

## **Speaking With Remodeling Contractors**

What follows is a step-by-step guide to help you secure the best outcome for your remodeling job.

### **Step 1: Describe Work**

Explain what type of remodeling work is involved. Be consistent in the way that you present the information so each contractor will have an opportunity to bid the same job.

### **Step 2: Documented Questions and Answer Session**

Before you create a set of serious candidates, you'll need to have a brief question and answer session with each one. While the contractor questions you, take notes on his concerns. He may reveal some aspects of the remodel or addition that are new to you, or may just reveal his own inferior knowledge. When you interview him, take this first impression into account. A good rapport with your contractor is essential to arrive at a finished product you are both happy with. As far as his ability to accommodate the specifications of your remodel, you'll need to inquire about technical ability, job history, and the details of your project. The following list can guide you through this process.

- Do you specialize in the type of work I've described? If so, please provide some examples of similar work near Santa Clara County that you've completed.
- What is the timeframe from estimate to completion?
- Do you carry workers' compensation and liability insurance?
- Will you provide a written estimate?
- What type of warranty for your work will you provide? What does it cover?
- Will permits be needed? If so, who will be responsible for getting them?
- Do you do the work yourself with your employees or do you hire subcontractors?
- How long have you been in business?
- How and when do you clean up?
- Will you provide a written contract?
- What process do you go through to price the work?

### **Step 3: Making a Preliminary Decision**

After you've interviewed some remodeling specialists, it's time to narrow down your choices. Review your notes and decide which answers are the most important. Based on these results, which contractor most closely matches your criteria? Which do you personally feel the most comfortable dealing with? The earlier question and answer process will have made this clearer.

### **Step 4: Final Research**

After you've selected your prospective remodeling contractor, it's time to do some final research. What credentials does he have? Verify licensing, insurance and certifications such as Diamond Certified, the Better Business Bureau and CSLB licensing status.

### **Step 5: Making the Final Decision**

Now it's time to select your contractor. Call and ask any final questions and then ask for your representative to provide a signed, written and thoroughly detailed agreement.