

## SELECTING A MOVING COMPANY

Having all your possessions in someone else's hands can be frightening. Finding a moving company that is reliable, responsible, "gentle" on belongings, and affordable could be a complicated task.

We will give you one less thing to worry about. The following information can help you find the right moving company for you.

### **Allow 8 to 10 weeks to select a mover:**

The process of finding the right moving company for you will probably take this much time. You'll request bids from each mover, check references, and make your final decision about which company is the best value for your money. Moving companies will need time to fit your move into their schedules, especially in the summer months, which is their busiest time of year.

### **Ask around:**

Ask each of your prospective movers for references from previous customers and for documents on their history of service. Take advantage of free estimates, and get them from several movers. Having several free estimates will give you a very good idea of how costly your move will be. Keep in mind that certain movers offer estimates that are outrageously low, and then hand you a large bill when the move is complete. In order to avoid this predicament, always make sure that any estimates you receive from movers are either binding or include a "not to exceed" clause.

One of the important factors affecting the quality and cost of your move is the selection of a mover. Be extra bit careful in selecting a mover. Ask friends for references of the movers they know and had good experience but mind you- every mover had done good moves and bad moves in the past. So the experience of your friend if it is positive need not be so and same way a bad referral need not be the same with you. You need to dig deeper into the details and verify whether the mover is reliable. Never use a mover whose main source of advertising are signs posted on trees and telephone poles.

Contact your local Better Business Bureau and ask if there are any complaints registered about the movers you're considering. Keep in mind that there are usually two sides to every story. A pattern of many complaints, however, is not a good sign.

Check out for any incentives available from any companies. Free packing material , higher discount rates and don't forget to cross check the incentives from some other companies.

### **Decisions you should make in advance:**

Decide in advance which goods will be shipped and which will be sold or given away. Then consider whether or not you would like the mover to pack and what other type of additional services you may want. Remember that packing is always a separate bid from moving. An estimator may come to your home and create a bid, or make an estimate by talking to you over the phone. Moves that are less than 100 kilometers away are usually priced by the hour. For longer distance moves, estimates are based on weight, usually per 100 pounds.

If you decide to do your own packing or partial packing, remember that the moving company is not liable for damage to boxes packed by customer. However, if there is an obvious exterior damage at the delivery, make a note of that on the inventory sheet of your shipment. The driver has the right to refuse to accept any carton that may be improperly packed. If the driver has to re-pack cartons that the customer has packed, additional charges will apply.

Try to provide as much information as possible about unusual situations on either end, so your estimates will be more accurate. Make the mover be aware of any problems they may encounter at the delivery, such as parking problems, road access, street accessibility, delivery time restriction or if there are any stairs or elevators involved.

The cost of your move can increase for such occurrences. Try to reserve a “parking space” for the moving van, if your new home is on a congested street. If the moving crew has to carry your load more than 50 meters, from the moving van to your door, you may be charged for excessive distance.

### **Types of quotes:**

- Binding - Study the mover offers a guaranteed price, within a small percentage of deviation that is based on a complete list of items to be moved and the type of service performed.
- Non-binding or hourly rate - This is not an estimate at all, only a price list. These rates are based upon the movers' previous experience of jobs similar to yours.
- Not to exceed - This quote is binding only on the mover. The final price for the move cannot exceed the estimate figure; but if the move comes in under the estimated amount you pay the lesser price.

### **Know how to read your Quote:**

Quotes should include all moving charges, such as carrying up stairs or in an elevator, overtime, additional transportation, moving bulky articles, carrying an excessive distance, storage, and more. These types of charges usually involve obstacles the mover has to overcome, which you can determine ahead of time and include in the bid. Packing bids should state not only labor charges but the amount and cost of boxes. Make sure each bid is estimated the same way, so you can easily make comparisons.

### **Ask the right questions:**

- Does your company subcontract its moving services?
- Which subcontractors could be used to move my home?.
- Will the contents of my home be on one truck the entire time? (Moving goods between trucks increases the potential for damage).
- What services are not listed on this bid, and what do you charge for them? What training do your movers and/or packers receive (especially for packing and moving fragile items)?.
- Can you provide recent references from other customers you've moved?

### **Don't make price the deciding factor:**

Low-ball quotes could mask less reliable moving practices. Use several factors in addition to price: references, performance reports, reported complaints. Get the final bid in writing (on which you may be asked to sign), but never sign off on a final bill until the move is complete.

Try to go for a well known name for transport, but keep in mind, a van lines agent for a local move, is not the national vanline company who you think you are dealing with. The agent will do the move on his own authority.

Most van lines don't have the authority to do local moves. If you are moving internationally, you may not get the van lines you think you are getting either as most agents have no obligation to use their primary van lines for international moves.

**Coverage for loss or damage:**

Make sure you understand the coverage for loss or damage of your shipment. All licensed movers must provide liability for the value of goods, which they transport. But there are different levels of liability. You must be aware of the amount of protection provided and the additional costs that may apply.

Make sure the mover is properly insured. Particularly check if the mover has workmen's compensation which is required by law in most places. If this coverage is not in place and a worker gets hurt on your property, you could be liable for his injuries.