feedback will be given after an event or with an ongoing contract and in what format.
- 9) **PLANNING** – Discuss the event with the security company, ask for their feedback and ideas on positioning of the security, the entrance/exit, cloakroom, catering, bar, etc. Their input can be invaluable to the smooth running of an event especially if hundreds of people are expected.
- 10) **EQUIPMENT** – Are they able to supply radios, barriers, clickers, etc? What are the charges for these? What other charges could there be - travel expenses, petrol, accommodation?
- 11) **OTHER SERVICES** – Are they able to provide stewards, hosts, paramedics. Many security companies often have good contacts with a myriad of other suppliers, ask them if they can put you in touch with any.
- 12) **PAYMENT TERMS** – Ensure this is known from the outset. The time scale, the way payment should be made, any interest that may apply.
- 13) **THE RIGHT COMPANY FOR YOU** - A large national company may not be right for high profile celebrity party and the same for a more niche specialist firm may not be right for a live performance. The security industry has become more fragmented with the growth of specialist firms able to provide bespoke services and personnel that are right for the job and therefore are right for you

A final note to take on board. The Security company are representing you, it is imperative you are confident they will be diplomatic, respectful and not heavy handed. Experience and recommendation should not be undervalued.