

Contract administrator questions for a pre-contract meeting

These Member guidance notes can be used in conjunction with the Contract Administrator (CA) Questionnaire and neither document is intended for sharing with the CA or client.

If any concerns remain after completion of the questionnaire Members should consider asking for a follow up meeting or call to delve deeper, using the questions below as prompts. Members should also consider discussing specific concerns with the client including exploring whether they would consider appointing alternative contract administrators.

This should take place **before** you sign your own contract.

1. Qualifications and Experience

- Can you share an example of how you've successfully handled a project like this one?
- What challenges have you faced when working with builders and how did you resolve them?

2. Understanding Responsibilities

- How do you make sure your decisions are fair to both the client and the builder?
- What steps do you take to ensure clear communication between all parties?

3. Communication and Processes

- How will you communicate key instructions or approvals during the project?
- Do you provide regular progress updates or hold meetings? If so, how often?

4. Handling Changes and Challenges

- How do you usually manage changes to the work or timeline during a project?
- What do you need from builders to assess requests for additional payment or time?

5. Problem Resolution

- Can you describe a time when you resolved a disagreement between a builder and a client?
 - Do you have a plan for how you will act when the interests of the client diverge from the interests of the builder?
 - What's your approach to preventing disputes before they arise?
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Guidance on interpreting responses

Red Flags:

- Responses are vague, inconsistent, or dismissive of builder concerns.
- The CA shows bias toward the client without discussing fairness to all parties.
- They lack experience in projects of a similar scope or have unclear processes for key responsibilities.

Positive Indicators:

- Clear examples of past projects where they balanced fairness and professionalism.
- A proactive approach to communication and documentation.
- Confidence in managing changes and resolving disputes quickly and collaboratively.

Practical Tips for FMB Members:

- Stick to open-ended but straightforward questions to encourage discussion.
- Use the responses to gauge whether the CA will be easy to work with and fair in their decision-making.
- Follow up with the client if the answers raise concerns about the CA's suitability for the project.

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