

SHOPPING FOR A NEW FREIGHT CARRIER?

HERE'S HOW TO FIND A KEEPER.

If your small to mid-sized business (SMB) ships freight, you know the logistics industry is slowly climbing out of a freight recession. Because of this downturn, overcapacity has forced many companies to suspend service to certain areas, downsize or even go out of business. Their SMB customers may be dissatisfied with the change in service or have been left without a provider all together.

If you're in the market for a new freight carrier, this tip sheet can help. With the right information, you can find a great match while keeping up your end of the partnership.



ASK THE RIGHT QUESTIONS

When vetting a potential carrier, it's crucial to gather enough information about them to make an informed decision. Here's a list of questions that should give you a good sense of whether they're right for your business.

- Do you deliver where I need my freight to go?**
Check their service frequency and coverage areas including local, subregional, regional and national services.
- Do you offer the services I need?**
Whether you need full truckload (FTL) or less-than-truckload (LTL), contract or on-call, ask for a complete list of their freight solutions. It's also important to ask about special services, such as expedited shipping, final-mile delivery and hazmat solutions.
- Is your pricing competitive?**
Ask the carrier for pricing up front to get a sense of how transparent they are on freight rates. Also ask about their contract vs spot pricing and whether they offer freight consolidation services.
- What's your on-time performance?**
Look for a carrier that has a history of excellence and is willing to share data that illustrates timely delivery.
- What's your business philosophy?**
Make sure the carrier's values, purpose and ethics align with yours. This can prevent carrier challenges down the road.
- What can we offer each other?**
A shipper-carrier relationship can be mutually beneficial, so use this time to showcase what your company brings to the partnership.
- Do your customers recommend you?**
Ask if the carrier can provide referrals and reviews from its existing clients. This will prove they've earned a strong reputation among shippers.
- What amount of cargo insurance do you carry?**
Bigger is generally better when it comes to insurance amounts, so compare it to industry averages.
- How long have you been in business?**
Knowing that a company has a long history of success and is financially stable may increase the chances they won't go out of business and leave you without a carrier.



BUILD A STRONG RELATIONSHIP

As any SMB owner knows, relationships are everything. Right now, there's more capacity than freight. But times change, and when volumes surge again, a strong relationship can help you stay among your carrier's top priorities. Here's how to become a valued shipping customer.



Communicate

Be upfront and open about the commodities you need moved and any shipping or receiving expectations. A transportation management system (TMS) can help you communicate the full needs of your shipments by adding the details at the point of booking. That includes freight class, insurance required, special services needed and much more.



Avoid cancelling shipments

If it's unavoidable, give as much notice as possible and try to quickly find them another shipment. Plus, try to never book a shipment with a pickup window of less than two hours. They'll appreciate your commitment and proactivity.



Pay promptly and in full

A surefire way to stay in the carrier's good graces is to pay invoices on time, every time.

CALL IN THE LOGISTICS EXPERTS

For an even smoother path to choosing and working with a freight carrier, you can work with a third-party logistics provider (3PL) like Worldwide Express. We have strong relationships with a large portfolio of carefully vetted freight carriers, so we can help guide you to the perfect carrier for your business needs. Contact our team of shipping experts for a free, customized shipping consultation!

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